

Report to New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Districts

*New Mexico Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Programs and Resources
Division*

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July 2022

July	Appointed Supervisors take Oaths of Office.
July 1	Fiscal year begins.
July 15	Deadline for providing information to county tax assessor(s) on mill levies: -Mill levy rate resolution; -List of land owners and legal description of lands subject to mill levy.
July 15	Point System worksheet due (refer to item #4).
July 30	Independent Public Accountant (IPA) Recommendation Form & the Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP) contract must be signed & submitted to the State Auditor. AUP applies to Tiers 3-7.
July 31	Final budget and budget resolution for the coming fiscal year due to DFA-LGD, (cc: SWCC and SWCC Region Commissioner) for districts that submitted only their *preliminary* budget by the June 1 deadline.
July 31	4th quarter budget report and resolution due to DFA-LGD for the past fiscal year (cc: SWCC, SWCC region commissioner, and NMDA Specialist).
July 31	Final WQ&C grant report due to SWCC.

OMA Notification Requirements

Remember that if you have to hold a district board meeting at a date, time or location that deviates from the information you advertised in your Open Meetings Act resolution, you must advertise it accordingly. Here are the guidelines:

Regular Meeting – 10 Days Prior

Special Meeting – 3 Days Prior

Emergency Meeting – 24 Hours Prior

As COVID containment efforts continue, it is possible that an event scheduled for the near future could be postponed, canceled, or hosted online instead of in person. Because of the fluid nature of things in response to COVID, NMDA recommends that you check with the host organization for the events contained in this report that the events have not changed in

terms of their date or the manner in which they are to be hosted. We have included event websites to make this a simple step for you.

1. July 21: NMDA hosts mandatory grantee training for SWCDs implementing (and/or supporting) Healthy Soil Program grants in FY23

Did your district *apply for* a Healthy Soil Program grant for a project it intends to implement in Fiscal Year 2023? Did your district *support* a project that an Individual Applicant intends to implement in FY23? Either way, if a project associated with your district is selected for funding, an authorized representative from your district will be **required to attend an online training for FY23 grantees (and supporting SWCDs) on Thursday, July 21.**

Please mark your calendar and stay tuned for information about the times the trainings will be offered that day. The training will come just a few weeks before the **August 15 deadline to return a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to NMDA** so that work on FY23 projects to improve soil health can begin as soon as that very day.

For important reminders such as this, please subscribe to the Healthy Soil Program e-newsletter. The form to subscribe is at the bottom of the program's website:

<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/agricultural-programs-and-resources/healthy-soil-program.html>

2. Agricultural Workforce Development Program

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) Agricultural Workforce Development (AWD) Program grant application period **opened June 10** and will continue until funds are fully allocated or by March 31, 2023, whichever comes first. Internships can begin July 1, 2022 and must be completed by May 31, 2023.

NMDA's AWD Program offers incentives to the state's agricultural businesses to hire interns. The AWD Program is intended to provide hands-on educational opportunities for students aspiring to careers in agriculture, as well as young or beginning farmers and ranchers. The AWD Program is the result of the [Agricultural Workforce Development Program Act](#), which was signed into law in 2019.

NMDA will reimburse qualified agricultural businesses up to 50 percent of the actual cost of hiring a qualified intern, not to exceed \$15,000 per internship. An agricultural business may request funding to hire as many as three interns per calendar year. Each intern must be provided with **at least one hundred thirty (130) hours** of work experience, not exceeding one (1) year in duration per intern.

1. The period for agricultural businesses to apply is from June 10, 2022 to March 31, 2023 **or until funds are fully allocated.** NMDA will award funding to agricultural businesses based on: **a)** their compliance with program requirements; and **b)** funding availability.
2. Internships must occur between July 1, 2022 and May 31, 2023.

Please note:

- NMDA will **not** match agricultural businesses with potential interns.
- Agricultural businesses must identify an intern prior to applying for funding.
- Interns must be 18 years or older by the start of the internship.
- Immediate family members of the agricultural business are NOT eligible to participate.
- Participating agricultural businesses must pay minimum wage (or higher) to each intern, as well as carry workers' compensation insurance for each intern.

For more information, please visit:

<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/agricultural-workforce-development.html>.

