

Revised: October 2, 2023

**TENTATIVE AGENDA  
for the  
FOURTH MEETING  
of the  
WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**October 3-5, 2023  
Corbett Center Student Union, West Ballroom  
New Mexico State University  
1600 International Mall  
Las Cruces**

**Tuesday, October 3**

- 9:00 a.m.           **Call to Order and Introductions**  
—Senator Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics, Chair, Water and Natural Resources  
Committee (WNRC)  
—Representative Matthew McQueen, Vice Chair, WNRC
- 9:15 a.m.           (1)   **Welcome and Updates from New Mexico State University (NMSU)**  
—Jay Gogue, Ph.D., President, NMSU
- 10:00 a.m.           (2)   **Implementing the Consent Decree for the *Texas v. New Mexico***  
**Settlement**  
—Nathaniel "Nat" Chakeres, General Counsel, Office of the State Engineer  
—John Longworth, Senior Projects Manager, Office of the State Engineer  
—Zachary Ogaz, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney  
General  
—Samantha Barncastle, General Counsel, Elephant Butte Irrigation District  
(EBID)
- 11:00 a.m.           (3)   **Southern New Mexico Water Concerns and Efforts to Meet Rio Grande**  
**Compact Compliance**  
—Mike Hamman, P.E., State Engineer, Office of the State Engineer  
—Hannah Riseley-White, Director, Interstate Stream Commission  
—Jason Casuga, Chief Engineer and Chief Executive Officer, Middle Rio  
Grande Conservancy District  
—Stuart Paisano, Governor, Pueblo of Sandia (invited)  
—Gary Esslinger, Manager, EBID  
—Jennie Bierner-Shepperd, Chair, San Miguel Community Ditch

- 12:15 p.m.      **Working Lunch**
- (4)      **[Water Data Act Implementation Update and Next Steps](#)**  
—Stacy Timmons, Associate Director, Hydrogeology, Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology  
—John Rhoderick, Director, Water Protection Division, Department of Environment (NMED)  
—Kevin Myers, Senior Reclamation Specialist, Mining Act Reclamation Program, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)  
—Hannah Riseley-White, Director, Interstate Stream Commission
- 1:45 p.m.      **Public Comment**
- 2:00 p.m.      (5)      **[White Sands Test Facility Plume Update](#)**  
—Kate Girard, Executive Director, Office of Natural Resources Trustee  
—Rick Shean, Director, Resource Protection Division, NMED  
—Gill Sorg, Supervisor, Dona Ana Soil and Water Conservation District
- 3:00 p.m.      (6)      **[2023 Farm Bill and Updates on State and Federal Agriculture Policy](#)**  
—Jeff M. Witte, Director, New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA)  
—Belinda Garland, Executive Director, New Mexico Livestock Board  
—Rebecca Dow, Executive Assistant, New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts  
—Allen Malone, Ed.D., Associate Director, Cooperative Extension Service, NMSU  
—Pam Roy, Coordinator, New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council, and Executive Director, Farm to Table
- 4:15 p.m.      (7)      **[New Mexico Agriculture: Growers, Consumers and the New Mexico Food, Farm, and Hunger Initiative](#)**  
—Jeff M. Witte, Director, NMDA  
—Kendal Chavez, Food and Hunger Advisor, Public Education Department  
—Lorenzo Alba, Jr., Executive Director, Casa de Peregrinos Food Pantry  
—Travis Day, Executive Director, New Mexico Chile Association  
—Chris Goblet, Executive Director, New Mexico Wine
- 5:15 p.m.      **Recess for Tour of Rio Grande Winery**

**Wednesday, October 4**

- 9:00 a.m.      (8)      **[Companion Animal Rescue, Population Management and Veterinary Training Opportunities](#)**  
—Jessica Johnson Shelton, Chief Government Affairs Officer, Animal Protection Voters

- Belinda Garland, Executive Director, New Mexico Livestock Board
- William J. Duran, Executive Director, Board of Veterinary Medicine
- Heather Romero, Financial Aid Manager, Higher Education Department

