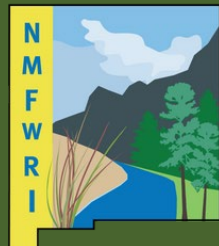


# New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute in Service of New Mexico: 20 Years of Supporting Healthy Forests and Informed Land Management



**New Mexico  
Forest and Watershed  
Restoration Institute**

*New Mexico Highlands University*



# Agenda

- **Introduction to SWERI**
- **Introduction to NMFWR**
  - Staffing and Functional Areas
- **Impacts of Federal Funding Cuts by Program**
- **Moving Forward**
- **Contact Information**



# Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes

## WHO ARE WE?

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN

**3** UNIVERSITY-BASED  
RESTORATION INSTITUTES



## OCTOBER 2004

Established by Congress via the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act (SWERI Act)

## FEBRUARY 2005

Designated by US Forest Service

## JUNE 2005

NM Governor and NMHU President solidified support through a Charter that established the SWERIs as a federal-state partnership

# Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes



Research, develop, and monitor treatments to accelerate forest restoration and reduce wildfire risks



Translate and adapt conventional research findings for practical, real-world applications



Transfer knowledge about restoration-based hazardous fuel reduction treatments to key audiences



Assist with the design and implementation of monitoring and adaptive management

# NM Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute

**22-26 Fulltime Staff, 1-2 Seasonal Staff, 2-4 Students/Interns**



## **Administration**

**Director/Deputy Directors, Budget & Finance Manager, Admin Coordinator, Public Information**



## **Civic & Community Action**

**Collaboration, Conservation Science Center, Research**



## **Technical & Applied Science**

**Ecological Monitoring, Geospatial Information Systems, Research**

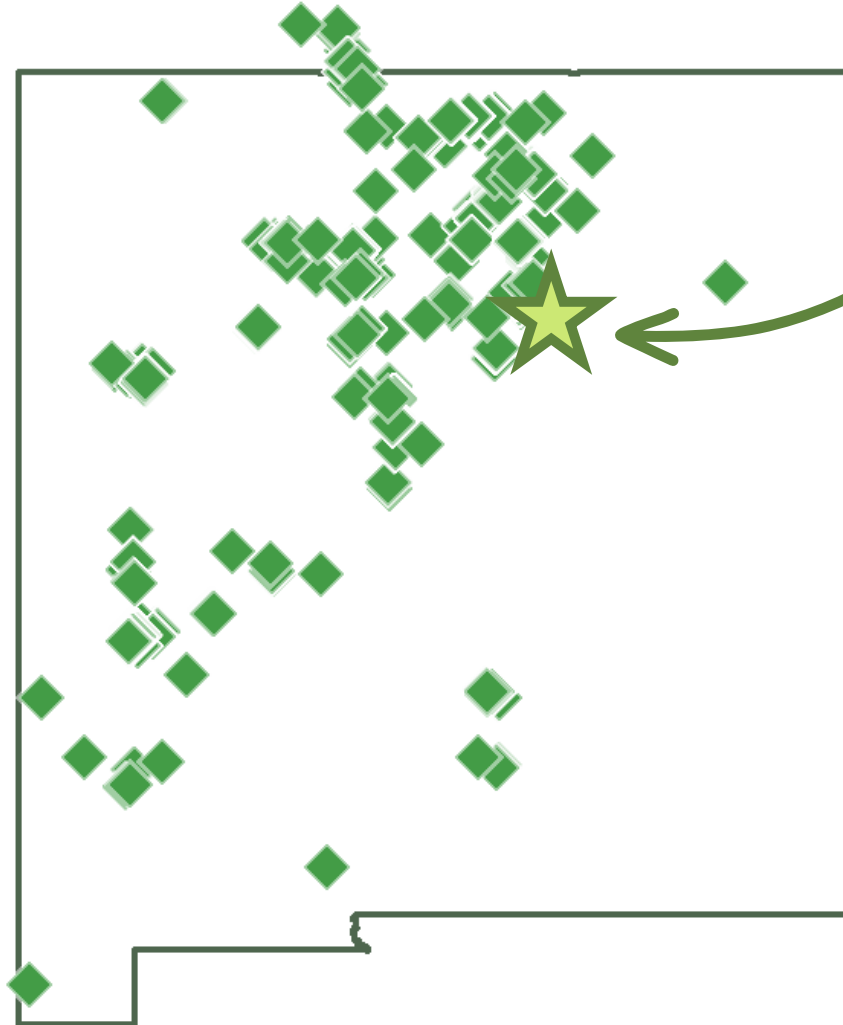
# Where NMFWRI Works

Collaborative  
Groups &  
Meetings

GIS Mapping  
and Drone  
Projects

K-16 / STEM Pathways

Postfire Restoration  
& Workshops



*Based at New Mexico  
Highlands University in  
Las Vegas, NM*

Ecological Monitoring  
Plots and Projects

Research Projects and  
Professional Groups

# NMFWRI Funding

## Typical Funding (Annual) – FY24

- Federal Appropriation: \$2.2M
