

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

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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 water rights leases and buyback, 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 law enforcement and water rights, including priority administration, a transition from "use it or lose it" and deep water rights;
11. strategic water supply updates, including:
 - a. alternative water supply options and Strategic Water Supply Program Fund grant awardees for brackish water treatment projects;
 - b. surface and ground water contamination concerns and acequia and watershed protections;
 - c. brackish aquifer mapping and energy needs for desalination; and
 - d. the process, funding and disposal options for treatment of brackish water;
12. *Texas v. New Mexico* settlement updates, the status of the Rio Grande Compact and middle Rio Grande management and metering changes;
13. updates on Indian water rights settlements, the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and San Juan River Dineh Water Users Incorporated;
14. Colorado River basin and Colorado River Compact updates, including conservation initiatives;

15. water demand from Project Jupiter and other data centers, mining operations 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 and watershed restoration funding;
22. green infrastructure and nature-based solutions for water, watersheds and wetland restoration;
23. past water infrastructure spending, future needs and human-made infrastructure failures affecting water delivery;
24. the proposed Land Grant-Merced and Acequia Infrastructure Fund;
25. the suspension of water delivery within the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District; and
26. San Juan-Chama Project source watershed protections and management of invasive species to aid aquifer recharge;

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 of the Energy Transition Act and executive orders regarding zero emissions on electric generation development and interconnection;
8. nuclear energy development, including small modular reactors to enhance grid reliability, recycling potential, waste storage 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, public subsidies and decommissioning bonds;
13. the role of the New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority and updates;
14. distributed generation, 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 funding 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 and state tax credits;
19. methane and ozone rules, including status and reporting gaps;
20. the role of the Public Regulation Commission and appointment versus election structure;

21. an orphan well plugging update and the implementation of Oil and Gas Act changes;
22. emissions standards and the Certified Natural Gas Program;
23. net-zero buildings and schools through guaranteed energy savings performance contracts;
24. a final report from the Energy Affordability Council;
25. the potential of fuel cell technology and hydrogen development; and
26. an energy infrastructure study group report pursuant to House Memorial 20 (2026);

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, funding needs and wildfire impacts, including:
 - a. fire insurance;
 - b. mitigation and restoration efforts;
 - c. post-fire flooding;
 - d. air and water pollution; and
 - e. costs of forest fires and climate change;
3. federal environmental protections, including existing policy rollbacks and program and funding cuts;
4. climate change, drought and extreme heat impacts on public health, the environment, tribal communities and worker safety;
5. State Supplemental Land and Water Conservation Fund updates;
6. Natural Heritage Conservation Act and Land Conservation Incentives Act updates and amendments;
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 cars 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. waste management, recycling and an update on the state's circular economy, pursuant to changes enacted through House Bill 291 (2025);
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. mining reclamation funding and a progress report on uranium and neglected contaminated site cleanups;
19. an update on PFAS and other emerging contaminants and a report on the implementation of the Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances Protection Act, pursuant to House Joint Memorial 3 (2026);
20. the Outdoor Equity Fund, including funding needs and community impacts;
21. air quality monitoring in and around public schools;
22. conservation easements; and
23. cleanup of legacy nuclear waste at Los Alamos National Laboratory and new technologies for nuclear site cleanup; and

D. agriculture, land management and animals, including:

1. a New Mexico Agricultural Workforce Development Program Act update, cost barriers for future generations of farmers and impacts of agriculture in New Mexico;

2. updates on the implementation of the wildlife management reforms enacted in 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 2025-2026;
 - b. market opportunities and challenges for farmers, ranchers and producers;
 - c. the governor's food initiative; and
 - d. the cost of senior citizen meal sites versus food distribution alternatives;
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, Department of Game and Fish hunting tags and wildlife disease concerns;
10. an expansion of municipal and school composting programs;
11. regenerative food and agricultural practices;
12. the impact of federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program changes;
13. nonfunctional turf restrictions;
14. solar shade and agrivoltaics; and
15. the proposed creation of a state search and rescue department.

**Water and Natural Resources Committee
2026 Approved Meeting Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
May 21	Santa Fe
July 13-14	Roswell
August 31-September 1	Abiquiu/Chama
September 28-30	Socorro
October 26-27	Santa Fe