

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>
August 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

September 1st	Annual report of activities and annual plan for the past fiscal year due to SWCC, SWCC region commissioner, and NMDA Specialist.
October 30 th	1 st quarterly budget report due to DFA-LGD (cc: to SWCC, SWCC Region Commissioner, and NMDA Specialist)
October 31st	Water Quality and Conservation Grant 1 st quarterly report and budget due to the SWCC and NMDA Specialist

1. SWCDs: Apply for the \$160,000 with NMDA for Capacity Building

Please see NMDA's attached guidelines and proposal instructions for the SWCD FY26-28 Capacity Building Funding Opportunity. There is also a budget template that NMDA suggests (rather than requires) SWCDs use.

NMDA will accept proposals for this round of capacity building funding from July 15, 2025 to July 15, 2026 (12 months). Once NMDA has approved a proposal and the necessary paperwork is completed, funded activities can begin.

Please email the completed proposal and budget to your SWCD Specialist and pdepner@nmda.nmsu.edu. **If you have questions about this funding opportunity or require assistance, please contact your SWCD Specialist.**

2. Point System Worksheet Funding for FY26-28

Following consultation with the Soil and Water Conservation Commission in June, NMDA will dedicate a portion of the \$9 million special appropriation for the SWCDs to increase funding for base operational support through the Point System. Funding will be allocated to each SWCD based on the SWCC's annually approved Point System formula. This will result in an increase of approximately +\$10,000 per SWCD per year for FYs 26, 27 & 28. This means approximately \$28,000 per SWCD per year will be available for districts that earn **full**

points on the Point System worksheet. To receive the additional funding from the state appropriation, districts must be compliant with state audit requirements.

3. NMDA's Healthy Soil Program hosts NRCS conservation planning webinar Aug. 12

Now that Fiscal Year 2026 Healthy Soil Program grant-funded projects are off and running as of July 15, NMDA is looking ahead to the program's Fiscal Year 2027 grant-application cycle. We'll kick off the FY27 cycle with a webinar for Individual Applicants.

WHAT: Webinar: NRCS conservation planning for NMDA's Healthy Soil Program

WHEN: Tuesday, August 12, 2025 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Mountain Time

WHERE: On Zoom. You must register to receive the link to attend:

<https://tinyurl.com/3a262xe2>

WHO should attend:

- Farmers, ranchers, and other land managers who intend to apply for a Healthy Soil Program grant when the FY27 application goes live in early 2026.
- SWCD staff and supervisors are among the many others who are welcome to attend.

WHY: To prepare Individual Applicants to complete NRCS-certified conservation planning early, as it's the foundation of an Individual Applicant's Healthy Soil Program project idea.

This webinar aims to allow 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.

As a reminder to SWCDs that are implementing and/or sponsoring Healthy Soil Program projects in FY26: ***All projects must be invoiced for reimbursement at least quarterly.*** That requirement will help all parties involved with the grant keep pace with their paperwork during the nearly 15-month grant term.

Keep up with all things HSP by reading a brief weekly email from NMDA's Healthy Soil Program team. Subscribing is simple: Send an email to hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu with the word SUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

4. Agricultural Workforce Development Program opened June 16

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) Agricultural Workforce Development (AWD) Program grant application period opens June 16, 2025, and will continue until funds are fully allocated or by March 31, 2025, whichever comes first. Internships can begin after July 1, 2025, and must be completed by May 30, 2026.

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.

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.

Agricultural business operators, please read the [Agricultural Workforce Development FAQs](https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/agricultural-workforce-development-faqs.html) carefully before submitting an application at:
<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/agricultural-workforce-development-faqs.html>

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>

5. NMDA Grant Contact Emails

If your SWCD has an FY26 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 FY26 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
- **\$160,000 SWCD Capacity Building Funding Opportunity:** Patricia Depner at pdepner@nmda.nmsu.edu; for questions about applying for the funding, contact your Specialist.

6. 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.

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

7. 2025 Regular Local Election Candidate Information

Published at <https://www.sos.nm.gov/candidate-and-campaigns/how-to-become-a-candidate/2025-regular-local-election-candidate-information/>; retrieved by NMDA July 22, 2025

2025 Regular Local Election Overview

The Regular Local Election will be held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025.

When to File – Date and Time

Candidate filing day for all local offices for the 2025 Regular Local Election is TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025 – between 9:00am and 5:00pm – in the offices of the County Clerks.

Where to File – Proper Filing Officer

Declarations of candidacy and candidate qualification documents will be filed with the county clerk of the county in which the candidate resides.

What to File – Forms

Each candidate must submit a Declaration of Candidacy Form (and any other required forms) to their proper filing officer, during the designated hours for filing (see section above “Where to File – Proper Filing Officer.”)