3. Livestock owners missing animals should call officials/Ag Related Assistance due to wildfires

Owners should call New Mexico Livestock Board or county sheriff's office. Livestock owners who are missing livestock as a result of the wildfires in New Mexico – or who are unsure whether their animals are located where they are supposed to be – should contact either the New Mexico Livestock Board at 505-841-6161 or their county sheriff's office.

Livestock owners may also call their local New Mexico Livestock Board Inspector directly.

For other agriculture-related assistance needed as a result of the wildfires, visit the state of New Mexico's wildfire resource page: <https://www.nmdhsem.org/2022-wildfires/>.

4. FY21 Point System Worksheet – All Items Must be Complete for Full Funding

The Soil and Water Conservation Commission voted the FY21 Point System Worksheet to require all items, 1-9, to be completed in order to receive full funding. Due date is on or before July 15. The worksheet will require 100 points to be accrued to receive full funding. The worksheet can be found at: <https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/agricultural-programs-and-resources/soil-and-water-conservation-districts/references-and-resources-for-swcd.html>.

If there are questions about the worksheet or if you need any assistance, please contact your SWCD Specialist.

5. NMACD Regional Meetings

Information is in the attached document about the regional meetings in July. If there are questions about the meetings, please contact NMACD. The first meeting for Region III will be on July 6 in Truth or Consequences and the Region VI meeting on July 7 in Capitan, followed by meetings the next few weeks. For specific information, such as location and times, refer to the attachment or contact Debbie Hughes at conserve@nmacd.org. It is strongly recommended that you confirm those dates, locations, and times with NMACD.

6. Town Halls for Agricultural Lessees with Commissioner of Public Lands Stephanie Garcia Richard and State Land Office Staff

In-person meetings with virtual (Zoom Meeting) and call-in options.

- **July 14, 2022** - Clayton, NM Location: Union County Courthouse - Annex Meeting Room
Address: 200 Court Street, Clayton, NM 88415
Time: 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Zoom Meeting ID: 841 1679 0016, Passcode: 912703 or call 1 (720) 928-9299

- **July 18, 2022** - Clovis, NM Location: Clovis-Carver Public Library - Ingram Room
Address: 701 N Main Street, Clovis, NM 88101
Time: 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Zoom Meeting ID: 897 7645 4008, Passcode: 944027 or call 1 (720) 928-9299

- **July 19, 2022** - Hobbs, NM Location: New Mexico State Land Office - Hobbs District Office
Address: 914 N Linam Street, Hobbs, NM 88240
Time: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Zoom Meeting ID: 842 3886 7433, Passcode: 631696 or call 1 (720) 928-9299

- **July 21, 2022** - Moriarty, NM Location: New Mexico State Land Office - Moriarty District Office
Address: 2506 Route 66, Moriarty, NM 87035
Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Zoom Meeting ID: 811 3500 3862, Passcode: 848659 or call 1 (720) 928-9299

The purpose of these events is for Commissioner Garcia Richard to speak with, listen to, and answer questions from the agricultural community. In addition, Land Office staff will explain changes to the GS series agricultural lease and the agricultural lease renewal process for 2022. *Reminder:* Staff will also be available at the New Mexico State Land Office from Monday through Friday to assist you with your Agriculture Lease Renewal and documents.

7. 28th Annual Southwestern Noxious, Invasive Plant Short Course (July 19-21)

This year (2022) we are pleased to be able to offer the course face-to-face in Farmington, NM at the San Juan College's (SJC) Henderson Fine Arts Center in Rooms 9008 and 9010. Although we do not have a crystal ball, the SJC currently has no COVID restrictions. We encourage you to consult the latest CDC guidelines. We hope to offer the short course face-to-face in its entirety, including the popular field trip from Farmington, NM to Durango, CO (see draft agenda on the registration site -- **NOTE THAT ALL TIMES ARE MOUNTAIN TIME!!**). Your \$400 registration fee will cover: 1) lunches and breaks on Tuesday and Wednesday (and 1 break on Thursday), 2) a round-trip field trip from Farmington, NM to Durango, CO, and 3) access to Powerpoint presentations given during the 3-day event. Your

instructors will include local, regional, and national experts (see draft agenda on the registration site -- **NOTE THAT ALL TIMES ARE MOUNTAIN TIME!!**). We are in the process of requesting CEUs from the Arizona and New Mexico Departments of Agriculture.

