

NMACD REPORT

WNR Committee Interim Committee

August 25, 2016

Current Legislative Concerns

- Legislation to change the Soil and Water Conservation District Election process
 - ✓ Costs of General Election
 - ✓ Mil Levy – Ability to pass future mil levies
 - ✓ Only special district with sunset for mil levy
 - ✓ Only special district with 1 mil authority limit
- State Funding Cuts for Technical Service Provider Program

NMACD HAS SERVED AS FISCAL AGENT FOR TSP PROGRAM SINCE 2003.

New Mexico's Farm Bill Technical Service Program is authorized by the USDA National Farm Bill Program. A new contract to manage New Mexico's Technical Service Provider (TSP) Program was awarded to NMACD by NMSU on July 1, 2015 to be effective for a period up to four years. In accordance with the contract, the TSP Program is administered under the following agreements and contracts:

- Basic agreement between NRCS, NMDA, and Soil & Water Conservation Commission which serves as the mechanism for technical service providers to be cost-shared by State of New Mexico and NRCS.
- Purchase orders issued by NMDA authorized by the contract, awarded by New Mexico State University, which provides the funding for NMACD to administer a Farm Bill Employee (Technical Service Provider) program.
- Agreements between participating SWCDs for "capacity building" cost-shared Farm Bill employees (TSP's) with current staffing of 2 Capacity Building Employees.

For FY 2017, NMACD plans to have a staff of 25 employees.

✚ **\$580,000 state funds reoccurring matched by USDA-NRCS \$600,000**

✚ NRCS also supplies, offices, vehicles, & training.



**This program is a GREAT job training and Recruitment Program for Rural NM!
Over 35 TSP employees have become full time USDA-NRCS employees!**

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FEDERAL FUNDS NMACD AND SWCDs ARE BRINGING TO NMI!

1. A separate **contribution agreement between NRCS and NMACD** whereby NMACD contracts for On-Demand technical specialists to provide special technical services for NRCS field offices. Using this agreement and the contract with NMDA, NMACD has 24 conservation specialists and 8 archaeologists to provide the needed services.

\$1,133,000.00 is the total contract amount including the \$150,000 just added to agreement.

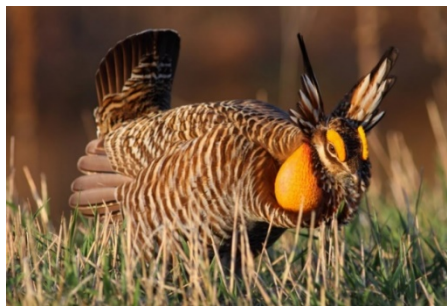
2. **20 million dollar Agreement between NMACD and BLM for Restore New Mexico Initiative** which provides for NMACD to utilize its "on demand" specialists to service land owners participating in the Restore New Mexico Initiative.



Over 3.3 million acres restored and counting

The NMACD Restoration Initiative is in its 11th year. The purpose of the initiative is to address invasive species on range and woodland on private, state, and federal lands in New Mexico. NMACD has been coordinating funding from the NRCS-EQIP program and the BLM-Restore New Mexico programs to provide funds to ranchers for addressing brush species. Over 189 Coordinated Resource Management Plans (CRMP) have been developed and funded. In addition, there have been 62 watershed/landscape scale treatments carried out by 13 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. SWCDs that have RESTORE NM projects include: **Carlsbad, San Juan, Deming, Lea, Sierra, Cuba, Otero, Salado, Hidalgo, Socorro, San Francisco, Taos, Rio Arriba.**

3. **Grant agreement with National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)** for \$936,616 to provide technical assistance for protecting and improving habitat conditions for the Lesser Prairie Chicken in eastern New Mexico. NMACD currently staffs 2 full-time employees. This grant agreement is separate from the basic Farm Bill Technical Services Program.



Lesser Prairie Chicken will NOT be listed!