10:00 a.m. (9) **Public Regulation Commission (PRC): Legislative Priorities, Budget and Staffing Update**

- Cholla Khoury, Chief of Staff, PRC
- Pat O'Connell, Commissioner and Chair, PRC
- Miranda Mascareñas, Chief Financial Officer, PRC

11:00 a.m. (10) **Solar for All, Low-Income Solar Funding and the Community Solar Act**

- Jeremy Lewis, Deputy Director, Energy Conservation and Management Division, EMNRD
- Christopher Worley, Director, Public Policy, Sunrun
- Cholla Khoury, Chief of Staff, PRC
- Kevin Cray, Mountain West Senior Director, Coalition for Community Solar Access
- Christian Casillas, Director, Policy Development and Research, Coalition of Sustainable Communities

12:15 p.m. **Lunch**

1:15 p.m. (11) **Innovations for Future Energy Reliability: Grid Modernization Plans, Utility-Scale Storage and Distributed Energy Resources**

- Pat O'Connell, Commissioner and Chair, PRC
- Jim DesJardins, Executive Director, Renewable Energy Industries Association of New Mexico
- Seth Nelson, Director, Development, GridLiance, NextEra Energy Transmission, LLC
- Reginald Rudolph, Chief Energy Innovations Officer, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.
- Abbas Akhil, Principal, Renewable Energy Ventures, LLC

2:30 p.m. (12) **Meeting Energy Transition Act Standards: Renewable Energy Replacement Options and Integrated Resource Plans**

- Craig Johnson, Director, Renewable Energy Office, State Land Office (SLO)
- Laura Sanchez, Executive Director, Government and Public Affairs, Public Service Company of New Mexico
- Zoë Lees, Regional Vice President, Xcel Energy
- Alex DeGolia, Director, State Legislative and Regulatory Affairs, U.S. Region, Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)

- 3:45 p.m. (13) [Community Energy Efficiency Development Block Grant Program and Low-Income Utility Rates](#)  
—Rebecca "Puck" Stair, Director, Energy Conservation and Management Division, EMNRD  
—Tammy Fiebelkorn, New Mexico Representative, Southwest Energy Efficiency Project  
—Gabe Pacyniak, Professor of Law, University of New Mexico (UNM) School of Law; Faculty Supervisor, Natural Resources and Environmental Law Clinic, UNM School of Law  
—Dawn Z. Hommer, Chief Executive Officer, Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico

4:45 p.m. **Public Comment**

5:00 p.m. **Recess**

#### **Thursday, October 5**

- 9:00 a.m. (14) [Oil and Gas Act Enforcement: Setbacks, Orphaned Wells and Methane Rules](#)  
—Dylan Fuge, Director, Oil Conservation Division, EMNRD  
—Sunalei Stewart, Deputy Commissioner of Operations, SLO  
—Tannis Fox, Senior Attorney, Western Environmental Law Center  
—John Smitherman, Senior Advisor, New Mexico Oil and Gas Association

- 10:15 a.m. (15) [Water Augmentation Possibilities for the West](#)  
—John Rhoderick, Director, Water Protection Division, NMED  
—Greg Gates, P.E., Water Resources Practice Lead, Hazen and Sawyer  
—Pei Xu, Ph.D., Department of Civil Engineering, NMSU  
—Zacariah Hildenbrand, Ph.D., Chief Scientific Officer, Infinity Water Solutions  
—Bruce Thomson, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Department of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering, UNM  
—Sam Fernald, Ph.D., Professor, Watershed Management, Department of Animal and Range Sciences; Director, New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute, NMSU

- 11:45 a.m. (16) [Statewide Soil Health and Carbon Management Strategies](#)  
—Leslie Edgar, Ph.D., Associate Dean and Director, Agricultural Experiment Station, NMSU  
—Rajan Ghimire, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Plant and Environmental Sciences Department; Faculty, Clovis Agricultural Science Center, NMSU  
—John Idowu, Ph.D., Professor, Extension Plant Sciences Department; Research Director, Leyendecker Plant Science Research Center, NMSU

12:45 p.m. **Public Comment**

1:00 p.m. **Adjourn**