

# NM Water Policy & Infrastructure Task Force

## Water Ambassador Priorities for 2023-2025

Water and Natural Resources Committee Hearing – July 11, 2023

Patrick McCarthy – Water Policy Officer, Thornburg Foundation



## Task Force Members / Water Ambassadors

Mike Hamman – Chair, Office of the State Engineer  
Hannah Riseley-White – Interstate Stream Commission  
Rebecca Roose – Environment Department  
Marquita Russel – New Mexico Finance Authority  
Elizabeth Anderson – Alb.-Bernalillo Co. Water Utility Authority  
Aron Balok – Pecos Valley Artesian Conservancy District  
Carleton Bowekaty – Zuni Pueblo  
Jennifer Bradfute – Marathon Oil Company  
Aaron Chavez – San Juan Water Commission  
Dr. Ladona Clayton – Ogallala Land and Water Conservancy  
Bill Conner – NM Rural Water Users Association  
Dr. Nelia Dunbar – NM Technical Institute  
Joy Esparsen – NM Association of Counties  
A.J. Forte – NM Municipal League  
Paula Garcia – NM Acequia Association  
Norm Gaume – Middle Rio Grande Water Advocates  
Kyle Harwood – Egolf Ferlic Martinez Harwood  
Dr. Phil King – NM State University (ret.), private consultant  
Todd Leahy – NM Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Dept.  
Priscilla Lucero – Southwest NM Council of Governments  
Patrick McCarthy – Thornburg Foundation  
Debbie Romero – NM Dept. of Finance and Administration  
Michael Sloane – NM Dept. of Game and Fish  
Ryan Swazo-Hinds – Pueblo of Tesuque  
Paul Tashjian – Audubon Southwest  
Lynn Trujillo (Laurie Weahkee, proxy) – NM Indian Affairs Department  
Daryl Vigil – Jicarilla Apache Nation  
Ralph Vigil – NM Acequia Commission  
Jeff Witte (Max Henkels, proxy) – NM Dept. of Agriculture

## Legislative Advisors

Rep. Gail Armstrong  
Rep. Jack Chatfield  
Rep. Susan Herrera  
Rep. Tara Luján  
Rep. Nathan Small  
Sen. Ron Griggs  
Sen. Elizabeth Stefanics  
Sen. Peter Wirth  
Sen. Pat Woods



# Water Can't Wait

“Driven by drought and climate change, New Mexico’s water crisis has laid bare water policies and processes that users, practitioners, and lawmakers agree are not meeting the 21st century needs of New Mexicans under the stress of drought, aging infrastructure, and climate change.”

- *NM Water Policy & Infrastructure Task Force Charter*

“Go big or go home.”

-- *State Engineer and Task Force Chair Mike Hamman*

# Interdependent Strategies to Drive System Change

Capacity

Funding

Water  
Conservation

Science, Data,  
and Planning

Community  
Engagement

# Water Ambassador Priorities for 2023-2025



# Water Ambassador Priorities for 2023-2025

2023

## 1 – Implement Solutions from the 2023 Session

- A. Water Security Planning Act (SB 337)
- B. Regional Water System Resiliency (SB 1)
- C. Legacy Permanent Fund (SB 9)
- D. Strategic Water Reserve expansion
- E. Surface water permitting



2024

## 2 – Enact Outstanding Recommendations

- A. Build state & local capacity for water projects & operations
- B. Improve water infrastructure project funding
- C. Leverage federal funds (state & local matching)
- D. Assess and improve groundwater policy and management
- E. Close the funding gap for water infrastructure emergencies

2024-2025

## 3 – Refine and Act on Additional Priorities

- A. Strengthen water rights enforcement
- B. Grow the water workforce
- C. Expand shortage-sharing agreements
- D. Invest in green and natural infrastructure

# Water Ambassador Request for 2023-2024

**Ongoing legislative support** to modernize NM water policy, infrastructure, and programs, including **authorization and funding** for:

- A. Building state & local capacity for water projects & operations
- B. Improving water infrastructure project funding
- C. Leveraging federal funds (state & local matching)
- D. Assessing and improving groundwater policy and management
- E. Closing the funding gap for water infrastructure emergencies



*\* Tribal, federal, NGO, CBO, and local*



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New Mexico Water Policy and Infrastructure Task Force

Crafting Recommendations To Improve Water Policy And Infrastructure

# The Water Report

Water Rights, Water Quality & Water Solutions in the West

**NEW MEXICO WATER POLICY AND INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE: A ROADMAP TO RESILIENCE**

John Fleck, Utton Transboundary Resources Center, University of New Mexico School of Law; Patrick McCarthy, Thornburg Foundation; and Mike Hamman, New Mexico State Engineer

**Introduction**

In 2022, New Mexico faced what state leaders viewed as a water crisis. Reservoirs were near empty, with declining snowpacks and river flows leaving little hope that they would refill. Irrigation ditches often ran dry when crops needed water the most. Rural communities

**Upcoming Stories**

- The Internet of Water
- Water Markets
- Utah Water Banking
- & More!