2026 PROPOSED
WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE
for the
WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members

Rep. Matthew McQueen, Chair
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics, Vice Chair
Rep. Micaela Lara Cadena
Sen. Pete Campos
Rep. Kathleen Cates
Sen. Joseph Cervantes
Sen. Candy Spence Ezzell
Rep. Miguel P. García
Rep. Jonathan A. Henry
Rep. Joseph Franklin Hernandez
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Rep. Marian Matthews
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley
Rep. Kristina Ortez
Rep. Angelica Rubio
Rep. Debra M. Sariñana
Sen. Larry R. Scott
Rep. Elaine Sena Cortez
Sen. Jeff Steinborn
Sen. James G. Townsend
Rep. Martin R. Zamora

Advisory Members

Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Craig W. Brandt
Sen. Angel M. Charley
Rep. Jack Chatfield
Rep. Nicole Chavez
Rep. Eleanor Chávez
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary
Rep. Martha Garcia
Rep. Charlotte Little
Sen. Linda M. López
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Sen. Antonio Maestas
Rep. Javier Martínez
Rep. Angelita Mejia
Rep. Tanya Mirabal Moya
Rep. Rod Montoya
Rep. Mark B. Murphy
Rep. Randall T. Pettigrew
Rep. Andrea Romero
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez
Rep. Nathan P. Small
Sen. Mimi Stewart
Sen. Anthony L. Thornton
Rep. Harlan Vincent
Sen. Peter Wirth
Sen. Pat Woods

Proposed Work Plan

The Water and Natural Resources Committee was created by the New Mexico Legislative Council on April 17, 2026. The committee will focus on the following topics, as scheduling permits:

A. **water**, including:

1. Water Data Act and aquifer mapping program updates, modernization of water management and the proposed creation of a department of water resources;
2. the status of the Strategic Water Reserve, including results, future potential and an update on the Jicarilla Apache Nation water sharing agreement;
3. the New Mexico Unit Fund, including distributions, proposed uses and funding;

4. Water Security Planning Act and regional water planning updates;
5. produced water rulemaking process, status and information gaps;
6. 50-Year Water Action Plan updates, including conservation strategies, development of new water supplies and watershed protection;
7. water education initiatives;
8. Surface Water Quality Permitting Program updates and the health of public water systems;
9. freshwater resources, including largest users, conservation strategies and metering;
10. water rights, including a transition from "use it or lose it" and deep water rights;
11. strategic water supply updates, including alternative water supply options, surface and ground water contamination concerns and acequia and watershed protections regarding produced and brackish water discharge;
12. *Texas v. New Mexico* settlement updates, the status of the Rio Grande Compact and middle Rio Grande management and metering changes;
13. Indian water rights settlements updates;
14. Colorado River basin and Colorado River Compact updates, including conservation initiatives;
15. water demand from data centers, mining and other economic development projects;
16. per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination of aquifers and water systems;
17. ground water management;
18. a New Mexico dams status report and infrastructure needs, including an update on the El Vado Dam repair;
19. water regeneration of land in the state;
20. weather modification and cloud seeding updates;
21. watershed protection zones;
22. nature-based solutions for water, watersheds and wetland restoration;
23. human-made infrastructure failures affecting water delivery;
24. the proposed Land Grant-Merced and Acequia Infrastructure Fund;
25. the water delivery crisis within the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District; and
26. San Juan-Chama Project source watershed protections;

B. **energy**, including:

1. the status of community energy efficiency development projects, grid modernization and the Community Benefit Fund;
2. a report on the renewable energy production tax credit;
3. battery energy storage systems, including siting, safety and state oversight;
4. a report on violations, penalties and lawsuits regarding the Oil and Gas Act;
5. private equity versus public ownership of utilities, Blackstone Infrastructure's proposed acquisition of Public Service Company of New Mexico and Bernhard Capital Partners' proposed acquisition of New Mexico Gas Company;
6. potential economic impacts of the Clean Fuel Standard;
7. the impact on electric generation of executive orders regarding zero emissions on

electric generation;

