



SAN JUAN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

NEW BEGINNINGS



ANNUAL REPORT FOR FY 2022 -2023

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

SAN JUAN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

301 McWILLIAMS Road

Aztec, New Mexico 87410

505-234-6040

business@sanjuanswcd.com

New Beginnings and new Challenges

- The current administration is actively pursuing the Mission of the San Juan SWCD by protecting, restoring, enhancing, and promoting the wise use of natural resources, promote stewardship through education and provide financial administrative assistance to the citizens of the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District. We will continue to make available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user.
- The beautiful new building was only six months old when the fresh staff members came on board. Additional work completed to the building included installation of acoustic baffles to the ceiling and walls in the meeting room and carpet in the primary office area. Hopefully, the City of Aztec will complete the paving of McWilliams Road before the monsoon season.
- The new fiscal year began with the SWCD Board members seeking applicants for the three positions left vacant by the previous administration in June of 2022. Oralia Bridge has stepped in as Assistant District Manager, Procurement Officer. Edicia Rodriguez is working as Assistant Office Manager. Jenna Wethington came on board in October as Watershed Coordinator.
- Board Members included John Arrington-Chairman, Leo Pacheco, DeAnne McKee, Cash Carruth, Ashley Maxwell, Steve Wamel, Catherine Thomas Kemp.
- The San Juan Basin welcomed all the moisture received throughout the year. The drawbacks to the amount of moisture received included the project crews experiencing delays of up to two weeks to complete projects.

PROJECTS IN PLACE AT THE BEGINNING OF FY 2022- 2023

CODE	GRANT TITLE	SUMMARY
<u>121</u>	<u>BLM Invasive weeds 2023</u> <u>\$31,116.28 Ex. 8/23</u>	<u>Invasive weed inventory and treatment</u> <u>Activities to commence soon.</u>
<u>122</u>	<u>BLM Roads 2020-2023</u>	<u>Manage BLM's cost share to the SJ Basin</u> <u>Public Roads Committee Funds ran out</u> <u>10/22</u>
<u>123</u>	<u>BLM Riparian Restoration \$201,384.40</u> <u>Ex. 1/24</u>	<u>Project commenced 2023</u>
<u>127</u>	<u>WO 20-5 NMACD 2021 Restore NM</u> <u>28,932.81 Ex. 12/22</u>	<u>Aerial sagebrush treatment. Materials</u> <u>Project Completed 10/22</u>
<u>127</u>	<u>Restore NM WO 20-3</u>	<u>Materials for erosion control fences in</u> <u>Largo Wash. Completed 11/22</u>
<u>127</u>	<u>Restore NM Wo 20-3</u>	<u>Range sediment Construction in Pump</u> <u>Canyon</u>
<u>128</u>	<u>319 LAWBP 2021 Phase III</u> <u>\$224,025.37 EX. 9/24</u>	<u>Improve Animas River water quality FY</u> <u>2022-2023 Expenditures 137,021.05</u> <u>Balance 81,3120.74</u>
<u>130</u>	<u>SJ BASIN WUI 2022 \$48844.29</u>	<u>Russian Olive and Salt Cedar Removal</u>
<u>132</u>	<u>San Juan WBP Planning</u> <u>193,682.03</u>	<u>No activity yet</u>
<u>218</u>	<u>ORNT San Juan Valley Soil Health</u> <u>279,993.82 Ex. 6/2027</u>	<u>Objective is to assist farmers impacted by</u> <u>the Gold Mine Spill. Soil testing, and cover</u> <u>crop planting.</u>
<u>219</u>	<u>NMDA Healthy Soils FY 22-23</u> <u>47,435.68 Ex. 5/31/23</u>	<u>Grant to individual that implement one or</u> <u>more of the five soil health principles.</u>
<u>220</u>	<u>2023 Severance Tax Restoration</u> <u>\$428,188.12 Ex. 6/25</u>	<u>FY- 2022-2023 Expenditures \$170,912.03</u>
	<u>SPECIAL PROJECTS</u>	
<u>107</u>	<u>River of Lost Souls Phase II</u>	<u>Weed Project</u>
<u>205</u>	<u>SJC Non-Native Phreatophyte</u> <u>119,499.57</u>	<u>Removal of Salt Cedar, Russian Olive, and</u> <u>Herbicide Spot FY 22-23 Expenditures</u> <u>\$115,299.30</u>
<u>301</u>	<u>BHP Billiton Special Projects</u>	<u>Match for LAWBP implementation projects</u> <u>and bacteria sampling</u>
<u>302</u>	<u>CWMA Invasive Weed Project</u>	<u>Retained funds for invasive weed</u> <u>treatment on oil & gas properties.</u> <u>Knapweed, Halogeton and thistle. Project</u> <u>is idle</u>
<u>413</u>	<u>Building Capital Outlay 2021 \$35,754.00</u>	<u>remaining funds for installation of acoustic</u> <u>baffles and carpet in the primary office</u> <u>area</u>
<u>4505</u>	<u>City of Aztec Stewardship</u>	<u>Project Idle \$3,411.53 Funds available</u>

FY 2022-2023 Grant Project Activities Summary

121 BLM Invasive Weeds - BLM given approval to use up the fund. Priority areas to be sprayed include the gravel pits for halogen, then Middle Mesa for leafy spurge, then on to Rosa, Middle Mesa, Pump Canyon, Glade area and Upper La Plata area for Russian Knapweed and thistle. Any remaining funds will be utilized to spray halogen where it has been previously mapped.

122 BLM Roads - BLM funds ran out in October 2022.

123 BLM Riparian Restoration - NEPA survey has been completed and the removal of fifty-three acres of slat cedar will be completed by May 15th. BLM portion of this Riparian Grant – to date Gary has not received the ARCH Survey report but knows that the survey is complete. NEPA will take place by next winter in the Goberador area and seven acres on VFW grounds. The NEPA process will take longer than the actual work.

