

**2025 APPROVED
WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE
for the
WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

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Work Plan

The Water and Natural Resources Committee was created by the New Mexico Legislative Council on April 28, 2025. The committee will focus on the following topics, as scheduling permits:

A. topics concerning **water**, including:

1. the Surface Water Quality Permitting Program (Senate Bill (SB) 21) (2025) and the impact of industry on water quality;
2. Water Data Act and Aquifer Mapping Program: updates, integration, access and gaps in data and funding;

3. the status of the Strategic Water Reserve and fund changes (SB 37) (2025);
4. a Water Security Planning Act report and regional water planning, including:
 - a. implementation, rulemaking status and funding needs;
 - b. water security in times of water scarcity and drought and Office of the State Engineer well permitting in water-scarce regions;
 - c. sequencing regional planning efforts and infrastructure needs; and
 - d. updates from the Water Security Tribal Advisory Council;
5. implementation of the Strategic Water Supply Program pursuant to House Bill (HB) 137 (2025) and desalination as a tool for augmentation of state water resources;
6. an update on the governor's 50-year water plan;
7. water rights administration: metering, monitoring, enforcement, shortage-sharing and solutions to prevent water theft, modernize water management and support key industries;
8. increasing water use penalties, as proposed by SB 210 (2025) and HB 348 (2025);
9. water supply strategies and conservation alternatives, including an update on the Roosevelt Soil and Water Conservation District Rainfall Enhancement Program;
10. acequia infrastructure challenges and opportunities, including:
 - a. a report on the outcome of HB 330 (2025), which would have enacted the Land Grant-Merced and Acequia Infrastructure Act;
 - b. an update on the Acequia and Community Ditch Infrastructure Fund;
 - c. the proposed creation of the Acequia Bureau;
 - d. Acequia and Community Ditch Education Program changes; and
 - e. disaster recovery programs, acequia restoration and funding needs;
11. Indian water rights settlements updates;
12. *Texas v. New Mexico* settlement updates, lower Rio Grande water challenges and Rio Grande Compact status;

13. New Mexico Unit Fund: distributions, proposed uses and funding;
14. Colorado River basin and Colorado River Compact updates;
15. increased water demand from data centers and other economic development projects; and
16. per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances contamination of aquifers and water sources;

B. topics concerning **energy**, including:

1. electric utility shutdowns;
2. transmission projects, renewable siting and permitting, tax changes and incentives and grid development to prevent local blackouts and increase export capability;
3. oil and gas price and production declines;
4. acquisition of utilities, including Blackstone Infrastructure's acquisition of Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) and Bernhard Capital Partners' acquisition of New Mexico Gas Company;
5. economic and regulatory impacts of the Clean Fuel Standard;
6. a report on the renewable energy production tax credit;
7. a report on the status of community energy efficiency development projects;
8. a report on violations, penalties and lawsuits regarding the Oil and Gas Act, including:
 - a. increasing fees and penalties, as proposed by HB 259 (2025);
 - b. oil and gas bonding, enforcement and reform; and
 - c. proposed funding changes to the Oil Conservation Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD);
9. a report on the San Juan Generating Station facility and mine remediation and restoration study, pursuant to HB 142 (2023);
10. energy and policy 101: interagency work on energy issues and an overview of energy demand and source alternatives in the state;

11. energy efficiency building codes, workforce opportunities and electric vehicle (EV) charger buildout and requirements for new construction;
12. the Solar For All program, community solar and sovereign energy;
13. the Energy Transition Act — Economic Development Department fund projects update;
14. air quality monitoring, state and federal updates on methane and ozone rules and a report on the emissions around oil and gas production sites and creating children's health protection zones, as proposed by HB 35 (2025);
15. an overview of critical mineral mining activity and exploration in the state and wind turbine, copper and critical mineral recycling opportunities;
16. an overview of the oil and gas royalty rate changes, pursuant to SB 23 (2025);
17. Oil and Gas Reclamation Fund changes, as proposed by HB 403 (2025), and a progress report on the plugging of abandoned wells;
18. the creation of a state energy advisory board, as proposed by House Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee Substitute for HB 394 (2025), to advance clean energy development in the state; and
19. nuclear energy development, the potential for a domestic recycling program for spent nuclear fuel and impacts of tritium venting, uranium and other mining and processing on environmental and public health;

C. topics concerning **natural resources, conservation and climate**, including:

1. an update on the reforestation centers;
2. wildfire issues and mitigation strategies, including:
 - a. insurance cancellations in high-risk areas and an update on the FAIR Plan;
 - b. post-fire flooding concerns and restoration efforts;
 - c. creating buffers between wildland-urban interfaces, pursuant to HB 175 (2025);
 - d. changes in federal wildfire response, funding and the United States Forest Service program;

- e. costs of climate change and forest fires on New Mexico's economy and public health;
 - f. risk to utilities and costs to ratepayers;
 - g. utilizing the Forestry Division of the EMNRD's mapping tool to assess priority areas, increase forest management and reduce fire risk; and
 - h. a Wildfire Study Group Report pursuant to Senate Memorial (SM) 2 (2025);
3. state natural resource agencies federal funding gaps, federal administrations' revisions to and elimination of certain federal environmental protections and changes to the federal Environmental Protection Agency;
 4. a Rio Grande Trail update, including designation and limiting liability within special districts, as proposed by HB 29 (2025);
 5. a forest restoration and economic development study report pursuant to Senate Joint Memorial 1 (2025) and implementation of the Timber Grading Act (HB 553) (2025);
 6. Natural Heritage Conservation Act and Land Conservation Incentives Act: accomplishments, updates and proposed reforms;
 7. state parks updates and funding needs;
 8. heat response, mitigation and policy changes: current trends in extreme heat, health impacts and worker protections, as proposed by the Department of Environment's proposed heat illness and injury prevention rule;
 9. updates on the Environmental Database and interagency coordination;
 10. Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund proposed changes;
 11. clean car and trucks rules update: public health impacts of transportation and the economic impacts of EV mandates;
 12. EV battery recycling;
 13. state and federal EV and charger rebates, customer incentives and cost savings from purchasing an EV;
 14. electric school buses;

15. the role of states in action to mitigate climate change and the need for greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets;
16. green technologies and infrastructure;
17. status of federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 projects and funding; and
18. waste management, recycling and implementation of the state's circular economy and rulemaking, pursuant to HB 291 (2025); and

D. topics concerning agriculture, land management and animals, including:

1. federal land sales;
2. changes to the Department of Game and Fish, the State Game Commission and wildlife management pursuant to SB 5 (2025);
3. a New Mexico Agricultural Workforce Development Program Act update;
4. a New Mexico meat and dairy in schools work group report pursuant to SM 19 (2025);
5. impacts of extreme weather on rural and agricultural communities;
6. food and farm initiatives and a New Mexico Grown Programs update, including:
 - a. 2025 legislative outcomes and state and federal funding concerns;
 - b. the New Mexico Food Charter and its annual "report card" for 2023-2024; and
 - c. market opportunities and sustainable systems for New Mexico farmers, ranchers and food producers to support food security and local economies; and
7. management of wild and free-roaming horses, as proposed by HB 284 (2025).

**Water and Natural Resources Committee
2025 Approved Meeting Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
June 3	Santa Fe
July 1-2	Las Vegas
August 18-20	Las Cruces and Alamogordo
September 11-12	Taos
October 29-30	Artesia
November 17-18	Santa Fe