8. nuclear energy development, recycling and health and environmental impacts;
9. transmission and renewable energy siting and permitting;
10. a San Juan Generating Station facility and mine remediation and restoration progress report;
11. geothermal issues, including research and development progress, permitting and rulemaking, pore space ownership, funding needs and grant opportunities;
12. data centers, including national regulatory trends, energy use and large load management;
13. the role of the New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority and updates;
14. virtual power plants and demand response programs;
15. volatility of the oil and gas market and the impact on energy security and rates;
16. cost and cost savings of wind and solar;
17. solar industry updates, including:
    a. community solar;
    b. solar incentives, impacts of federal cuts and tariffs and expansion of state tax credits;
    c. residential permitting and utility net metering; and
    d. new technologies and plug-in and balcony solar alternatives;
18. electric vehicle charging infrastructure progress and state tax credits;
19. methane and ozone rules, including status and reporting gaps;
20. the Public Regulation Commission, including appointment versus election structure;
21. an orphan well plugging update and the implementation of Oil and Gas Implementation Act changes;
22. emissions standards and the Certified Natural Gas Program;
23. net-zero buildings and schools through guaranteed energy savings performance contracts; and
24. a final report from the Energy Affordability Council;

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

1. a Rio Grande Trail update;
2. Forestry Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department fire updates and funding needs and wildfire impacts, including fire insurance, mitigation and restoration efforts, air and water pollution, costs of forest fires and climate change;
3. federal environmental protections, including rollbacks and program and funding cuts;
4. climate change impacts on public and environmental health, including extreme heat;
5. State Supplemental Land and Water Conservation Fund updates;
6. Natural Heritage Conservation Act and Land Conservation Incentives Act updates;
7. state parks updates and funding needs, the impact of fee changes on revenues and the potential establishment of Slot Canyon Riverlands State Park;

8. a proposed resilience fund to address extreme weather events;
9. Environmental Database updates and air and water quality monitoring;
10. Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund updates;
11. a clean car and trucks rules update, electric school buses and public health impacts of transportation;
12. environmental rights and the proposed New Mexico Green Amendment;
13. data centers, including emissions and health impacts;
14. public land protections from industry development and infrastructure expansion and the role of expert, transparent, fact-based rulemaking in protecting air, land and water;
15. nonfunctional turf restrictions;
16. an *Atencio v. State of New Mexico* lawsuit update;
17. critical and rare earth element minerals research in New Mexico, global trends and recycling opportunities;
18. uranium and neglected contaminated site cleanups;
19. an update on PFAS and other emerging contaminants;
20. the Outdoor Equity Fund, including funding needs and community impacts;
21. air quality monitoring in and around public schools; and
22. conservation easements; and

D. **agriculture, land management and animals**, including:

1. a New Mexico Agricultural Workforce Development Program Act update, cost barriers for future generations and impacts of agriculture in New Mexico;
2. updates on the implementation of Senate Bill 5 (2025);
3. impacts of extreme weather, drought and water scarcity on agriculture;
4. food and farm initiatives and a New Mexico Grown programs update, including:
   a. the New Mexico Food Charter and its annual "report card" for 2024-2025;
   b. market opportunities and challenges for farmers, ranchers and producers; and
   c. the governor's food initiative;
5. data centers, including land use and wildlife impacts;
6. Bosque management, urban-wildland interfaces and impacts of invasive species;
7. federal land sales;
8. free-roaming horse herd management and funding for equine shelters and rehabilitation;
9. an update on the elk private lands use system; and
10. an expansion of municipal and school composting programs.

Water and Natural Resources Committee
2026 Proposed Meeting Schedule

Date	Location
May 21	Santa Fe
July 13-14	TBD
August 6-7	TBD
August 31-September 1	TBD
September 28-29	TBD
October 26-27	Santa Fe