

Santa Fe-Pojoaque Soil & Water Conservation District

Scope of Work and Accomplishments – FY2025

Mission of the Santa Fe-Pojoaque Soil and Water Conservation District:

To provide leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain and improve natural resources within the District.

1

INFORMATION/EDUCATION



Area education events and work parties

Provided technical assistance to cooperators (landowners, farmers and ranchers) within the District to develop, coordinate and implement soil and water conservation programs, practices and demonstrations.

Partnered with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), New Mexico Department of Agriculture, County Fire and Emergency Departments, Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition, Santa Fe Conservation Trust, Railyard Park Conservancy, Chimayo Cultural Preservation Association and others to provide community education promoting forest thinning, wildfire mitigation, noxious weed control, land restoration, and soil and water conservation in the District.

Sponsored attendance of area youth at educational camps, conferences and events.

Published educational and informational articles in local print and online media.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS



Healthy Soil Program Projects

Served as oversight organization for three successful grant awards for soil and water conservation projects in the District, under the Healthy Soils Program of NMDA. Grantees included the Railyard Park Conservancy, Chimayó Cultural Preservation Association's Plaza del Cerro Community Farm, and the nonprofit Hearts Abloom, with a total of \$36,237 in grant dollars put to work directly in the District. The District applied for and received a direct grant of \$99,685 to assist District landowners in improving soil health, and sponsored nine new FY26 grant applications from District farms, of which four received grant awards totaling \$43,082.

Partnered with East Rio Arriba, Taos, and Upper Chama Soil and Water Conservation Districts on a collaborative noxious weed management grant, bringing \$200,000 into the four-district area. The partnership is actively seeking additional funding to continue this important work.

Participated in monthly meetings of the Santa Cruz Watershed Planning Group, a diverse, multi-agency, community based initiative working to preserve watershed resources and improve the health and safety of the Rio Santa Cruz watershed in Santa Fe and Rio Arriba Counties. District Supervisor Shann Stringer Watershed continues to serve on the Group's Technical Advisory Board.

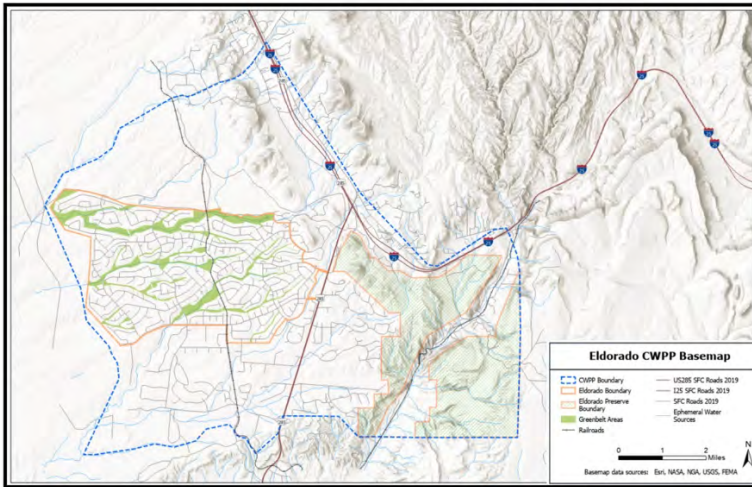


Figure 1. Map of the CWPP planning area.



Defensible-Space Forest Thinning at Wilderness Gate



A Nambe Ranch, now under agricultural conservation easement

Managed a NM Counties grant that allowed the Eldorado Community Improvement Association to develop its first-ever Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Served as fiscal agent and project manager for a Santa Fe County grant received from USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Program. This \$350,000 project is intended to provide flood remediation to Rio en Medio residents whose properties have been damaged and remain at risk due to post-wildfire flooding.

Partnered with Santa Fe Conservation Trust and New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department to initiate an agricultural conservation easement on a 1,400-acre dairy farm and ranch in Nambe, to preserve it as agricultural open space in perpetuity.

Through a \$250,000 NM Forestry Non-Federal Lands grant, conducted defensible-space thinning on 22 acres of private land in the Wildland/Urban Interface of the Sangre de Cristo mountains.

