

Supporting White Sands Missile Range

How the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce turns community support into advocacy, partnership and action

Legislative Military & Veterans Affairs Committee

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Who We Are

Serving area businesses since 1902 with advocacy, connections, leadership development and business-growth programs.

Our role: strengthen the regional economy and represent business with local, state and federal government.

Military support sits inside our Public Policy work because WSMR is both a national-security asset and a foundational regional industry.



1902

Chamber service to the region began

3 levels

Local • State • Federal advocacy

1 voice

Business + community support

What Chamber Support Looks Like for our Military and Veterans

LISTEN

Monthly Military Affairs Committee

Maintain direct relationships, surface needs, coordinate regional support.

ADVOCATE

Annual Washington, D.C. trip

Carry WSMR priorities to federal leaders and reinforce community support.

CELEBRATE

Thanks Team WSMR

Bring Las Cruces businesses onto the installation to thank service members, civilians, contractors and families.

**2026 Thursday
September 17th**

AMPLIFY

Voice for the installation

Promote WSMR events, mission awareness and military-family connection across Doña Ana County.

Military Affairs Committee: Roundtable of sharing and support

Monthly

Rotate meeting locations

20+

Agencies represented

Military organization updates –White Sands Missile Range, Holloman Airforce Base, Navy, NM Military Base Commission.

Legislative updates - Senator Martin Heinrich's office, Senator Ben Ray Lujan's Office and Congressman Gabe Vasquez's Office.

Organizational updates – Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce, Spaceport America, Virgin Galactic, Dona Ana Community College, NMSU PSL and additional agencies.



Advocacy: Greater Las Cruces Chamber goes to Washington D.C.

30+ years

Chamber Support

15-20

attendees annually



Be Heard - Make sure Southern New Mexico has a seat at the table when federal decisions are made.

Support WSMR - Advocate for the funding, infrastructure, modernization and quality-of-life investments needed to protect and grow the mission.

Build Relationships- Create direct connections with congressional and federal leaders so they understand that Southern New Mexico stands behind White Sands Missile Range.



Thanks Team WSMR: Community Support Made Visible

20+ years

chamber tradition

500+

attendees each year

50+

business supporters

A free, family-friendly appreciation event for WSMR service members, civilian employees, contractors and families –**2026 is our 24th year!**

Las Cruces restaurants, businesses, Chamber Ambassadors and volunteers provide food, entertainment, activities and giveaways.

The event does more than say “thank you” — it strengthens the relationship between the installation and the community that surrounds it.



AMPLIFY: Being a Voice for White Sands Missile Range

2000+

Community Distribution

6K+

Social media followers

Reach the Community — Use our weekly Chamber Compass, reaching more than 2,000 businesses and community members, to share WSMR news, events, accomplishments, opportunities and community needs.

Connect Business & WSMR — Help local businesses better understand the installation, its mission, workforce and opportunities to support our military community.

Promote WSMR Events & Initiatives — Use Chamber communications, meetings, social media and member networks to increase awareness and participation.

Be a Consistent Advocate — When decisions affecting WSMR arise locally, in Santa Fe or in Washington, the Chamber helps ensure the business community's voice is heard.



Legislative Opportunity: Deliver a Modern White Sands Missile Range School

1951

original construction

295

students population 2026

#81

DoD PMSI
priority list

\$93M+

demo of old school and
new construction estimate

The existing K-8 campus has documented roof, flooding, asbestos-material and technology-infrastructure challenges.

US Department of Education National Blue Ribbon School - 2024

Committee ask: protect momentum, coordinate state/federal partners, and support any state match, infrastructure or enabling action needed to move the replacement forward.



What We Ask of This Committee

1

Champion White Sands School

Help align state and federal partners so a modern K–8 campus moves from planning to delivery.

2

Protect military-family quality of life

Consider education, healthcare access, workforce, spouse employment and infrastructure as readiness issues.

3

Keep WSMR competitive

Support infrastructure and policy that enable testing, modernization and mission growth.

4

Use the Chamber as a partner

We can convene employers, local leaders and WSMR stakeholders and bring a unified regional voice.

Thank You

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“A strong White Sands Missile Range is a strong Southern New Mexico.”

