

## Report to New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Districts

New Mexico Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Programs and Resources Division

<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/soil-and-water-districts.html>

### March 2025

#### 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**

January 15 – March 19	<b>Healthy Soil Program grant application period</b> for Eligible Entities and Individual Applicants
February 2 – April 4	Water Quality & Conservation Grant application period for SWCDs
February 3 – March 14	<b>District Opportunities Grant application period</b> for SWCDs and Watershed Districts
March 3 – April 11	<b>Noxious Weeds Program grant application period</b> for: CWMAAs, SWCDs, local governments, state political subdivisions, and special districts, tribes, nations, and pueblos, land grants-mercedes and acequias, and non-profits and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with proven land management capacity
April	Pass annual mil levy rate resolution and submit to the SWCC for approval
April 20	3rd quarterly budget report due to DFA-LGA (cc: SWCC region commissioner and NMDA)
April 30	WQ&C grant 3rd quarterly report and budget due to SWCC
May 15th or July 1st	Independent Public Accountant (IPA) Recommendation Form and the Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP) contract must be signed and submitted to the State Auditor. This applies to Tiers 3-7.
June	Finalize annual work plan for coming fiscal year and submit to the SWCC.
June 1	Budget and budget resolution for the coming fiscal year due to DFA-LGD by June 1st (cc: SWCC and SWCC Region Commissioner). Option: submit preliminary budget by June 1st; final budget with budget resolution by July 31st.
July 15	Point System Worksheet due to SWCC and NMDA Specialist

## 1. NMDA Grant Contact Emails

If your SWCD has a FY25 project with an NMDA grant or program, please submit invoices, requests, and reports with the **grant or program name** to the email addresses below. For FY25 HSP projects, please also include the project number.

**Capital outlay:** Patricia Depner at [pdepner@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:pdepner@nmda.nmsu.edu) and Gabriela Hernandez at [ghernandez@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:ghernandez@nmda.nmsu.edu)

**Healthy Soil Program:** [HSP@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:HSP@nmda.nmsu.edu)

**Land of Enchantment Fund Grant:** [LOE@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:LOE@nmda.nmsu.edu)

**Noxious Weeds Management Grant:** [weeds@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:weeds@nmda.nmsu.edu)

**Water Quality & Conservation:** [SWCC@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:SWCC@nmda.nmsu.edu)

## 2. DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT: 2 New Mexicans win national awards at NACD's 79th Annual Meeting

*Published by NACD Feb. 11 (<https://tinyurl.com/hy6jtpn3>); excerpted by NMDA*

On February 10<sup>th</sup>, the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) recognized winners of national service awards at the association's 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The **Olin Sims Award** was presented to **Jim Berlier** of Estancia, NM. Jim Berlier is a rancher, entrepreneur, mentor, motivator, and leader. He has been involved with the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts for more than 20 years, is an NACD Soil Health Champion, has worked alongside NRCS, and has served on various boards. He is a true conservationist who shares this nation's natural resource issues and the conservation message with others. The Olin Sims Award was established in partnership between NACD and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and is presented to an individual, district, or organization that has gone above and beyond to promote private lands conservation. Sims, a rancher from McFadden, WY, was a longstanding leader in NACD who dedicated his life to volunteer service and conservation.

**Vincent Cordova** of Guadalupe Soil and Water Conservation District in Santa Rosa, NM, was recognized as a recipient of the National Conservation District Employees Association's (NCDEA) **Outstanding Conservation District Board Member Award**. As Chairman of the Guadalupe Soil and Water Conservation District, Vincent has been the driving force behind transformative initiatives, tackling watershed erosion and invasive species and bringing more money and resources to his community. He has also collaborated with state, regional, and national partners to advance conservation. Cordova has brought unmatched expertise and passion to the conservation field, positively affecting countless farmers, ranchers, stakeholders, and future generations.

### 3. 2025 SWCD Supervisor Elections

NMDA strongly encourages all SWCDs to schedule meetings with all county clerks whose counties are within SWCD boundaries, not just the counties where the majority of the district land lies. Each county clerk may run elections differently. Therefore you are responsible for contacting them soon to see what they need from your district and when it's needed. The NMDA election timeline, which clearly states what is due and when, is no longer valid for SWCD elections. County clerks are in charge and will be the ones to set due dates and how to comply with the new Local Election Act.