SANTA CRUZ DAM SITE 1 REHABILITATION



Near completion of the design phase for a new, major flood-control structure that will replace the 60-year-old Santa Cruz Dam Site 1 and provide improved protection from flooding to more than 2,022 households in Rio Arriba and Santa Fe Counties living in the inundation zone below the dam. This dam rehabilitation is a top priority for the NM Dam Safety Bureau. The district continues to do maintenance on Site 1 as necessary—including recent replacement of a large outflow culvert displaced by acequia storm flow below the dam, plus restoration and maintenance of the dam access road—and is stepping up its community awareness efforts as the design phase concludes and the construction phase nears. A community informational meeting will be held for area residents in December of 2025.

Successfully secured \$260,000 in State Capital Outlay funding for the first upcoming construction phase, to build access road and staging area. Secured \$7.44 million to from the New Mexico Match Fund to complete the required local match. Continued work to secure the remaining needed funding from the federal government.

There are Disaster Resolutions for both Santa Fe County and Rio Arriba County regarding the potential danger of flood-control dam failure for Santa Cruz Site 1, and the need for funding assistance (see final pages of this report both resolutions).

SANTA CRUZ DAMS – INSPECTIONS, OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE



Operated, maintained, and conducted an annual inspection on seven flood control dams throughout the Santa Cruz River valley. These dams provide essential protection from flooding for residential areas, farmlands, acequias, County and State roads, schools and other property. County Emergency Managers are encouraged to attend the annual inspection.

Finalized Emergency Action Plans for all seven Santa Cruz Dams, so all dams now have current EAPs. Partnering with County emergency managers on regular emergency tabletop and real-time exercises.

Completed construction designs for reclamation of areas seriously compromised by off-highway-vehicle (OHV) traffic on sensitive dam embankments of three dams (Sites 2G, 3A and 4). Secured \$144,594 in funding to complete this critical work and protect Santa Fe and Rio Arriba County residents against a dam breach.

Conducted a structural engineering assessment of a lateral crack on Dam Site 4, resulting in a new monitoring plan now pending approval by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service national office.

Hired a qualified contractor to conduct needed storm-damage remediation at Santa Cruz Dam Site 6, with work to begin in fall of 2025.

ANNUAL PLAN OF OPERATION

SANTA FE-POJOAQUE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL PLAN OF OPERATION

JULY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2025

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>DATE COMPLETED</u>
Participate in local NRCS work group	9/16/24
Review Land Use Plan	Awaiting grant funding
Conduct annual dam inspections, including NM State Engineer and NRCS Reps as appropriate	11/1/24
Develop prioritized list of maintenance needs for dams based on State Engineer's SIFTSWCD inspection Report	1/8/25
Request funding for dam maintenance from Santa Fe and Rio Arriba Counties	SFC - Feb and Jun-25; RAC - May-25
Conduct emergency action plan test for Dams 1, 2G, 3 and 3A	Postponed until EAPs completed
Update ICIP	6/13/25
Reserve County Fair Booth	6/30/25
Submit Mill Levy Ballot Question to County Clerks	6/30/25
Submit annual activity report to satisfy Rio Arriba and Santa Fe County MOAs	RAC - May-25; SFC - Jun-25
Conduct regular District meetings	Monthly
Participate in Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee meetings	Monthly
Participate in Santa Cruz Watershed Planning Group meetings	Monthly
Review Site 1 and Site 6 Rehabilitation Action Items	Monthly
Review Annual Plan	Monthly
Review Financials	Monthly
Review Points Document	Quarterly
Operate and maintain seven flood-control dams	Ongoing
Manage, sponsor and oversee funded Healthy Soils Program projects	Ongoing - 3 grantees in FY25
Conduct public-awareness conservation activities in community (Arbor Day, Soil Stewardship Week, etc.)	Ongoing
Partner on agricultural and other easements as appropriate	Ongoing - 1 project in FY25
Serve as fiscal agent on projects with governmental and other partners as appropriate	Ongoing - 2 projects in FY25
Participate with other organizations, agencies, and landowners to promote the control of invasive species	Ongoing
Participate in state and regional coalitions (NMDOC, NMACD, NMCCD, GRGWA)	Ongoing
Manage defensible-space thinning projects	Ongoing
Facilitate Formation of Santa Cruz Watershed District	Ongoing
Maintain an internet presence for the district	Ongoing
Develop draft project proposals for possible funding	Ongoing - 4 applications in FY25
Sponsor youth activities	Ongoing
Manage defensible-space thinning projects on private lands	Ongoing
Promote Private Property Wildfire Mitigation to Landowners	Ongoing
Obtain Training for any new supervisors (as available)	Ongoing
Develop Draft of Dam O&M Plans/Manuals	Awaiting grant funding
Continue completing Dam EAPs	Completed - awaiting DSB signoff
Develop Public Relations Campaign Re: Santa Cruz Dam Sites	Ongoing
Increase SWCD Educational Outreach	Ongoing
Prepare Maps & Conservation Plans for Conservation Projects	Ongoing
Complete Subdivision Reviews as Requested	Ongoing

