

New Mexico Land Grant- Merced Consejo

The NM Land Grant-Merced Consejo is a grassroots organization that advocates for all land grants in the state of New Mexico.



Recent accomplishments for land grants

- Land Grant-Merced Assistance Fund (guaranteed revenue stream)
 - This year 17 land grants are eligible for a distribution
- Passing HB 268 which listed land grants in statute



Capital outlay

- In the last two years, land grants have collectively received over \$2 million in capital outlay dollars. These funds have allowed our Mercedes to:
 - Purchase former common lands
 - Purchase buildings for offices and community centers
 - Upgrade existing buildings
 - Purchase heavy equipment to maintain common lands
 - These purchases have helped increase land grants' capacity and improve their services to their communities

Property purchases made possible with the help of capital outlay funding

- Las Mercedes Unidas have purchased the old Piedra Lumbre Visitor's Center
- Town of Tomé Land Grant has purchased the Casita, a historic jailsite, 7.4 acres of land in production and is in the process of purchasing more
- Town of Tajique has purchased 80 acres with a small building
- La Merced de Manzano has purchased 100 acres
- The Santa Bárbara Land Grant acquired the San Acasio Church from the Archdiocese in 2022 and has since been renovating the building



Additional support for land grants

- Last year, the Council received additional funds to better support land grants. These funds were used hire an accountant, purchase bonds, purchase Quickbooks and more
- This year, more land grants have paid membership dues to the Consejo (a total of 14)
- More individuals are becoming involved with the Consejo

Fuelwood projects

- Las Trampas and Santa Bárbara Land Grants collected and distributed 700 cords of wood to community members in a Forest Service partnership
- The Bearcat fuelwood project provided five of the east mountain land grants to distribute 33 cords each to heirs in a State Land Office partnership
- The Cristobal de la Serna, San Miguel del Bado, and San Joaquin del Río de Chama Land Grants have also recently participated in fuelwood projects



Current and future legislative priorities

- In the upcoming legislative session, the Consejo would like to support the creation of a revolving loan fund to assist our Mercedes in acquiring land
- In future sessions the Consejo would like to work towards:
 - Tax exemption for land grant properties
 - Acquiring unidentified parcels of land within land grant boundaries by working with state assessors

Future needs

- We would like to work with DFA on:
 - The possibility of receiving loans from the NM Mortgage Finance Authority for land purchases
 - Clarity on which purchases are allowable with capital outlay funds
 - Appraisal issue
- Receiving and using junior money
 - Is it possible for junior money to be used for surveying and/or appraisals?
- Difficulties finding affordable insurance for land grants' assets