



CUBA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

**Fiscal Year 2021
ANNUAL REPORT**



**PO Box 250
109 County Rd. 11
Cuba, NM 87013
Ph: (575) 289-3950**



CUBA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Board of Supervisors

Julian Sanchez, Chairman
Timothy Johnson, Vice Chairman
John Kreger, Secretary/Treasurer
Margaret Ohler, Supervisor
Ricardo Duran, Supervisor
Frank Chacon, Supervisor
L. D. Schmitz, Supervisor

The District Board meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
Meetings are held at the Cuba SWCD Office, 109 County Road 11, Cuba, NM.

District Staff

Casey Spradley, District Manager
Beverly Rodriguez, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Assisted by:

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

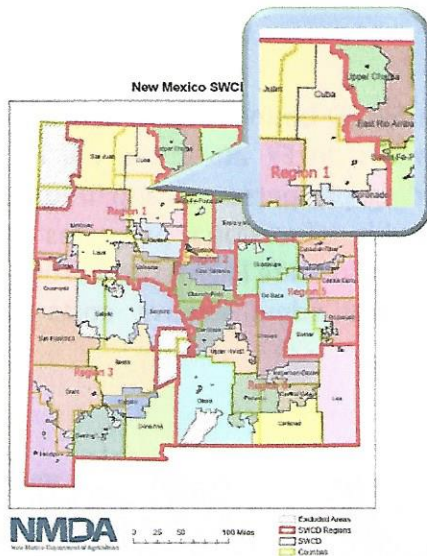
Martin Meairs, District Conservationist Team 2
Jill Mumford, Soil Conservationist
Arturo Rios, Soil Conservation Technician

New Mexico Department of Agriculture

Jim Wanstall, Soil and Water Conservation Specialist



CUBA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



The Cuba Soil and Water Conservation District was formed in 1944 and encompasses land in three counties: Sandoval, Rio Arriba, and Mc Kinley. From North to South the district runs from the Colorado state line to the Zia Pueblo and from Mt. Taylor on the West to the Bandelier National Monument on the East. Land within the district includes Private, State, Federal, and Tribal land with a variety of topographical features and soil types.

MULTI-AGENCY COOPERATION BENEFITS CONSERVATION

The Cuba Soil and Water Conservation District strives to work with numerous federal, state, and tribal agencies to accomplish common goals. These agencies include the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA), United States Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM), USDA Forest Service (USFS), New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), Jemez and Zia Pueblo, Ojo Encino, Torreon, and Counselor Chapters of the Navajo Nation, Jicarilla Apache, NMSU Cooperative Extension Service, Sandoval, Rio Arriba, and McKinley Counties, and various other municipal and private entities as well as private land owners. Our goal is to promote the conservation of natural resources within the district through the wise use, long range, and intentional planning by providing education, financial and technical assistance to landowners and stewards of our resources. By working collaboratively with other entities within our district we hope to multiply our efforts and avoid redundancy.

While FY 2021 provided some challenges due to the Covid 19 pandemic, Cuba SWCD through the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts (NMACD) and BLM was able to rehabilitate 7 earthen dam structures in the upper Rio Puerco water basin helping to reduce erosion, slow the flow of over land water, and provide water to livestock and wildlife in the area. Cuba SWCD also purchased material for over 3 miles of fence to be constructed by BLM crews to divide an allotment in San Luis, providing greater management potential for the permittees. Unfortunately, the Rio Puerco Riparian area removal of Salt Cedar and Russian Olive had to be cancelled due to the contracting crew becoming ill with Covid 19. All in all, \$182,588 were put into conservation through these projects.

Cuba SWCD, along with other SWCDs had been meeting with the US FS Santa Fe and Carson National Forests on identifying projects that the districts and USFS could partner on. While the pandemic slowed the progress due to restricted meetings, Cuba SWCD along with the Cuba Ranger district continue to look for possible projects that could serve as a pilot project.

Cuba SWCD has applied for a Nonfederal Lands Hazardous Fuels Removal grant for FY 2022-2023.



CUBA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

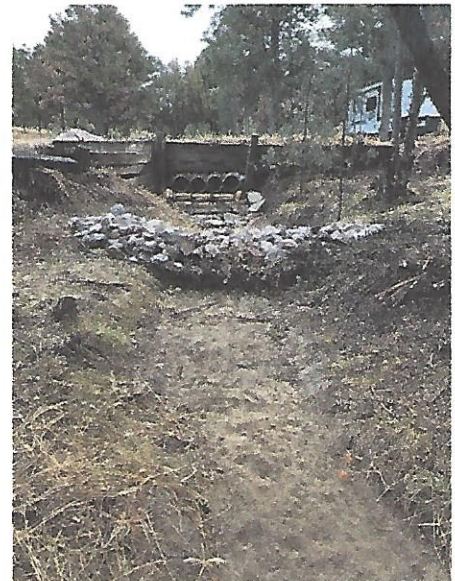
DISTRICT REVENUES

In 1989, a mil levy was passed on private land within the Cuba SWCD boundaries to help fund district operations, Cost share, and other conservation programs. In FY 2021, the mil levy generated \$222,725.29. These funds are used to pay for our building, pay personnel and fund the district cost share and noxious weed programs as well as provide educational programs for schools and communities. Additional funds come from the New Mexico State Legislature through the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, building rent, and administrative costs on administered grants.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

Conservation Cost Share

Cuba SWCD offers financial assistance to landowners/managers or acequias who are interested in implementing a conservation practice on private and public land within the district. During FY 2021, Cuba SWCD received 25 new applications totaling more than 125,000 in project costs. Cuba SWCD will reimburse 50% of the cost of the project with a maximum contribution of \$4,000. Of the 25 applications received, all but 1 was approved and 9 were completed. The project totals for the completed applications is \$90,598.14 with a match from Cuba SWCD of \$36,330.35 or roughly a 2.5 to 1 match. This continues to be one of the most popular programs.



Noxious Weeds

The Cuba SWCD has identified weed control as a major priority and continues to work with landowners and other entities to treat the infestations before it reaches the proportions it has in many states. In FY2019, Cuba Soil and Water Conservation District simplified the noxious weed program. We currently work with district landowners to identify noxious weeds and provide handouts for methods of control and treatment recommendations. The district has 2 pull behind sprayers, 5 truck/atv sprayers, 4 backpack sprayers, and 2 handheld sprayers that landowners can use for the application of chemical herbicides for noxious weed control. District personnel will also provide a general use pesticide free of charge for the first-year treatment along with education and training on proper equipment usage, timing of application, calibration, and use of personal protective equipment. From April – June of this year, the district assisted 9 landowners in treating more than 70 acres of Russian Knapweed and Bull, Musk, and Canadian Thistle.



CUBA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA)

The district continues to be active in getting the CWMA reestablished. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has limited our ability to meet during the past fiscal year.

EDUCATION

Educational opportunities were extremely limited during FY 2021 due to restrictions on meetings. However, as the pandemic subsided this spring Cuba SWCD has applied for grants to get its outdoor interactive classroom up and running. The first grant was denied due to limited funding. The second grant the SWCC Water Quality Grants was accepted. Cuba SWCD plans to install a seasonal high tunnel, raised beds, water catchment system, and ADA compliant paths. Our hope is to use the outdoor classroom to teach awareness about cover crops, soil health, pollinators, compost, and efficient water usage. Everyone can participate in conservation in some way.