Important notes:

1. It is important that you register and pay for the short course ASAP. This is because we must adhere to a registration cap of 80 participants for this face-to face event -- once this number of participants has been achieved all registration for the short course will be closed. We don't want to see anyone get shut out especially since we have not been able to do this event face-to-face for the past 2 years. We encourage you to register early!

2. As of 6/13/22, the SJC had no Covid restrictions, such as masking or social distancing. Again, we encourage you to consult the latest CDC guidelines. Should the SJC change its policy to increase COVID restrictions, our back-up plan will be to offer the short course virtually during the same week and same general time frame (i.e., July 19-21, 2022). If this were to happen, your registration fee will only be \$60 which would mean you would receive a \$340 credit if you previously paid to attend the face-to-face event. We of course hope none of this will happen but wanted you to be aware of our contingency plan.

The registration fee (until 7/11/22) for this year's event is \$400 (\$200 for students -- 5 student slots available). You must register and pay for the event by 7/11/22 to receive the early bird fee. The registration fee will increase to \$450 after 5pm on 7/11/22.

Credit card payments are the most efficient way to register and quickly reserve your seat. If you are paying with a P.O. or a check it must arrive in our office on or before July 15, 2022 to receive the early registration rate of \$400. If paying by check or P.O. please make your check or P.O. payable to "THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA" (TIN #74-2652689) and write in the check memo "Noxious Weed Short Course". Send check or P.O. payments to The School of Natural Resources and the Environment (Attn: Yessica), The University of Arizona, ENR2 – Room N326, 1064 E. Lowell Street, Tucson, AZ 85721. If you have questions about registering and paying for this event please contact Yessica Garate at ygarate@arizona.edu or 520-621-4189. Your seat is not reserved until we have received your full payment, credit card preferred.

8. USDA Seeks Proposals for Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership due Aug. 5

The Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership enables NRCS and Forest Service to collaborate with partners such as agricultural producers and forest landowners to invest in conservation and restoration at a big enough scale to make a difference.

Proposals are developed through a collaborative process between NRCS, Forest Service and local partners. Past partners have included county, state, non-governmental, Tribal, utilities or private individual stakeholders.

Project proposals are due by Aug. 5, 2022, for the 2023 fiscal year. Contact your local NRCS service center.

9. NM Environment Department Request for Information PFAS Contamination

The New Mexico Environment Department issued a Request for Information (RFI) seeking information relevant to the disposal and destruction of PFAS that will support strong policy and science-based decision-making during implementation of Phase 2 of the Removal Plan. NMED is seeking the best scientific and technical information available related to studies, technology testing, active research projects, and policy considerations from the general public, scientific/research community, private industry, academia, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

Topics covered in the RFI include, but are not limited to, data, reports, narratives, or other information related to PFAS-contaminated livestock, composting PFAS-contaminated livestock carcasses, PFAS destruction, incineration of PFAS-contaminated material, and data from placing PFAS-contaminated material in a hazardous waste landfill or associated research into short- and long-term risks. Responses to the RFI must be submitted through the NMED Public Comment Portal by July 18, 2022.

10. BLM seeks public input and will host public meetings on the environmental impacts for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project

The Bureau of Land Management has opened a 90-day public comment period to collect public comments on the potential environmental impacts associated with proposed amendments to the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project authorized by the BLM in 2015. The BLM will also hold three virtual public meetings on the proposal.

The proposed project consists of two planned 500 kV transmission lines that would cross approximately 520 miles of federal, state, and private lands between central New Mexico and central Arizona. This project would transport up to 4,500 megawatts of clean energy from New Mexico to homes and businesses in Arizona and California. **The comment period will end on July 28, 2022.**

The public meetings will be held via the Zoom virtual platform. The dates and times of these meetings will be announced at least 15 days in advance through local media, newspapers, and the BLM website at: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2011785/510>.

The BLM encourages substantive comments concerning the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project, meaning comments that are factual and specific; describe the significance of the impacts and how they affect you, others, places, and activities; provide any new information that is relevant to the project (e.g., potential affected resources); and discuss modifications to existing alternatives or suggest other reasonable alternatives with justification.

To have your comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement considered for inclusion in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, the BLM must receive them by July 28, 2022. Comments can be provided in the following ways:

- Submit a verbal comment via the hotline: 1-888-959-2510
- Submit your comments electronically via the ePlanning site:
<https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2011785/510>
- Mail your comments to BLM New Mexico State Office at the below address, *Attention: SunZia Southwest Transmission Project*

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be viewed on ePlanning or examined at the BLM New Mexico State Office, 301 Dinosaur Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87508 and BLM Arizona State Office, One North Central Ave., Suite 800, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

For further information, contact BLM Project Manager Adrian Garcia by phone at 505-954-2199.

