

**2025 APPROVED  
WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE  
for the  
LAND GRANT COMMITTEE**

**Members**

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Sen. Leo Jaramillo, Vice Chair  
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Sen. David. M. Gallegos  
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Rep. Jimmy G. Mason  
Rep. Rod Montoya  
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley  
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez

**Work Plan**

The Land Grant Committee was created by the New Mexico Legislative Council on April 28, 2025. The committee will focus on the following topics, as time permits:

**A. Infrastructure, disaster relief, land and management issues, including:**

1. financing options for the acquisition of historical lands at land grants;
2. a review of current and potential funding options from state and federal entities for land grants and acequias and potential for new funding and building capacity;
3. discussion of entities that can be used to secure capital and provide economic growth for land grant members;
4. the parameters and ramifications of the Bernalillo County property tax case regarding land grants-mercedes and other tax issues impacting land grants-mercedes;
5. issues concerning land transfers from, and management agreements with, state agencies;
6. state and federal land stewardship and firewood leñero programs offered by state and federal land management agencies that are open to land grant and acequia communities;
7. an examination of services and infrastructure needs, including legislation introduced during the 2025 legislative session, including House Bill (HB) 330, HB 21 and Senate Bill 208;

8. a review of analyses of prior relevant legislation from the Legislative Finance Committee;
9. a discussion of a potential New Mexico Finance Authority revolving loan fund for land acquisitions;
10. a status report on the transfer of the Laguna del Campo fish pond to the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant-Merced;
11. a status report of post-flooding conditions along the Rio Chama;
12. an exploration of essential services available to land grants, including health care, senior and children's programs and other services; and
13. an examination of new technologies, including artificial intelligence, and their impacts on land grants, acequias and rural communities;

**B. Governance of land grants-mercedes and acequias and water rights, including:**

1. governance of land grant-merced common waters and the implications of the January 2023 attorney general opinion regarding due process for water transfers and the impacts of ground and surface water transfers on small agricultural communities;
2. a status update from the administratively created Acequia Bureau within the Interstate Stream Commission;
3. the status of post-fire recovery efforts at land grants-mercedes and acequias;
4. the potential to build land grant-merced input into federal and state land management agency fire prevention planning;
5. a status update from the Higher Education Department and the University of New Mexico School of Law regarding the Community Governance Attorney Program and continuing legal education and other programs being developed regarding land grants-mercedes and acequia law;
6. the administration and adequacy of the Land Grant-Merced Assistance Fund and the challenges that various land grants-mercedes have encountered in connection with that fund;
7. status reports from the Acequia Commission and the New Mexico Acequia Association;
8. a status report from the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty Division of the State Department of Justice;

9. an examination of various land grants-mercedes that are seeking to be subject to the requirements and authorities of Chapter 49, Article 1 NMSA 1978;
10. a status update on capital outlay and a report on the capital outlay process;
11. an examination of potential updates to Chapter 49, Articles 1 and 4 NMSA 1978;
12. a report on pending federal land grant legislation;
13. issues involving regional water planning;
14. issues involving state audits;
15. technical assistance for acequias;
16. updates from the Office of the State Engineer regarding disputes impacting land grants-mercedes and acequias;
17. updates from the Federal Funding Stabilization Subcommittee; and
18. updates from the rural and frontier equity ombuds of the Local Government Division of the Department of Finance and Administration;

**C. Reports from individual land grants-mercedes, the Acequia Commission and other related entities, including:**

1. reports from various land grants-mercedes;
2. reports from the Land Grant Council and updates from the New Mexico Land Grant Consejo and the University of New Mexico Land Grant Studies program, including:
  - a. a status update on the Land Grant Council's efforts on land grant-merced property surveys; and
  - b. the development of land grant youth programs; and
3. status reports from the Acequia Commission and the New Mexico Acequia Association;

**D. Review of issues involving the Bureau of Land Management and land grant heirs;**

**E. Discussion of key historic factors and events concerning common lands, including review of *United States v. Sandoval* (1897) and other historic transfers of land grants; and**

**F. Invitation of the New Mexico congressional delegation to discuss relevant issues.**

**Land Grant Committee  
2025 Approved Meeting Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
May 30	Santa Fe
July 14-15	Las Vegas
August 14-15	Tierra Amarilla
September 8-9	East Mountains (Manzano or Chilili)
October 7	Santa Fe