

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>

May 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

May	Pass annual mil levy rate resolution and submit to the SWCC for approval
May	Submit Appointed Supervisor recommendations to the SWCC
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.
June 13	FY2027-2031 ICIPs due to DFA for interested SWCDs and other special districts Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration
June 30	Fiscal Year Ends
July 15	Point System Worksheet due to SWCC and NMDA Specialist
*July 30	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.

**Corrected Date from Previous Reports*

1. Farmer and Rancher Town Hall online May 6

NMDA partnership with NMCWEL

Virtual Town Hall hosted by the New Mexico Coalition to Enhance Working Lands (NMCEWL) in partnership with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA). This event is an opportunity for farmers and ranchers across New Mexico to share how federal administration and policy changes are affecting your operations—and to speak directly to decision-makers about what’s needed now.

Date: Tuesday, May 6

Time: 6:00–7:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom - [Please click here to register](#). *You must be registered to attend!*

Opening Remarks: NMDA Secretary **Jeff Witte** and **Kendal Chavez**, Food and Hunger Advisor in the office of Governor Lujan Grisham

Producer Panel: Reach out to coordinator@nmcewl.org if you are interested in participating in a facilitated panel on market disruptions, conservation programs, labor access, or changing relationships with federal agencies.

Open forum: 3-minute time-slots will be available to attendees to share their experience

Facilitated and hosted by: NM Coalition to Enhance Working Lands

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We're inviting you to share your story, reflections or testimony during the town hall—whether it's a challenge you're facing or a solution you've found. Topics may include market disruptions, conservation programs, labor access, or changing relationships with federal agencies.

If you'd like to speak during the town hall, you'll be able to sign up when you RSVP. Each registered participant will be given three minutes to speak. If time permits, facilitators will also take additional comments during the event.

For questions, contact **the NMCEWL team** at info@nmcewl.org.

All are welcome to attend this event. You're encouraged to distribute this invitation.

Here's a [link for an image to share this invitation](#) via social media.

2. NMDA's Healthy Soil Program: Closing out FY25 projects, starting upFY26 projects

Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25): There are two important dates this month for **Eligible Entities and Individual Applicants** currently implementing Healthy Soil Program grant-funded projects:

- **May 24:** Grant-funded activities must be completed and post-project soil assessment(s) must be performed by this date.
- **May 31:** 3rd quarterly/final reports, including post-project soil assessment data, must be submitted to NMDA. Final invoices must also be submitted to NMDA for approved project expenses.

Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26): There are two important dates coming up for those who applied earlier this year for a Healthy Soil Program grant:

- **June 12:** On or about this date, NMDA will email each applicant – Eligible Entity and Individual Applicant, successful and unsuccessful – to notify them of the outcome of their FY26 grant application. At that time, those whose projects are selected for funding will be

presented a final budget (the budget they submitted less any ineligible expenses) so they can make an informed decision to accept the grant or have those dollars reallocated to Healthy Soil Program research, etc.

- **June 24:** NMDA will host two trainings via Zoom: one training for Eligible Entities, and one training for Individual Applicants and their Project Sponsors (SWCDs and tribal governments). The training is mandatory, covering topics like pre-project soil testing and assessment; invoicing early and often throughout the grant term; and timely delivery of quarterly reports on grant progress. Information to register for this training will be included in the notification email sent to successful applicants on or about June 12.

The period to implement an FY26 Healthy Soil Program grant-funded project is July 15, 2025 to September 30, 2026. Information pertaining to the Fiscal Year 2026 cycle remains on the Healthy Soil Program website so that those interested in applying for a Fiscal Year 2027 grant can get a sense of the application requirements.

NMDA intends to update the website with Fiscal Year 2027 requirements this fall. That timeframe allows Individual Applicants several *months* to complete conservation planning with USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), even before NMDA launches its next online grant application in early 2026.

3. NMDA Grant Contact Emails

If your SWCD has an 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 and Gabriela Hernandez at ghernandez@nmda.nmsu.edu

Healthy Soil Program: HSP@nmda.nmsu.edu

District Opportunities grant (formerly known as the Land of Enchantment Fund Grant): LOE@nmda.nmsu.edu

Noxious Weeds Management Grant: weeds@nmda.nmsu.edu

Water Quality & Conservation Grant: SWCC@nmda.nmsu.edu

4. Mill Levy Rate Resolutions and Appointed Supervisor Nominations

Please submit your Mill Levy Rate Resolutions and Appointed Supervisor Nominations to the SWCC by June 1st. Appointed Supervisor nominations should be submitted for **each** supervisor in positions 6 and 7. Attached is the Appointed Supervisor Form, to be filled out for both Appointed Supervisor positions and submitted to the SWCC.