Drafted and executed an annual Operating Plan which includes Water Conservation Plans and subdivision reviews for Santa Fe County development projects. The district continuously maps new areas for restoration, weed management, and wildfire mitigation projects.

SANTAFE COUNTY
RESOLUTION NO. 37

**A RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THAT AID, ASSISTANCE AND RELIEF
PROGRAMS AND FEDERAL FUNDING BE PROVIDED TO SUPPORT THE SANTA
FE-POJOAQUE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO REMEDIATE
A FAILING FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURE**

WHEREAS, the Santa Fe-Pojoaque Soil and Water Conservation District, hereinafter referred to as the "Conservation District" sponsors seven (7) earthen flood-control dams in Santa Fe and Rio Arriba Counties; and

WHEREAS, six (6) of the dams lie just north of the Santa Fe County line near State Road 76 and were originally constructed to protect irrigated land from siltation in both Santa Fe and Rio Arriba counties; and

WHEREAS, there has been an exponential increase in residential development below the dams since they were first constructed; and

WHEREAS, the earthen dam sponsored by the Conservation District known as Santa Cruz Site 1 was designed to have a fifty (50) year life span and it has now been over fifty-five (55) years since its construction; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation District begun planning for rehabilitation of the dam approximately ten (10) years ago in anticipation of the end of the dam's useful life; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz Site 1 dam has approximately seventeen (17) percent of its original capacity due to sedimentation from the Arroyo de la Canada Ancha over the past fifty-five (55) years, thus there is a severely limited functional ability of the dam to capture all storm water from a major storm event; and

WHEREAS, releasing water from the earthen emergency spillway could compromise the dam's integrity; and

WHEREAS, the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the federal government is working on an Environmental Assessment, a requirement which must be satisfied prior to the Conservation District submitting an application for funding to initiate the re-construction of the dam; and

WHEREAS, public infrastructure, schools, homes, businesses, residences, farmland and domesticated animals in Santa Fe County may be inundated if a large storm event were to compromise the dam's integrity, including potential loss of life; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation District has been unable to procure any substantial funding to date for use in mitigating the potential danger to downstream communities;

SFC CLERK RECORDED 04/12/2017

Santa Fe County Resolution
No. 37, in support of funding
needs of Santa Fe-Pojoaque
Soil & Water Conservation
District

WHEREAS, in recognition of the potential risk posed by the current condition of the Santa Cruz Site 1, Santa Fe County included an early warning system in the event of a dam failure within its Santa Fe County Hazard Mitigation Plan submitted to FEMA.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners for Santa Fe County to recognize that portions of Santa Fe County are at risk of potential disaster in the event the Santa Cruz Site 1 fails and therefore supports aid, assistance, relief programs and funding that may be available for the Conservation District from the State of New Mexico, from the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service, from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and from any other local, state or federal agency with resources to aid in this effort, especially resources that would fund an emergency alert system designed to alert Santa Fe County residents in the event the dam fails.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 11th DAY OF April, 2017.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF SANTA FE COUNTY

By: [Signature]
Henry P. Roybal, Chair

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Geraldine Salazar, Santa Fe County Clerk