11. NM Fire Information: Stay Informed about Fires & Fire Restrictions

New Mexico Fire Information (<https://nmfireinfo.com/information/>) is an interagency effort by federal and state agencies in New Mexico to provide timely, accurate, fire and restriction information for the entire state. The agencies that support the site are the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, State of New Mexico, and U.S. Forest Service. The site is updated as often as new information is available from the Southwest Coordination Center, individual forests, national parks, state lands, tribal lands and BLM offices. The aim is to provide one website where the best available information and links related to wildfire and restrictions can be accessed.

12. River Stewardship Program Request for Proposals

The goal of the River Stewardship Program is to fund projects that enhance the health of rivers by addressing the root causes of poor water quality and stream habitat. Each year the New Mexico Legislature appropriates capital outlay funds for the River Stewardship Program to design and construct projects that improve surface water quality or river habitat statewide and to provide state matching funds required by the terms of any federal grant under the Clean Water Act. Annual funding has ranged from \$500,000 to \$2,300,000.

The River Stewardship Program builds on the success of past efforts with Clean Water Act funding and state funding for watersheds, rivers and wetlands. The objectives of the River Stewardship Program include:

- Enhancing the economic benefits of healthy river systems, such as improved opportunities to hunt, fish, float and view wildlife.
- Restoring or maintaining the hydrology of streams and rivers to better handle overbank flows and reduce flooding downstream.

- Providing match required to leverage federal grants, ensuring that New Mexico continues to receive these funds.

NMED has prepared [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) about the River Stewardship Program.

New Mexico has set standards to ensure that surface waters are of sufficient quality to support fish and other aquatic life as well as human use for recreation, irrigation, and municipal water supplies. Many of New Mexico's streams and rivers fail to meet these water quality standards. The River Stewardship Program will address these problems and help ensure water quality for these economically important uses.

The River Stewardship Program will reduce flood hazard in downstream communities. A natural river system includes a channel (with a recognizable bed and banks) and adjacent flood plains. Even in steep canyons some flood water is temporarily stored in small floodplains, reducing the flow as a flood proceeds downstream.

Project contractors and partners have leveraged past state restoration funds on a greater than 1:1 basis with federal grants, private funds or in-kind contributions. Past state restoration funding supported the work of 68 contractors, of which 94% were New Mexico businesses or individuals.

River Stewardship Program projects are be distributed statewide. There is broad eligibility for applying for funding. Eligible applicants include: towns, cities, counties, soil and water conservation districts, irrigation districts, for-profit organizations, Indian Nations, Pueblos and Tribes. Federal agencies and state agencies are not eligible. Projects are selected through [Requests for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) using the state procurement system. Evaluation criteria ensure that projects are technically sound, community-based and stakeholder driven. Evaluation criteria favor projects that improve water quality, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, support local economies, and that reduce downstream flood hazard. The proposal evaluation committee consists of representatives of the NMED Surface Water Quality Bureau and other natural resource management agencies.

The RFP opened May 26th and will close July 26th. To view the RFP, visit: <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/river-stewardship-program/>

13. \$1 Billion America the Beautiful Challenge to Support & Accelerate Locally Led Conservation & Restoration Projects

The America the Beautiful Challenge is anchored by an initial commitment of \$440 million of Federal resources over the next five years to a new public-private grant program, [administered](#) by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), that will support locally led ecosystem restoration projects that invest in watershed restoration, resilience, equitable access, workforce development, corridors and connectivity, and collaborative conservation, consistent with the [America the Beautiful Initiative](#). The historic Bipartisan Infrastructure

Law is a major source of the initial Federal investments for the America the Beautiful Challenge.

The America the Beautiful Challenge will offer states, Tribes, territories, local groups, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and others the opportunity to apply for multiple grant programs through a single application that is managed by NFWF. This one-stop-shop solicitation will streamline the grant application process and facilitate the coordination of funding for projects across landscapes, watersheds, and seascapes to achieve larger and more durable benefits on the ground.

