

New Mexico Acequia Commission



Land Grant Committee
November 22, 2022

Ralph Vigil, Chairman

New Mexico Acequia Commission - Governance

- **NMAC - Powers & Duties - NM Stat § 73-2-66**
- Provide advice and assist the governor, legislature, office of the state engineer and interstate stream commission and the United States army corps of engineers in establishing acequia and community ditch rehabilitation priorities and other acequia and community ditch matters
- Serve as a facilitator for communication between acequia and community ditch associations and state and federal agencies; and
- Review and comment on any plan or legislation affecting acequias or community ditches to the governor, the legislature, the secretary of agriculture and the interstate stream commission.

New Mexico Acequia Commission - Governance

- The Commission is administratively attached to the local government division of the department of finance and administration.
- Acequia commissioners are appointed by the governor and shall consist of eleven members who reside in the irrigated areas of the state containing acequias.
- Members shall own land irrigated from an acequia or community ditch organized pursuant to a ditch or acequia statute. Each member appointed by the governor shall serve a term of four years.



NM Acequia Commission - Initiatives

- **Watershed Protection - Terrero Mine** – The Pecos Valley, which contains the Tererro remediation site, is an area that is being targeted for exploratory mining operations. This area is still recovering from mining operations that contaminated the river in the 1990's causing over 90,000 fish to be killed and millions of dollars spent by the state for cleanup.

NM Acequia Commission – Initiatives Continued

- **NM Wildfires – Calf Canyon and Hermits Peak Fires** - the largest wildfire in New Mexico's recorded history
- The Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak Fire burned 341,471 acres
- The blaze was sparked in the spring by two prescribed fires conducted by the U.S. Forest Service
- Rocky Mountain foothills burned, hundreds of homes were destroyed, livelihoods were lost and drinking water supplies and irrigation were contaminated affecting acequias and local farmers
- Cost \$300 million



**Hit us pretty
hard** 🙄



NM Acequia Commission – Initiatives - Continued

- **Collaboration between NMAC/Land Grant Council/State Land Office - San Miguel Del Vado Wood Project**
- **Mayordromo Project**
– USFS works with Mayordromos and county – get 1 acre to clear and given \$350 Stipend
- **Potential Opportunities –**
Collaboration between Acequias/Land Grants/USFS/State Land Office and Conservation efforts to be proactive in Promoting Healthy Forests and Watershed



NM Acequia Commission – Initiatives - Continued

- **Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRW) -**
ONRW Designation Passed by Water Quality Control commission
- NMAC/NMED collaboration with local communities on healthy watershed and clean water act
- NMAA continues to work with FEMA on disaster relief for NM Acequias
- Acequia and Watershed Protection - Talpa Trails



2023 Legislative Requests

- **NMAC – FY23 - Current Budget**
 - FY 23 Operating Budget - \$88.1K
 - Includes 2 part time Consultants, travel and Misc Operating Budget
 - FY 23 - ACDF Budget - \$ 0
 - Total Request \$1,151,000
- **NMAC – FY24 - Proposed Budget**
 - FY 24 Operating Budget - \$160.0K
 - 2 Part time Consultants; 1 FTE with Benefits to do deep analysis of acequia/water/climate initiatives for NMAC and misc expenses
 - FY 24 – ACDF Budget - \$1 Million

CONCLUSION

Thank you and I look forward to a continued dialogue with the New Mexico State Legislature.

Ralph Vigil

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