- State (RPSP): \$334k
- Other Sources: \$1.61M

**Total: ~\$4.1M/year**

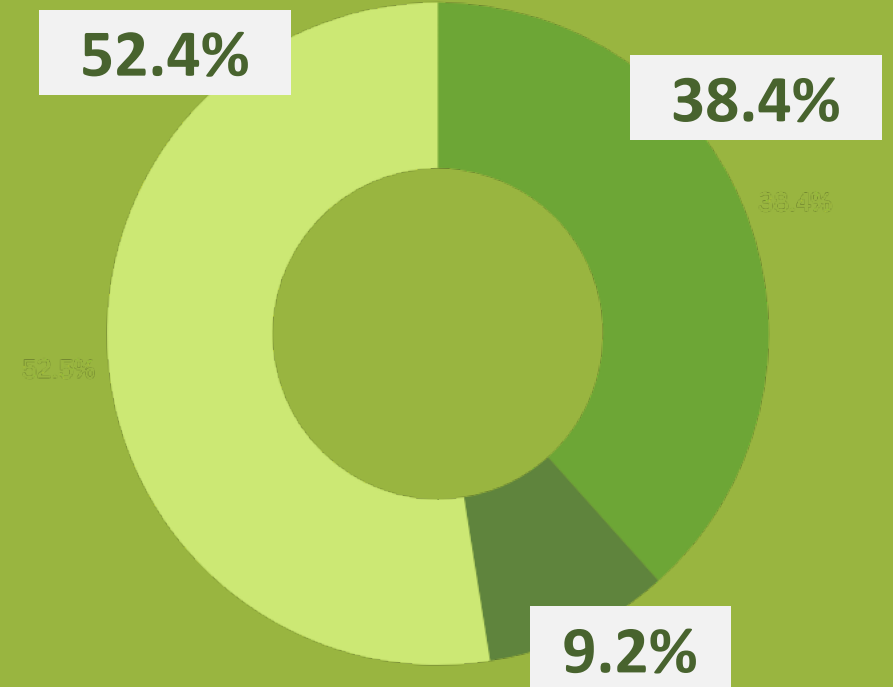
## FY25 Funding (Annual)

- Federal Appropriation: \$1.M (55% cut)
- State (RPSP): \$343,602k
- Other Sources: \$1.61M

**Total: ~\$2.9M/year**

Annual federal appropriations

Other sponsored contracts



Annual state appropriations

# NMFWRI Functional Areas

## Conservation & Restoration Education

Community Engagement with the purposes of increasing awareness and understanding of ecological processes within forested ecosystems and watersheds, and the related impacts of wildfire.

- K-16 programming
- Building STEM pathways for future workforce
- NMHU STEM student retention
- Curriculum development



## Budget Cut Impacts (~\$74,000)

- Froze 1 FTE position dedicated for K-12 outreach
- Reduced scope of Fire Ecology Learning Lab (FELL) curriculum for youth
- Scaled down core STEM education programming



# NMFWRI Functional Areas

## Collaboration

Serves place- and project-based collaborative groups and watershed associations as a resource to build and expand collaborative and organizational capacity.

- Promote and Coordinate Partnerships
- Support collaborative and volunteer groups in rural Communities



## Budget Cut Impacts (~\$41,640)

- Reduced capacity for partnership coordination
- Reduced capacity for community research project development
- Reduced scale of network facilitation

# NMFWRI Functional Areas

## GIS

Fosters connections with partners and communities and provides innovative technological solutions to restoration challenges.

NMFWRI serves as a hub for restoration-focused GIS, remote sensing, and GPS expertise across New Mexico.



**GEOSPATIAL  
INFORMATION  
SYSTEMS (GIS)**

## Budget Cut Impacts (~100,430)

- Eliminated post-fire GIS application training for communities
- Postponed satellite vegetation assessments.
- Canceled purchase of drone equipment
- Suspended updates to the NMFWRI website

# NMFWRI Functional Areas

## Ecological Monitoring

Maintains a professionally-managed field crew to collect data on short- and long-term ecosystem response to restoration treatments and disturbances.

These data provide the scientific basis for restoration treatments and is critical for adaptive management.