The sooner you make contact with each county clerk within your district boundaries, the sooner you will be on the right track to the 2025 elections. Neither NMDA nor the SWCC has any input if a deadline or document is not correctly fulfilled.

Each SWCD is solely responsible for their 2025 election in accordance with the Local Election Act.

### 4. NMDA's Healthy Soil Program: Apply for a grant by March 19

The Healthy Soil Program's Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) grant-application cycle opened January 15 and closes at 12 p.m. (noon) Mountain Time on March 19. Late, incomplete, and paper applications will not be accepted.

Because of new Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund monies, Healthy Soil Program **projects can last nearly 15 months**, from mid-July 2025 to late September 2026. To think through how to best utilize this extended timeframe – and for other agricultural and/or natural resource management questions – SWCDs and other Eligible Entities are encouraged to contact Dean Bruce, the technical co-lead of NMDA's Healthy Soil Program, at [hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu).

Individual Applicants who did not complete conservation planning with NRCS by the February 21 deadline cannot apply for grant funding this cycle. Individual Applicants are non-governmental parties (individuals, businesses, and nonprofits) that are directly engaged in farming, ranching, and other forms of land management.

As always, NMDA's Healthy Soil Program invites you to **sign up for a brief weekly email** for program updates (application tips and deadline reminders), as well as soil health events and news. To subscribe, simply enter your information in the form at the bottom of the Healthy Soil Program home page (<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/healthy-soil-program.html>) or send an email to [hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu) with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

### 5. District Opportunities Grant (*formerly known as the Land of Enchantment Fund Grant*) applications due March 14

The District Opportunities (DO) grant will open on Monday, February 3 at 12 p.m. (noon) and close on Friday, March 14 at 12 p.m. (noon). Once the grant application opens on Monday, February 3 at noon, it'll be available at: <https://grants.nmda.nmsu.edu>

Program requirements will be similar to the FY25 grant in that only SWCDs and watershed districts can apply for the competitive grants. The four categories of funding also will remain the same: Capacity-Building; Conservation Planning/Land Use Planning; Landscape-Scale Restoration Projects; and Community Outreach and Education Projects.

Other than the new name, the main change to the grant is the extended timeline for project implementation. Because of new Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund monies, the Landscape-Scale Restoration projects can last nearly 16 months, until October 31, 2026. The other three categories will have until August 15, 2026.

## **6. NMDA Noxious Weeds Management Grant webinar March 7**

The application period for NMDA's FY26 Noxious Weeds Management Grants will open on Monday, March 3, 2025, and close on Friday, April 11, 2025. Program requirements are largely similar to the FY25 grant and the project implementation period can last up to 15.5 months (July 15, 2025-October 31, 2026). Applicants can apply for up to \$60,000 for projects that address state-listed noxious weeds through the following activities:

- Surveying and mapping
- Early detection and rapid response (EDRR)
- Integrated weed management (on-the-ground treatments)
- Education/outreach
- Planning, capacity building, and partnership building

Prospective applicants are encouraged to begin planning their projects ahead of the application period. More details on the FY26 grant program can be found at:

<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/noxious-weeds.html>

[Looking to expand your noxious weed management efforts beyond \\$60,000? Consider applying for the EMNRD Invasive Plant Program \(IPP\) Grant. Funds awarded by the NMDA can be used to meet the 1:1 match requirement. Interested applicants must apply by Friday, April 11th, 2025, to be considered for Spring 2025 projects. For more information on the EMNRD IPP grant, visit: <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/forest-health/invasive-noxious-plants/>.](#) NMDA will host a webinar giving a brief overview of the noxious weeds grants to potential applicants on March 7, 2025, at 10 a.m. To access the webinar, use the following link: <https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/89101207567>.

If you have any questions, please contact NMDA's state noxious weed coordinator, Dylan Burruss at [dburruss@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:dburruss@nmda.nmsu.edu) or 575-997-1845.

## **7. Soil and Water Conservation Commission Water Quality and Conservation Grant Program FY26 Grant Applications due April 4**

The New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) annually receives a legislative appropriation from the State of New Mexico to be used for special projects

relating to water quality and conservation. These funds are awarded by the SWCC through the Water Quality and Conservation Grant Program. The goal of the grant program is to promote the health of New Mexico's watersheds and conserve the water resources they produce. A limited number of projects addressing one or more of the following areas will be funded over the next fiscal year.