The America the Beautiful Challenge will seek to advance conservation and restoration projects that are consistent with the principles outlined in the [Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful report](#) and that focus on at least one of the following core areas of need:

- Conserving and restoring rivers, coasts, wetlands, and watersheds
- Conserving and restoring forests, grasslands, and other important ecosystems that serve as carbon sinks
- Connecting and reconnecting wildlife corridors, large landscapes, watersheds, and seascapes
- Improving ecosystem and community resilience to coastal flooding, drought, and other climate-related threats
- Expanding access to the outdoors, particularly in underserved communities

America the Beautiful Challenge proposals are due July 21, 2022. For more information, please visit: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/news-updates/2022/04/11/biden-harris-administration-launches-1-billion-america-the-beautiful-challenge-to-support-and-accelerate-locally-led-conservation-and-restoration-projects/>

14. NM Watershed and Dam Owners Coalition Conference

NMWDOC will be hosting the 2022 Fall Conference "Watershed Fire Response" on October 12, 13 & 14, 2022 at Isleta Resort & Hotel. The Resort is located at 11000 Broadway Blvd SE, Albuquerque, NM 87105.

- **Save the Date.** Please block-out your calendars for this exciting upcoming conference.
- **More Details to Come.** We will send out a follow-up email with lots of additional conference & lodging details in the coming weeks.

15. Science Says Thinned Forests are Healthy Forests

“The new [Forest Service](#) strategy on [Confronting the Wildfire Crisis](#) outlines the agency’s plan for increasing fuels and forest health treatments to create healthier forests and reduce the risk to communities.”

Overgrown forests are one of the key contributing factors to the current wildfire crisis in the West. The new Forest Service strategy on Confronting the Wildfire Crisis outlines the agency's plan for increasing fuels and forest health treatments to create healthier forests and reduce the risk to communities.

To review the plan and more information on the Forest Service's plan to thin, visit:
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/features/science-says-thinned-forests-are-healthy-forests>

16. Records Management and Recording of Meetings during the Pandemic

Records Management Division provided some recommendations and guidance as to how long a recording of a district meeting needs to be held on file. The response by the Records Management Division was given:

Our recommendation for the recordings of the meetings, once the audio has been transcribed, the recording becomes non-records and can be destroyed at any time. The transcribed document shall become the official record and retained permanently.

For more information, or if you have questions, please contact Records Management Division at (505) 476-7921, or email Tanya Vigil at Tanya.Vigil@state.nm.us.

17. Electronic Meeting Options for SWCDs

Due to various state directives related to the COVID-19 situation, SWCDs that need to address time sensitive or emergency issues must meet electronically (teleconference and/or video conference). Your NMDA Soil and Water Conservation Specialist can help you get these platforms up and running for your SWCD. Here are a few options that have been the most successful:

- **Zoom** – This is a computer-based platform that allows participants the option to either connect through the internet with video and voice, or call in like a conference call using only voice.
 - While there is a free version, it does have a time limit of 40 minutes. This has caused problems for some SWCDs because the SWCD meetings typically last longer than 40 minutes.
 - The Pro Package is \$14.99 per month, and includes unlimited time, and up to 100 participants per meeting. It also includes cloud storage, the option to record the meeting, screen sharing, and other features. This should be sufficient for most SWCDs.
 - This is the link to the Zoom website <https://nmsu.zoom.us/pricing>
- **Webex** - is a similar video/phone conferencing option to Zoom, offering both free and prepaid plans.
 - Webex's free plan, allows up to 100 participants in each meeting, there is not a time limit on meetings, and it also does not limit the number of meetings one can hold.

- Webex allows both video conferencing and phone calls into the conference number. Which assists those who either do not have internet or internet that does not support video conferencing.
- Currently Webex is offering a promotion that allows a free first month when you sign up for a paid monthly plan, and four months free when an annual plan is purchased. Use code **wecare2020** to access this offer.