APPROVED AS TO FORM:

[Signature]
Gregory S. Shaffer, Santa Fe County Attorney

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss
I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 12TH Day Of April, 2017 at 09:48:21 AM
and Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1822821
of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Geraldine Salazar
Deputy County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM



SFC CLERK RECORDED 04/12/2017



Rio Arriba
Board of County Commissioners

Resolution No. 2017-033

COMMISSIONERS

Alex M. Naranjo
Chairman
District II

Barney Trujillo
District I

Danny J. Garcia
District III

COUNTY MANAGER
Tomas Campos III

Resolution No. 2017-033

Declaration of Imminent Disaster for a Portion of Rio Arriba County

WHEREAS, the Santa Fe-Pojoaque Soil and Water Conservation District, hereinafter referred to as the "SFPSWCD" or the "Conservation District" sponsors seven (7) flood-control earthen dams, six (6) of which are located in Rio Arriba County; and

WHEREAS, these flood-control dams are located north of State Road 76 and were designed and constructed to protect residents and farmland from flooding in both Rio Arriba and Santa Fe County, from the community of Chimayó to the center of the City of Española; and

WHEREAS, these flood-control dams were designed to have a fifty (50) year life span, and it has been approximately fifty-four (54) years since they were constructed; and

WHEREAS, over the past fifty-four-year period, annual flooding has resulted in silting and debris build-up within all of the flood-control dams, yet the water collection area and flood-control dam commonly known as Santa Cruz Site 1 Dam has experienced an especially high rate of sedimentation and is rapidly approaching the end of its useful life; and

WHEREAS, since the flood-control dams were constructed, there has been a large increase in residential development in the areas below the dams compared to when they were first constructed; and

WHEREAS, the public infrastructure, schools, homes, businesses, residents, farmland and domesticated animals below the spillways and in the direct path of storm water that cannot be held back because of sedimentation are in substantial peril should a large storm take place in the vicinity of Santa Cruz Site 1 Dam, and preliminary inundation studies indicate that the potential impact of a large storm is quite serious; and

WHEREAS, storm events in the past 24 months have already created dangerous flooding conditions, and future flooding is expected to worsen if Santa Cruz Site 1 Dam is not remediated; and

WHEREAS, the County of Rio Arriba experienced sudden and heavy rainfall and flooding that began on or about July 1, 2016, which created dangerous flooding conditions and damage to property and the public aqueduct systems; and

WHEREAS, due to the sudden and unexpected heavy rainfall in the Chimayó area and the mountains east of Chimayó which contributes to Santa Cruz Site 1 Dam's function as a flood control structure, Santa Cruz Site 1 Dam is currently at near capacity and in need of immediate remediation; and

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Rio Arriba County
Resolution No. 2017-033, in
support of funding needs of
Santa Fe-Pojoaque Soil &
Water Conservation District

WHEREAS, all locally available public and private resources and funding available to mitigate and alleviate the affected area are deemed insufficient and inadequate to mitigate the resulting situation that is becoming a serious concern.

NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for Rio Arriba County that by virtue of the authority provided under County ordinance, County enabling statutory provisions and by the New Mexico Civil Emergency Preparedness Act (NMSA 1978, 12-10-01 to 12-10-11), the Board does hereby declare Rio Arriba County to be under a state of imminent disaster as to the conditions existing in the immediate vicinity of Santa Cruz Site 1 Dam for the express purpose of exercising necessary emergency powers, for the authorization and expenditure of available local resources and for requesting aid, assistance, relief programs and funding that may be available from the State of New Mexico, from the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, also known as the "NRCS", from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, also known as "FEMA", and from any other local, state or federal agency with resources that can aid in this effort.

SIGNED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED THIS 26th DAY OF JANUARY, 2017.



ATTEST:

Linda J. Padilla
Linda J. Padilla, County Clerk

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR
RIO ARRIBA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

Alex M. Naranjo
Alex M. Naranjo
Chairman, District II

Barney Trujillo
Barney Trujillo
Commissioner, District I

Danny J. Garcia
Danny J. Garcia
Commissioner, District II