## Budget Cut Impacts (~\$318,660)

- Suspended hiring of staff and students, limiting personnel capacity for field work.
- Reduced ecological monitoring at historically long-term sites
- Cuts to on-the-ground applied research, hindering data requests
- Reduced community engagement

# NMFWRI Functional Areas

## FIRENM

Increases access to fire-adapted restoration knowledge, practices and experiences to promote resiliency in firesheds across NM.

Serves restoration practitioners, subcontractor, NGOs, NRM managers, field crews, volunteer firefighters, traditional students, landowners, youth, and reskill populations.

## **FIRENM: FIRE-INFORMED RESTORATION EDUCATION FOR NEW MEXICO**

## Budget Cut Impacts (~\$225,750)

- Decreased capacity for workforce development restoration workshops at desired frequency
- Decreased capacity to serve public and agency staff
- Decreased capacity to develop and imbed 'Culture of Fire' in training, curriculum and educational materials.
- Reduced scale of programs

# NMFWRI Functional Areas

## Communications

NMFWRI's Public Information program creates and coordinates strategic communications products to promote the institute's work through digital and traditional media, at in-person workshops and events, and in response to specific requests. The program also helps coordinate events to share information and the latest research regarding forest and watershed health, wildfire risk reduction, and post-fire restoration to help communities.

## Budget Cut Impacts (~\$98,455)

- Decreased capacity to hire, manage and mentor HU Media Arts interns and work study students, who will produce interactive, multimedia projects for education and outreach.
- Decreased capacity to travel to meetings and communication events/public meetings and public relations.

# NMFWRI Functional Areas

## Research

Synthesize and shares NMFWRI data and information. Primary and secondary research to facilitate understanding of fire-vulnerable human and ecological systems of the Southwest.

Develops collaborative relationships with land managers, NGOs, and academic communities.



## RESEARCH

## Budget Cut Impacts (~\$127,000)

- Reduced capacity to develop new research projects
- Reduced capacity to collect data for synthesis
- Reduced capacity for research and synthesis
- Reduced capacity to share and contribute towards knowledge exchanges
- Reduced capacity to develop partnerships

# NMFWRI Moving Forward

## Federal Advocacy

NMFWRI is actively working with the other two (ERI and CFRI) SWERIs to advocate for federal funding to be restored to FY24 level of \$6.6M .

Funding is highly dependent on the CR or passing of a Budget by Congress.

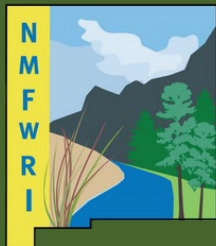
## Federal, State, Foundation Grants and Contracts

NMFWRI is actively applying for federal, state, foundation, grants and contracts. To date NMFWRI has applied to:

NMFWRI Proposal and Contract Log					
Funding Agency	Program/Type	Submission Date	Request	Duration (Yr)	Status
EPA	Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program	Nov-25	\$13,851,847.00	2	Pulled
US Forest Service	CWDG	Mar-25	\$9,847,184.00	5	Declined
SFCF	Education	Aug-25	\$195,551.00	1	Declined
NMDGF	Contract	Aug-25	\$25,000.00	1	Awarded
LCC	EDA - Subaward	Sep-25	\$168,385.00	2	Pending
LCC	USDA -Subaward	Sep-25	\$444,615.00	3	Pending
Claunch Pinto SWCD	Contract	Sep-25	\$10,000.00	1	Awarded
Claunch Pinto SWCD	Contract	Sep-25	\$166,911.00	2	Awarded
NMDGF	Contract	Sep-25	\$97,000.00	1	Pending
USFWS	Partners	Winter 2025	\$75,000.00	3	In Progress
RDC	Grant	Winter 2025	\$30,000.00	1	In Progress
PLVRD	Contract	Spring 2026	\$500,000.00	2	In Progress
PLVRD	Contract	Spring 2026	\$5,015,613.00	5	In Progress

Your support is crucial to help us continue our mission of reducing wildfire risk and restoring New Mexico's forests and watersheds. We are ready to provide any additional information you may need.

# THANK YOU!



**New Mexico  
Forest and Watershed  
Restoration Institute**

*New Mexico Highlands University*





- Alan Barton, Director [awbarton@nmhu.edu](mailto:awbarton@nmhu.edu) 505.426.2081
- Edward Martinez, Deputy Director, Operations & Development  
[eamartinez@nmhu.edu](mailto:eamartinez@nmhu.edu) 505.454.3360
- Gilbert “Buddy” Rivera, Deputy Director, Chief of Staff  
[gdrivera@nmhu.edu](mailto:gdrivera@nmhu.edu) 505.454.3289

NM Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute

NM Highlands University

Las Vegas, NM 87701

[nmfwri.org](http://nmfwri.org)