



From Grants to Ground

NMED River Stewardship in Action Across New Mexico

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WHY WETLANDS MATTER

Wetlands improve surface water quality by preventing erosion, stabilizing stream banks, breaking down some pollutants, and reducing flood damage. They recharge groundwater, and help maintain healthy stream flows. They serve as the sponges of our watershed by soaking up spring runoff and slowly releasing water throughout the growing season.

IDENTIFYING NEW MEXICO'S "WETLAND JEWELS"

Amigos Bravos worked with the public and mapping consultants to identify, analyze, prioritize, and map high-priority wetlands for protection and restoration. Wetland Jewels have been identified in the Carson and Santa Fe National Forest, and in the Gila and San Juan watersheds.

RIVER STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

Amigos Bravos has received **three NMED River Stewardship Grants since 2024:**

PROJECT	STATUS
Midnight Meadows Wetland Jewel Restoration	Project will be completed in in November 2026
El Rito Wetland Restoration	Planning underway, restoration begins summer 2027
Trout Creek (Gila) Wetland Restoration	Planning underway, restoration begins summer 2027

WHAT RIVER STEWARDSHIP MAKES POSSIBLE FROM 3 GRANTS	
310 acres	of wetland restoration funded when all 3 projects are completed
305+	wetland restoration structures built and installed
Local Jobs	created and supported through River Stewardship funding
Community Priorities	implemented with River Stewardship funding

- **RESTORATION IN ACTION: PROJECT HIGHLIGHT - MIDNIGHT MEADOWS:**

River Stewardship Funded:

- 2025 volunteer restoration weekend: 60+ volunteers built 1 media luna, 1 rock rundown, 37 one-rock dams, 2 worm ditches, 2 Zuni bowls, and 4 sod plugs. A 2026 volunteer weekend brought approximately 30 volunteers; structure count TBD due to a hailstorm and major flooding during the event.
- By November: 105 erosion-control structures, 5 floodplain rebuilds, and 3 historic channel improvements.

Before Restoration - 2022



After Restoration - 2024



In addition to building hundreds of restoration structures, since 2018, Amigos Bravos has restored 700 feet of “big hole” channel, built 1,600 feet of heavy-duty fence, repaired miles of existing fences annually, and employed 5 ranger riders to help protect restoration areas. River Stewardship funding added substantial outcomes to this work in 2025 and 2026.

The River Stewardship program is restoring community-identified Wetland Jewels, creating jobs, and helping provide and protect clean water for New Mexico.