Other options available with the paid Webex plans include cloud storage, the option to record the meeting, screen sharing, and other features. Paid plans start at \$13.50 per month. To view what each plan includes, prices and frequently asked questions, visit: <https://www.webex.com/pricing/index.html>

18. Guidance from NMDA to SWCDs during COVID-19 Pandemic

The memo is informational and provides additional guidance to the New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) and the New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) during the time of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most up to date orders issued by the Governor through the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) can be found here:

<https://cv.nmhealth.org/public-health-orders-and-executive-orders/>

In addition to the information on the NMDOH website, the New Mexico Attorney General (NMAG) has also issued Open Meetings Act (OMA) guidance related to conduct of public meetings during the period of social distancing, which can be found at:

<https://www.nmag.gov/>

In part the NMAG states:

“The Office of the Attorney General’s Open Government Division (OGD) advises all public entities subject to OMA to first and foremost follow the guidelines of the Department of Health and other health officials to ensure the health and safety of both members of the entity and the public. Accordingly, the most prudent thing to do to ensure compliance with OMA would be to postpone /cancel a public meeting. If, however, a board or commission has a time-sensitive matter to attend to, it may proceed with a virtual meeting, provided it’s notice of meeting contains detailed information (password, phone number, etc.) about how members of the public may attend and listen via telephone, live streaming or other similar technologies.

More specifically, if a public body decides to proceed with a virtual meeting, it should:

- At the start of the meeting, the chair should announce the names of those members of the public body participating remotely.
- All members of the public body participating remotely must identify themselves whenever they speak and must be clearly audible to the other members of the public body and to the public.
- Members of the public should be afforded remote access, via live stream or other similar technology, if possible, or call-in number for listening by phone.

- Chair should suspend discussion if the audio or video is interrupted.
- All votes of the public body must be by roll call vote.”

NMDA has provided all of the above information to SWCDs through its monthly report to SWCDs as well as through individual contact to each district. However, since this is a rapidly evolving situation, it bears repeating.

You are advised to conduct public meetings in a manner consistent with the public health orders and in compliance with the NMAG guidelines. This means that the meeting must be conducted in a manner that the public has access to participate through a conference call line allowing many interested publics to attend at once. All members of the public must be able to attend and must be allowed to participate in the meeting no matter which technology is chosen. It is advised that no one gather for the meeting in observance of the order to stay socially distant. If meetings are conducted via teleconference or web-based conference service, there would be no need to gather.

In addition to compliance with the social distancing order, it is also important to respect that individuals with underlying health conditions (potentially members of the SWCD board, employees, or the public) may not want to gather even with the appropriate six feet of distance. Therefore, NMDA strongly urges you to conduct any meetings in strict accordance with the orders and guidelines issued by the State of New Mexico. Please consider this information and the guidelines as you decide to hold a public meeting. If you have questions, please contact NMDA staff at 575-646-2642 or call your specific SWCD specialist.

19. Rolling Quorums

NMDA would like to remind all SWCD and Watershed District boards to be careful when emailing and hosting conference calls during this time of limited interaction. A rolling quorum needs to be avoided. The definition and examples are stated below, directly from the Attorney General’s Open Meetings Act Compliance Guide.

Rolling Quorums (Open Meetings Act Compliance Guide 2015 page 7):

The Act’s requirement for open, public meetings applies to any discussion of public business among a quorum of a public body’s members. Usually, a quorum of a public body’s members meets together to discuss public business or take action. However, a quorum may exist for purposes of the Act even when the members are not physically present together at the same time and place. For example, if three members of a five-member board discuss public business in a series of telephone or email conversations, the discussion is a meeting of a quorum. This is sometimes referred to as a “rolling” or “walking” quorum. The use of a rolling quorum to discuss public business or take action violates the Act because it constitutes a meeting of a quorum of the public body’s members outside of a properly noticed, public meeting.

20. Assistance Programs posted on NMDA’s Website

NMDA has compiled a list of all state and federal assistance programs available during the COVID 19 Pandemic. Please look over these assistance programs and feel free to pass

along any of this information that might be beneficial to individuals or groups within your SWCD.

Please visit: <https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/assistance-programs.html>.

21. Meeting and Comments on National Forests in NM

All five of the National Forests in New Mexico are in various stages of completing their Forest Plan Revisions. For updates, please visit the National Forests' websites below for meeting times and comment opportunities.

- Cibola NF: http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/cibola/landmanagement/planning/?cid=FSBDEV3_065627
- Carson NF: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/carson/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5443166>
- Santa Fe NF: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/santafe/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprd3791442>
- Gila NF: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gila/home/?cid=STELPRD3828671>
- Lincoln NF: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/lincoln/home/?cid=stelprd3814307>

NMDA encourages all SWCDs to stay active in the Forest Plan Revision process for all five national forests. We also encourage SWCDs to provide information as requested to make sure that SWCD information is included in the process.