1. Watershed Improvement/Management
2. Irrigation Efficiency
3. Riparian Restoration
4. Natural Resource Information and Education
5. Ground Water Protection/Conservation
6. Noxious Weeds

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Projects that are either sponsored or co-sponsored by one of New Mexico's 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are eligible. The SWCDs must be active participants in the project, and be fiscally responsible for the grant award.

### **PROCEDURES**

A review committee appointed by the SWCC will review the applications. The review committee will submit funding recommendations to the SWCC for approval. Applications that are approved for funding will have ten percent (10%) of the total award withheld pending potential legislative budget reductions. The remaining funding, less any budget reductions, will be made available following the regular legislative session.

Upon being approved for funding, the designated Project Coordinator and at least one member of the SWCD board of supervisors must attend a Water Quality and Conservation Grant Training. The training will review in detail the budgeting and reporting procedures, as well as any Joint Powers Agreement that must be approved by the SWCD board of supervisors.

Project Coordinators may be asked to attend regularly scheduled SWCC meetings to present project updates and discuss project status. Quarterly reports, including project updates and budget, must be submitted to the SWCC.

A final project report will be due to the SWCC within 30 days after the completion of the project. Projects must be completed by the end of the fiscal year (1 July – 30 June) in which they are funded.

**Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will be notified by email.**

## **8. Soil and Water Conservation Day at the Legislature on March 5**

Soil and Water Conservation Day in Santa Fe at the Legislature will be held on March 5 at the State Capitol/Rotunda. If your district would like to set up a booth, contact NMACD. All SWCDs are encouraged to attend.

## 9. New Mexico Conservation District Employees Association Meeting

The NMCDE will hold a meeting on **March 5<sup>th</sup> in Santa Fe, NM at 2:30 p.m.**

Meeting Location: **Genoveva Chavez Community Center 3221 Rodeo Rd, Santa Fe, NM 87507**

Please see attached NMCDE Dues Sheet and Bylaws. The Bylaws will be discussed at the meeting, so please review.

The NMCDE is also asking all SWCDs to please email a list of ALL SWCD employees, regardless of membership status.

For any questions please contact NMCDE President Marcos Valdez,  
[marcos.valdez@nm.nacdnet.net](mailto:marcos.valdez@nm.nacdnet.net)

## 10. NMDA Livestock Scale Inspection Requests due to NMDA March 31

Consumer Services is responsible for the annual inspection and testing of commercial livestock scales used in the state of New Mexico. The Livestock Scale Inspection Program is by request only. Livestock scale inspection requests are accepted annually during the months of January through March and are inspected between April 1 and December 31 of the current year. Fees will be assessed to scale inspection requests received after the deadline date.

In order to improve our efficiency, the New Mexico Department of Agriculture Standards and Consumer Services Division (SCS) has launched the [Routine Livestock Scale Inspection Program](#). The program will apply to livestock scale owners who consistently request SCS's annual livestock inspection service.

The online livestock scale request form below is *only* for livestock scale owners who opted out of the Routine Livestock Scale Inspection Program. If you are part of the Routine Livestock Scale Inspection Program, please *do not* fill out the form below.

For more information please call (575) 646-1616 or email [livestockscale@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:livestockscale@nmda.nmsu.edu)

Inspection requests must be made January 1 through March 31 of the current inspection year.

**The items below might be of interest to SWCDs. These items were retrieved from various sources outside of NMDA.**

## 11. Special District Capacity Building Training

*Retrieved by NMDA from the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), February 19<sup>th</sup>*

On Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> the NM DFA Infrastructure Planning and Development Division, in collaboration with the Office of the State Auditor and the Budget and Finance Department of

the Local Government Division will be providing training on the capital outlay process along with LGBMS training.

This training will offer a comprehensive overview of the entire process and focus on common challenges that some grantees face. Participants will also learn strategies to successfully navigate these obstacles in capital outlay.

Please see the attached flyer where you will find the QR Code for registration.