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4. **NRCS-USDA Agreements to provide technical assistance for the Acequia, Restore New Mexico, and Canadian River Riparian Restoration Regional Conservation Partnerships Program** which were awarded in FY 2015. NMACD's "on demand" specialist are being used to help provide this assistance.

4 Million 2016 RCPP Program New dollars for Restoration Work on Ranches with Federal Lands

- NMACD was successful in bringing 4 million new dollars to NM producers through the 2015 RCPP program. NMACD TSP contractors assist BLM, FS and NRCS in coordinating meetings with producers, prepare CRMPs for cost-shared contracts, issue work orders with local SWCDs who contract for installation of practices such as brush control.
- NMACD also assisted in scheduling cultural resource surveys with archaeologists for projects. We continue to have a heavy workload to provide archaeological surveys with 21 pending requests from NRCS. NRCS has also given us a list of approximately 22 projected requests for later this year and next. NMACD is submitting a RCPP Proposal for Forest Soil Health Initiative for Under-served Ranchers with Mixed Land Status

5. **2 million for Canadian River Riparian Restoration**



Middle Section Mills Canyon – After treatment in 2014

CRRRP also receives Water Trust Board Funding which has been used to leverage 2.5 million Pitman Roberson Funding from NM Game & Fish Dept.

6. **Acequia RCPPs - First Alternative Funding Agreement with NRCS in the Nation!!!**

NMACD TSP contractors provided coordination and technical assistance to acequia groups to improve or rehabilitate identified acequia projects. Assistance included working with participating agencies and partners to conduct workshops, coordinate meetings, develop plans, arrange for funding, and other activities for approved acequias. Developed and submitted 2017 Acequia RCPP pre-proposal. Under the previous project, NMACD received applications from over 70 acequias, but was only able to assist the 20 applicants who had already developed a project design or were selected to develop a design. Two RCPP proposals for Acequias approved and funded in partnership with SWCDs, ISC, and NM Acequia Association:

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NEW MEXICO RECEIVED \$1.2 million-FY 2014/2015
NEW MEXICO RECEIVED \$3 million-FY 2016

Acequia de la Joya near Nambe first acequia project completed!!!!



Before

During

After

7. **\$50,000 Agreement with US Forest Service** An agreement with the US Forest Service is the start of coordinated efforts with the Forest Service and ranchers with forest permits. NMACD will provide technical assistance in planning, design, layout and inspection of projects for implementation on Ranger Districts. NMACD will coordinate and facilitate meetings with US Forest Service, NRCS, SWCD's, grazing permittees and other stakeholders to identify potential projects, identify available resources, determine project readiness and coordinate roles. (Forest Service also has an agreement between NMACD and San Juan SWCD and the agreement between Cuba SWCD and USFS)



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- **Water Trust Board Watershed Restoration Projects approved for funding in 2015:** Mescalero Tribe \$750,000; Pueblo of Santa Clara \$1,000,000; City of Santa Fe \$150,000; Claunch-Pinto SWCD \$600,000; Canadian River \$600,000; Guadalupe SWCD \$450,000; Upper Hondo SWCD \$500,000
- **2016:** Canadian River \$600,000; Upper Rio Grande \$600,000; East Mountains \$600,000.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are one of the main “on-the-ground” delivery system for federal and state dollars to thin forests including funding from Water Trust Board, State Forestry, US Forest Service and NMED River Restoration!

8. \$50,000 New Mexico Game & Fish

NMACD will assist in the development of the Agency’s Conservation Program Initiative to improve wildlife habitat and meet the objectives of the Program. NMACD will provide training and technical guidance, promote Initiatives of the Program and provide the Agency with the names of individuals and /or organizations interested in wildlife habitat improvement. At the direction of the Agency, work with private landowners to plan, design and implement habitat improvement projects.



New Mexico Acequia Revitalization on Historic Irrigated Lands (NMAR)

First in the nation to utilize “Alternative Funding Agreement” with NRCS