5. 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 its 2025 election in accordance with the Local Election Act.

6. Reminder to Renew Chief Procurement Officer Certificate Every Two Years

Your CPO Certification *expires* EVERY two years, and it is **your responsibility** to renew your certificate. Please take time to add this to your calendar and other devices to help remind you.

Per NM EDGE

- Chief Procurement Officers are required to recertify ("per § 13-1-95.2 (D) NMSA 1978") every and within two years (based on the month of initial certification).
- It is the responsibility of the CPO to re-certify before their current certification lapses.
- NM EDGE offers Foundation and Recertification classes every quarter.

For more information and to register for classes, visit: <https://nmedge.nmsu.edu/public.html>

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

7. Training Information from NMACD

Retrieved by NMDA from Jennifer Hopper, NMACD, April 25

DFA is offering an essential training on Capacity Building, with the same training being held in different locations throughout the state. Preregistration is required. Flyers with links for registration are attached for the trainings that are currently scheduled. Two other trainings in the northern part of the state are planned, but have not yet been scheduled.

The training will cover OSA website navigation and requirements, capital planning and policy, and LGBMS (Local Government Budget Management System). You must pre-register, and space is limited. The flyer with the link for registration is attached.

Remember, these are important and essential elements of job requirements as state employees and elected officials with the SWCD. Employees and Supervisors are responsible and liable for having this information and a working knowledge of how to use the required systems.

Please contact Jennifer Hopper at Jenniferhopper@nmacd.org or 719-492-8547 with questions.

8. Watershed Protection Assistance Program Funding Opportunity

Retrieved by NMDA from NM Environment Department April 16, 2025

The Surface Water Quality Bureau, Watershed Protection Section, is now offering the Watershed Protection Assistance Program to develop, construct, maintain and/or monitor projects that improve surface water quality, riparian and/or aquatic habitat. Eligible entities include vendors who are active on the Riparian, Aquatic, and [Wetland Restoration Services Statewide Price Agreement](#) (40-00000-23-00037) or other applicable price agreements, National Association of State Procurement Officials, GSA schedule awards, or local public bodies (e.g., municipalities, counties, or political subdivisions of state or local governments).

This is a small funding opportunity (up to \$75,000) for a project term of six months to one year. Applications are due May 15th and November 15th each year.

[Click here](#) for more information. For questions, email: WPSProgram.Manager@env.nm.gov

9. Livestock Board Proposed Rule Making Notice

Retrieved by NMDA from NMLB April 24, 2025

New Mexico Livestock Board (NMLB) will hold an in-person rulemaking hearing on June 2, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in Ruidoso, New Mexico at the Ruidoso Convention Center, 111 Sierra Blanca Dr. Ruidoso, NM 88345 during a regular board meeting. The hearing will be held in-person only.

The NMLB will consider proposed Rule changes. The purpose of the proposed rule amendment is to make permanent rule changes for Equine Infectious Anemia to 21.30.4 NMAC AGRICULTURE AND RANCHING; ANIMALS AND ANIMAL INDUSTRY GENERAL PROVISIONS to include the testing, disposition and compliance of EIA, and grammatical/ stylistic changes. See generally 21.30.4.7 through 21.30.4.13 NMAC to

AGRICULTURE AND RANCHING; ANIMALS AND ANIMAL INDUSTRY GENERAL PROVISIONS.

Full copies of text of the proposed new rules can be obtained from the agency's website at www.nmlbonline.com. To request a copy of the proposed rule by mail, contact the NMLB at (505) 841-6161.

Interested persons may submit written comments on the proposed Rules 21.30.4.7 through 21.30.4.13 NMAC at www.rulecomments@nmlbonline.com 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 Friday May 30, 2025. The final proposed rules will be voted on by the Board during the public hearing on Monday June 2, 2025.

10. NMED and NMEMNRD Host Statewide Virtual Community Conversations to help shape New Mexico's Climate Action Plan

Retrieved by NMDA from NM Environment Department, April 23

The Climate Action Plan will provide an actionable roadmap to achieve New Mexico's climate pollution reduction goals while promoting community health, workforce opportunities, and economic development across the state.

Community Conversation Schedule:

All meetings will be held via Zoom from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

- May 13, 2025 – Electricity
- May 15, 2025 – Industry
- May 27, 2025 – Transportation
- May 29, 2025 – Agriculture, Forests, and Wilderness
- June 3, 2025 – Buildings and Waste & Materials

Register here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZBHC3BG>

Learn more on our website: <https://www.climateaction.nm.gov/cap/>

Zoom links will be sent to all registrants and posted on our website and on the New Mexico Environment Department calendar: <https://www.env.nm.gov/events-calendar/>

Language access: Spanish interpretation and translation will be provided at all meetings. For other language interpretation needs, please notify us at least five days in advance.