127 WO 20-5 NMACD 2021 Restore NM -Aerial Herbicide project. Spraying was conducted on 8756 acres. Spraying was done on October 17th. The total bill was \$234,424.00 for spraying and \$8352.82 for the tech assistant. Seven clean water retention dams were built. BLM fencing material was delivered to BLM on Nov.1, 2022

128 319 LAWBP 2021 Phase III - Erosion projects on Symonds's and Evert's properties involved bank stability to reduce erosion and installation of river rock structures to divert current away from the bank to reduce erosional energy. Symonds Project completed in February 2023. Matthew Symonds attended the March 2023 Board meeting to thank all the responsible parties for completing this project on his property to the end. Children's Nature Meadow Project-March 11 planting date.25 volunteers assisted in the planting of sixty-four trees which included New Mexico Olive, Cottonwoods, Western Willows and forty-six native species shrubs. T posts and fencing installed for protection during this critical growth period. Jenna also participated in the NMSU/Extension Healthy Soil Workshop March 23 at Sycamore Community Center.

130 WUI – Russian Olive and Salt Cedar Removal. Project ended 10/22

132 San Juan WBP Planning – No activity to date.

218 ORNT San Juan Valley Healthy Soils – The project's original focus involved four farmers for planting a total of thirty-six acres. The seed was delivered in October, but the wet weather hindered the planting of this seed. By February 2023, an additional five more farmers from San Juan Chapter area and five farmers from the Upper Fruitland area were added for a total of fourteen farmers and the total acreage involved went up to 225 acres. Farm planting plans were formulated, 167 yards of compost was spread, and seed was in the ground by the March 1st deadline. FY- 2022-2023 Expenditures \$50,582.86

219 NMDA Healthy Soils –FY 2022-2023 - Two applicants received sponsorship from the SWCD. Each applicant was awarded \$22,000.00 for their projects. The deadline for completion of this FY 2022-23 grant money is May 31, 2023. On March 15, 2023, NMSU, SJC Extension, SJSWCD and NRCS sponsored a Healthy Soils Grant Writing Workshop. Four applicants have received sponsorship from the SWCD for FY 2023-2024 and are awaiting notification of their financial funding status. The applicants will be notified by June 21, 2023. FY 2022-2023 Expenditures \$22,493.84

220 2023 Severance Tax Restoration – Seeding process continues NAPI property.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

107 River of Lost Souls Phase II - Seasonal weed program

299 Water Trust Board 2022 – Russian Olive removal and restoration on private lands

301 BHP Billiton Special Projects - Match for LAWBP implementation projects and bacteria sampling

302 CWMA Invasive Weed Project- Retained funds for invasive weed treatment on oil & gas properties. Knapweed, Halogeton and thistle. Project is idle.

413 Building Capital Outlay 2021 – Final payment to Winters construction was made and the remaining funds were used for the purchase and installation of acoustic baffles to the ceiling and walls in the meeting room and carpet in the primary office area. Grant closed 3/23.

PENDING GRANTS

	<u>PENDING GRANT APPROVAL</u>	<u>Grant Amount</u>
<u>126</u>	<u>RCCP San Juan Phreatophyte Nonnative phreatophyte removal and revegetation on ag lands.</u>	<u>\$52,000.00</u>
<u>221</u>	<u>AG Gold King Mine Grant Process applications from farmers on the Animas and San Juan River that were affect by the spill to plant and bring land back into production. Soil samples needed to approve eligibility. This program will pay farmers \$250/acre to establish alfalfa and \$200.00/acre to establish irrigated pastures. Annual crops such as corn, vegetables, hay</u>	<u>\$642,696.86</u>

	<u>grazer and others will receive \$100/acre once established for two years.</u>	
<u>223</u>	<u>ONRT Ditch Diversion</u> <u>Construct new diversions and replace ditch head gates</u>	<u>\$1.6 Million</u>

Outreach and Educational Events

- Jenna held numerous Rolling River trailer workshops at the local schools and the San Juan County Extension Farm facility.
- NMACD Annual Conference held in Albuquerque on November 7-8th was attended by Steve Wamel and Catherine Thomas-Kemp
- 2023 NM Envirothon In Toas. \$1,000.00 donation to the Navajo Preparatory School to sponsor six students and two sponsors to attend the Envirothon. The students agreed to give a report to the board on the event.
- Sponsorship to NM YOUTH Ranch Management Event. A donation of \$400.00 was approved by SJSWCD Board to enable Cash Carruth Jr. to attend this year's event. The recipient was not able to attend the event in 2022 because of the NM wildfires.
- Carl Chamblee Scholarship applications were sent out to area schools. The SJSWCD Board approved the award of two scholarships worth \$1000.00 each. The SWCD Board has not received any response to the application process.

Summary

- This year was a learning experience for all of us. We plan to improve the day-to-day operations to provide a more efficient SWCD office.
- Work diligently to improve the public awareness of this office's project work and educational programs available.
- Continue to provide the Rolling Rivers presentations to the local schools and events.
- Continue to support the Navajo Prep Envirothon team.
- Participate in local annual events and will draw the public's attention to our goal of providing stewardship education for our most precious resources.

ROLLING RIVERS TRAILER WORKSHOPS



Water Stabilization Projects



100 trees, shrubs planted in Animas Park in Farmington



Second phase of Russian olive eradication project is underway

By David Albright Herald Staff Writer

Tuesday, Mar 14, 2023 6:29 PM Updated Tuesday, Mar. 14, 2023 6:30 PM



Volunteers plant trees March 11 at Animas Park. (Photo courtesy Farmington Museum)

