

**2022 PROPOSED  
WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE  
for the  
LAND GRANT COMMITTEE**

**Members**

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Rep. Miguel P. Garcia  
Rep. Matthew McQueen  
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Sen. Linda M. Lopez  
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto  
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics

**Work Plan**

The Land Grant Committee was created by the New Mexico Legislative Council on April 26, 2022. As time permits, the committee proposes to examine the following topics:

**A. Strengthening Governance Capacity**

1. the Community Governance Attorney program, continuing legal education and other programs being developed at the University of New Mexico School of Law for land grants-mercedes and acequia associations, including an examination of client governance needs versus potential curriculum development;
2. a review of the processes being developed to implement distributions from the Land Grant-Merced Assistance Fund enacted during the 2022 legislative session, including any training sessions or other programs by the Land Grant Council to allow land grants-mercedes to receive those funds;
3. the management consultation and intervention caseload for acequias experienced by the New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA), particularly with regard to caseload increases due to wildfire recovery or response efforts;
4. status reports from the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty Division of the Office of the Attorney General; and
5. the basis for designation as a land grant-merced pursuant to Chapter 49, Article 1 NMSA 1978 or as a land grant corporation pursuant to Chapter 49, Article 2 NMSA 1978 and an analysis of how a land grant-merced designation pursuant to one article may be changed to a

designation pursuant to the other article, including a reexamination of the partitioned land bill that passed the legislature in 2017, 2019 and 2021 but was not enacted;

**B. Coordination and Leveraging of Federal, State and Nongovernmental Assistance Funding**

1. the current, proposed or developing federal programs for project and programmatic assistance that land grants-mercedes or acequias could receive, particularly as those programs relate to infrastructure development or wildfire recovery; and

2. resources, such as the council of governments, that may assist in grant writing, project planning or development of project finance controls;

**C. Fire and Natural Resource Issues**

1. natural resource protection options for land grants-mercedes;

2. continued examination of the land divisions at the Cristobal de la Serna Land Grant-Merced and efforts to rationalize those divisions into useful properties;

3. potential models for collaborative federal, state and land grant-merced programs for fire planning, risk mitigation and recovery programs;

4. the feasibility of duplicating the Dona Ana waste management model to prevent illegal dumping in land grant-merced and acequia communities;

5. updates on land use access and coordination of activities and issues in regard to national forest lands, including the potential for wood clearing for use by land grants-mercedes;

6. updates from the federal Bureau of Land Management regarding cultural and traditional uses of public lands, including the potential for wood clearing for use by land grants-mercedes; and

7. the potential and requirements for land grant-merced participation in the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program, known as EQIP, the Conservation Funding for Rural Communities program and other United States Department of Agriculture programs;

**D. Economic and Youth Development**

1. continued monitoring of the development plans for the Piedra Lumbre Visitor Center near Abiquiu;

2. presentations on building or rebuilding farm-based economies at land grants-mercedes and acequias, including:
  - a) New Mexico State University's Center of Excellence in Sustainable Food and Agricultural Systems' CREATE BRIDGES initiative, which fosters entrepreneurial development within rural communities; and
  - b) the current NMAA classroom and apprenticeship programs;
3. status updates on business development projects at various land grants-mercedes;
4. an examination of the potential for partnerships between land grants-mercedes and the Cultural Affairs Department or the Tourism Department to develop land grants-mercedes as tourism destination locations;
5. reports regarding programs to develop the next generation of leaders for land grant-merced and acequia communities, including the higher education curriculum development being done at New Mexico Highlands University and the youth training programs instituted the Land Grant Council and the NMAA;
6. the potential for land grants-mercedes to partner with state or county agencies or educational institutions to provide youth activities, drug prevention and library and other community enrichment programs;
7. reports from land grants-mercedes and the Department of Information Technology about the need for broadband services and state programs to help expand broadband networks to rural areas, including land grants-mercedes; and
8. an evaluation of whether the Property Tax Code could include an accommodation for land grant-merced common lands, similar to the agricultural lands exemption; and

**E. Reports from Individual Land Grants-Mercedes and Associated Entities**

1. reports from various land grants-mercedes;
2. a review of the Land Grant Council's programs and updates from the New Mexico Land Grant Consejo and the University of New Mexico Land Grant Studies Program; and
3. reports from the Acequia Commission and the NMAA.

**Land Grant Committee  
2022 Proposed Meeting Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
June 13	Santa Fe
August 18-19	Rio Hondo Arriba/Taos
September 22-23	Chilili
October 20-21	Abiquiu*
November 22	Santa Fe

\*Meetings outside the State Capitol after September 30 require New Mexico Legislative Council approval.