## **12. Section 319 Watershed Implementation Projects Request for Applications Now Open**

*Retrieved by NMDA from New Mexico Environment Department, January 24<sup>th</sup>*

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) is now accepting applications for on-the-ground watershed implementation projects to produce measurable improvement in water quality by 2028 and in the longer term as part of New Mexico's Nonpoint Source Management Program. The **Section 319 Watershed Implementation Projects Request for Applications (RFA)** was released on January 24, 2025 and has applications **due March 25, 2025, by 5:00 pm Mountain Daylight Time.**

Applications must be submitted as described in the RFA which is located here: <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/watershed-protection-section/funding-opportunities>

Please submit any questions about this funding opportunity as directed in the RFA and in writing to the Watershed Protection Section Program Manager:  
Kate Lacey-Younge: [wpsprogram.manager@env.nm.gov](mailto:wpsprogram.manager@env.nm.gov)

## **13. New Mexico Unit Fund Pilot Cycle open to Southwest Region SWCDs**

The application period *closes March 31, 2025*. If you have any questions about the application or the application process, please reach out to Susan Rodriguez at the New Mexico Finance Authority at [srodriguez@nmfa.net](mailto:srodriguez@nmfa.net) or (505) 984-1454. The Pilot Cycle application is located on the [New Mexico Finance Authority website](#).

In accordance with the NMISC [New Mexico Unit Fund Pilot Cycle Policy](#) and WTB's New Mexico Unit Fund Evaluation Pilot Cycle Policy, the NMISC will consider funding **Planning** or **Design** of water utilization projects that meet water supply demand in the Southwest Region (Catron, Grant, Hidalgo and Luna counties ) and accomplish one or more of the following:

Promote conservation and efficient use of water supplies.

- Establish and support water delivery systems or treatment systems that are hydrologically and fiscally sustainable and meet state and federal statutory and regulatory requirements.

- Support watershed health through projects that restore riparian ecosystems, improve water quality, or mitigate damage to water resources from wildfire. The NMISC encourages all eligible entities to apply for funding through the Pilot Cycle. The Pilot Cycle will create, test, and refine an application process for future funding cycles. NMDA has confirmed with NMISC & New Mexico Finance Authority that soil and water conservation districts in the Southwest Region (Catron, Grant, Hidalgo and Luna counties) are eligible entities.

## **14. Comprehensive Climate Action Planning Community Input Meetings**

*Retrieved by NMDA from New Mexico Environment Department, February 11<sup>th</sup>*

The New Mexico Environment Department and New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department are holding public meetings around the state to help inform New Mexico’s Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Plan will provide an actionable roadmap to meet New Mexico’s climate pollution reduction targets.

Please join us and share your ideas, values, beliefs, and priorities about creating a healthy, secure, and prosperous future for all New Mexicans!

All meetings are from 5:30-7:30 p.m. and food and beverages will be served. Please register for one or more of the meetings here ([link](#)). Your comfort and needs matter. Please let us know of any accommodation you need to participate in the community event. All event locations are ADA compliant. Language interpretation needs must be identified at least 5 days prior to the event.

2/20/2025-Gallup-El Morro Theater Event Center 210 S 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Gallup

2/27/2025-Hobbs-NM Junior College Larry Hanna Workforce Development Facility 4000 W Millen Drive, Hobbs, NM

3/6/2025-Tucumcari-NM Mesalands Community College 911 South Tenth Street, Tucumcari

3/13/2025-Silver City-Grant County Veterans Memorial Business and Conference Center 3031US-180, Silver City

3/20/2025-Las Vegas-NM Highlands Student Union Building 800 National Avenue, SUB rooms 321-322 Las Vegas

3/27/2025-Albuquerque-TBD

4/3/2025-Statewide-Virtual meeting

## **15. Livestock Board to consider updating Trichomoniasis rule during March 26 Meeting**



## **Published by NMLB February 17; excerpted by NMDA**

the New Mexico Livestock Board (NMLB) will hold an in-person and virtual rulemaking hearing on March 26, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at The Courtyard by Marriott Las Cruces at NMSU, 456 E. University Ave, Las Cruces, NM in Meeting Room 'Aggie'.