Contact: Becky Smith, (505) 469-1576, nm.cprg@env.nm.gov

11. New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board Proposed Rulemaking

Retrieved by NMDA from NM Environment Department, April 22

NOTICE RULEMAKING HEARING TO CONSIDER ADOPTION OF PROPOSED HEAT ILLNESS AND INJURY PREVENTION RULE 11.5.7 NMAC EIB 25-11(R)

The New Mexico Environmental Improvement Board (“Board”) will hold a public hearing beginning on July 16, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. to consider EIB 25-11(R) - In the Matter of Proposed New Regulation 11.5.7 NMAC – Heat Illness and Injury Prevention. The hearing will last as long as required to hear all testimony, evidence, and public comment, and is expected to last approximately two days. The Board may make a decision on the proposed Heat Illness and Injury rule at the conclusion of the hearing, or the Board may convene a meeting after the hearing to consider action on the proposal.

The hearing will be conducted in a hybrid format to allow for both in[1]person and virtual participation. The in-person hearing will be held at the New Mexico State Capitol Building (Roundhouse), 490 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507. Detailed information concerning the time and location and instructions on how to join the hearing virtually is available on the New Mexico Environment Department (“NMED”) events calendar at <https://www.env.nm.gov/events-calendar/>, under the calendar entry corresponding to the hearing start date. From now until the conclusion of the hearing, comments may be submitted via the NMED public comment portal at <https://nmed.commentinput.com/?id=4PbpDC9rG> or via email to heatrule.comments@env.nm.gov or in paper format by mailing comments to NMED-OHSB, Attn: Heat Illness and Injury Prevention, P.O. Box 5469, Santa Fe, NM, 87502.

The proposed rule will set forth standards for New Mexico employers to prevent injury or illness to workers from exposure to high heat environments in the workplace. These standards include implementing a Heat Illness and Injury and Prevention Plan (HIPP), taking time to acclimate workers to hot environments, providing access to clean, cool drinking water throughout the workday, and mandating frequent rest periods in the shade. This regulation is part of a broader state effort to address worker health and safety in the state through the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

NMED’s docketed matters website is at <https://www.env.nm.gov/opf/docketed-matters/>. Additional information is available on NMED’s Occupational Health and Safety Bureau webpage at https://www.env.nm.gov/occupational_health_safety/heat-illness-and-injury-prevention/. Paper copies of the petition, the statement of reasons, and the proposed rule are available at all NMED’s offices statewide. Interested persons may contact Kristy Peck at (505) 476-8712 or Robert Genoway at (505) 470-7627 or Heatrule.Comments@env.nm.gov with questions.

Any member of the general public may testify at the hearing. No prior notification is required to present nontechnical testimony at the hearing. Any such member may also offer non-technical exhibits in connection with their testimony, so long as the exhibit is not unduly repetitious of the testimony. A member of the general public who wishes to submit a written

statement for the record, in lieu of providing oral testimony at the hearing, shall file the written statement prior to the hearing or submit it at the hearing.

12. New Mexico Tree Deaths Double 2024

Retrieved by NMDA from, NM Forestry Division, April 21

SANTA FE – Tree deaths in New Mexico’s forests more than doubled from 2023, according to the new [Forest Health Conditions Report](#) released by the Energy Minerals and Natural Resources [Forestry Division](#).

Key findings from the report show:

- 70,000 acres of dead conifer trees – up from the 33,000 acres in 2023.
- 406,000 acres damaged by insects, disease and harsh conditions — an increase of 42,000 acres or 12% since 2023.
- 39% rise in trees losing needles, leaves and turning brown or red statewide.

The report, created in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, is based on aerial surveys to map insect and disease activity across 14 million acres of state, private, Tribal, and federal forests and woodlands.

Native insects proved to be the primary cause of tree damage. These include the caterpillars of the Douglas-fir tussock moth, which defoliated 18,000 acres within mixed conifer forests, a significant increase from 2023. Piñon needle scale, a tiny sap-sucking insect, defoliated 16,000 acres. Other culprits include bark beetles, Piñon ips, Western Spruce budworm, and Ponderosa needle miner.

Drought, which remains persistent in New Mexico, decreased slightly last year. Forest and woodland acres impacted by drought and heat decreased by 65% statewide. However, the state’s mean temperature rose to 56.3 degrees, making 2024 the second warmest year on record.

The public can access the full [report](#) and additional information on the Forestry Division’s [Forest Health webpage](#), including the [Data Dashboard](#) with five years of tracking data. For specific information about bark beetles, [visit this resource page](#)

Link to this press release available [here](#).