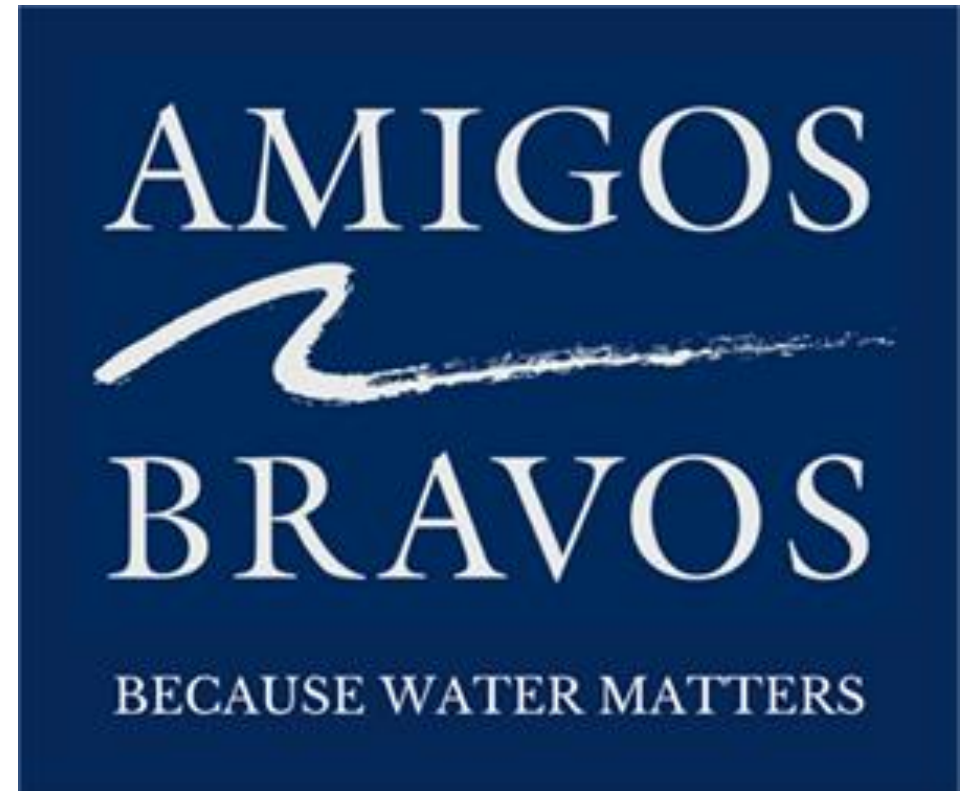


From Grants to Ground: River Stewardship in Action Across New Mexico

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Who Are We?

- Statewide water protection and restoration organization
- Mission: To protect and restore the waters of New Mexico
- Formed in Taos in 1988



Valle Vidal
Photo: Jim O'Donnell

Wetlands

- Help improve surface water quality by preventing erosion, stabilizing stream banks, breaking down some types of pollutants, and reducing flood damage.
- Recharge groundwater and help maintain stream flow.
- Crucial in supporting a balanced ecosystem.

Cruces Basin Wetland Jewel

Photo: Jim O'Donnell

Wetland Jewels

- Amigos Bravos worked with the public and mapping consultants to identify, analyze, prioritize, and map high-priority wetlands in New Mexico watersheds for protection and restoration.
- Priority areas for restoration, or “Wetland Jewels,” were identified in the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests and in the Gila and the San Juan watersheds.

La Jara Wetland Jewel
Photo: Jim O'Donnell

NMED River Stewardship Program In Action

- Amigos Bravos has received 3 River Stewardship Grants since 2024
- Midnight Meadows Wetland Jewel Restoration will be complete in November
- El Rito Wetland Restoration begins in summer 2027 (Planning underway)
- Trout Creek (Gila) Wetland Restoration begins in Summer 2027 (Planning underway)

Midnight Meadows Wetland Jewel

Photo: Jim O'Donnell

River Stewardship Impacts

- When all 3 Amigos Bravos Projects are completed the River Stewardship Program will have:
 - Funded 310 acres of wetland restoration
 - Contributed funding to numerous local jobs
 - Installed over 305 erosion control structures
- Provided unique opportunity to implement community identified priorities



Midnight Meadows Wetland Jewel

Photo: Jim O'Donnell



Building to Success – Midnight Meadows Project Highlight

- Since 2018:
 - At least 300 erosion control structures, 700 feet of “big hole” restoration, construction of 1600 feet of heavy-duty fence, repaired miles of existing fences every year, employed 5 ranger riders, and restored at least 160 acres of wetlands
- River Stewardship has added substantial outcomes to this work in 2025 and 2026.



Before – Big Hole Side Channel Headcut



After – Big Hole Side Channel Headcut

Left - before wetland restoration.
Middle - immediately following
wetland restoration fill in
September 2023.

Before Restoration - 2022



After Restoration - 2024





Midnight Meadows (River Stewardship only)

- Amigos Bravos hosted the 2025 volunteer restoration weekend where 60+ volunteers built: 1 media luna, 1 rock rundown, 37 one rock dams, 2 worm ditches, 2 zuni bowls, and 4 sod plugs.
- By November: Approximately 105 erosion control structures, 5 floodplain rebuilds, and 3 historic channel restorations.
- 2026 volunteer weekend – approximately 30 volunteers. Fewer structures than usual due to hailstorm and major flooding.

Thank you to the Legislature

- Amigos Bravos is extremely grateful to the Legislature for all the support you've given to the River Stewardship program.
- Please continue funding the River Stewardship program in the upcoming legislature.





In Summary

- River Stewardship is restoring community identified Wetland Jewels, creating jobs, and providing and protecting clean water for New Mexico
- Thank you!

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