The NMLB will consider proposed Rule changes. The purpose of the proposed rule amendment/repeal and replace it to make updated changes to the Trichomoniasis rules involving breeding bulls, official identification, pregnancy confirmation, and grammatical/stylistic changes. See generally 21.30.6.1 through 21.30.6.16 NMAC to TITLE 21, AGRICULTURE AND RANCHING; CHAPTER 30, ANIMALS AND ANIMAL INDUSTRY GENERAL PROVISIONS, PART 6 BOVINE TRICHOMONIASIS.

Full copies of the text of the proposed new rules can be obtained from the agency's website [here](#). To request a copy of the proposed rule by mail, contact the NMLB at (505)841-6161. Visit [www.nmlbonline.com/board](http://www.nmlbonline.com/board) for instructions on how to attend the virtual public hearing.

Interested persons may submit written comments on the proposed Rules 21.30.6.1 through 21.30.6.16 NMAC at [nmlb-rulecomments@state.nm.us](mailto:nmlb-rulecomments@state.nm.us) or individuals may mail written comments to: NMLB/Rule Comments, 2105 Osuna Rd NE Building South, Albuquerque, NM 87113. Comments are due by 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 25, 2025. The final proposed rules will be voted on by the Board during the public hearing on Wednesday, March 26, 2025. Interested persons may also provide data, views or arguments, orally or in writing, at the in-person and virtual public rule hearing to be held on March 26, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at The Courtyard by Marriott Las Cruces at NMSU, 456 E. University Ave, Las Cruces, NM in Meeting Room 'Aggie'. All written comments will be posted on the agency's website within three (3) days of receipt.

## **16. NRCS Watershed Program Opportunities for Flood Prone Communities**

*Retrieved by NMDA from Ray Ledgerwood, February 25<sup>th</sup>*

There will be a National Watershed Coalition webinar to learn the latest information on NRCS Watershed Program Opportunities for Flood Prone Communities.

**When:** April 22, 2025 at 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

**Topic:** NRCS Watershed Program Opportunities for Flood Prone Communities

**Register in advance for this webinar:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_MlJHWz55RFexuKjJsuKYrQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MlJHWz55RFexuKjJsuKYrQ)

**Description:** Participants will learn about NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program assistance with project sponsors for flooding and erosion protection following a natural disaster including structural solutions that protect communities from additional flooding threats and financial assistance for sponsor-led property buyouts.

The webinar will also include NRCS Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Program assistance to sponsors in preparing and carrying out watershed plans for purposes such as watershed protection and flood prevention, assessing the extent of watershed problems and the needs of a flood-prone community with watershed plans that may include nonstructural or structural measures.

## **17. National Cover Crop Summit**

*Retrieved Feb. 24 by NMDA from <https://www.covercropstrategies.com/national-cover-crop-summit>*

**The National Cover Crop Summit will return March 18-20, 2025**, with another can't-miss lineup of today's most successful cover cropper adopters, researchers and agronomists sharing their best seeding strategies, grazing and feeding tips, variety selection secrets and more.

Requiring no travel expense or time away from the office or farm, you will be able to participate from the comfort of your own office through a series of online presentation videos delivering practical tips and information on managing cover crops to improve soil health, protect the environment and enhance on-farm profitability. Link to registration: <https://tinyurl.com/3ax5bu2f>



# Capacity Building: Session 1

The **NM DFA Infrastructure Planning and Development Division**, in collaboration with the **Office of the State Auditor**, will provide training on the capital outlay process. This training will offer a comprehensive overview of the entire process, with a focus on common challenges that grantees face. Participants will also learn strategies for successfully navigating these obstacles in capital outlay.



**Saturday, April 12th**  
**9AM-5PM**



**NMDOT District 3**  
**7500 Pan American Frwy NE,**  
**Albuquerque, NM 87109**

**9:00 AM-10:30 AM: Manual Luna**  
**OSA Website Navigation and Requirements**

**10:30 AM-12:00 PM: Scott Wright**  
**Capital Planning and Policy**

**Lunch Break**

**12:00 PM-1:00 PM**  
**(Lunch will not be provided)**

**1:00 PM-5:00 PM: Cordelia Chavez & Others**  
**Local Government Budget Management System (LGBMS) Training**

**(Please bring your own laptop/device)**

**Register by April 4th, 2025**

Entity Training 2025 & Beyond  
Training Registration



[Link to Register](#)