8. Hagerman-Dexter SWCD District Manager Job Posting

Published by Hagerman-Dexter SWCD; retrieved by NMDA July 24, 2025

The Hagerman-Dexter Soil & Water Conservation District is seeking qualified applicants for the position of District Manager. This position will work in the Hagerman-Dexter SWCD office located in Hagerman, NM. Duties include generating monthly reports, paying bills, and overseeing Board meetings. Applicants must have basic computer skills in Microsoft Windows, Word, Excel, and Outlook, basic knowledge of accounting. Understanding of agricultural operations is preferable. This position is part-time. Work hours will be determined weekly based on workload needs. Apply by sending a resume to P.O. Drawer H, Hagerman, NM, 88232 by August 11, 2025. For further information, contact office personnel at: **(719) 351-9057**.

9. Chaves CWMA Conservation Partners Meeting

Published by Chaves SWCD; retrieved by NMDA July 25, 2025



The flyer for the Chaves CWMA Conservation Partners Meeting features a green and white color scheme. At the top, the title "Chaves CWMA Conservation Partners Meeting" is displayed in green. Below the title, the date "Date: August 14, 2025" and time "Time: 8:30 am - 3:30 pm" are listed. The location "Location: New Mexico Game & Fish 1615 W College Blvd Roswell, NM 88201" is provided. A central image shows a landscape with a drone flying over it. To the left of the image, a list of topics and speakers is presented, each preceded by a green checkmark icon. To the right of the image, the RSVP information is provided, including a deadline of 8/13/2025, an email address, a phone number, and a website. At the bottom, logos for Chaves SWCD, NM State College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, and Border SWCD are shown, along with a note that lunch is sponsored by Border SWCD.

**Chaves CWMA
Conservation Partners
Meeting**

Date: August 14, 2025

Time: 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Location: New Mexico Game & Fish
1615 W College Blvd
Roswell, NM 88201

- ✓ **Reduce Grassland Vulnerability**
The cheapest way to manage
woody encroachment.
Dr. Doug Cram
- ✓ **Spray Drone Technology for Weed and
Brush Management**
Dr. Casey Spackman
- ✓ **Arc GIS Training-**
Clay Benton & Emily Metcalf
- ✓ **Edd Maps Training**
Dylan Burruss
- ✓ **What's the right chemical for you?**
Greg Alpers
- ✓ **Partner Treatments/Chaves CWMA Meeting**
Jennifer Pierce & Drew Garnett

RSVP by 8/13/2025
chavesswcd@gmail.com
575-755-7923
www.chavesswcd.com

Lunch Sponsored by:
Border SWCD

Chaves SWCD

BE BOLD. Shape the Future.
College of Agricultural, Consumer
and Environmental Sciences
Cooperative Extension Service
Chaves County Extension Office

10. NM Interstate Stream Commission opens rulemaking public comment period for Water Security Planning Act Rule (Regional Water Planning) Stream Commission Rulemaking Public Comment Period

Published at <https://www.ose.nm.gov/RulesRegs/rulemaking.php>; retrieved by NMDA July 24, 2025

As part of the rulemaking process, the NM Interstate Stream Commission (NMISC) is accepting public comments for the official record through September 27, 2025.

A public hearing will begin on October 15 at 9:00 a.m. in Santa Fe. Following the hearing, the commission will deliberate and adopt, amend, or reject the proposed rule. Once finalized, NMISC will begin convening regional water security planning councils across the state.

To view the proposed rule, submit a comment, and access the docketed materials at this link:
<https://www.ose.nm.gov/RulesRegs/rulemaking.php>

11. YCC seeks 2026 project proposals – grants up to \$225,000

Published at: refer to the EMNRD link below; retrieved by NMDA July 25, 2025

The New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps is now accepting applications for grants up to \$225,000 to fund projects that improve public spaces statewide while providing job training to young New Mexicans ages of 14 to 25.

"We're looking for creative projects that make a real difference in communities across New Mexico," said **David Chené**, executive director. "These grants provide a win-win opportunity – improving our state while giving young people hands-on work experience and job skills."

Who can apply: State and federal agencies, public colleges and universities, governments (counties, cities, towns, villages), land grants, soil and water conservation districts, acequia associations, public school districts, charter schools, federally recognized Tribes, and 501(c) non-profit organizations.

What projects qualify: Any initiative that employs youth to conserve, improve or beautify New Mexico's public lands and facilities while creating lasting community benefits. Grant funds cover corps member wages, training, and project supplies.

How to apply: Complete details and deadline applications are available at:

<https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/about-ycc/yccrfp/>

<https://www.generalservices.state.nm.us/statepurchasing/active-procurements.aspx>

Free preproposal conferences will be held July 31 and August 21 to help applicants through the process.

Deadline: October 8, at 4 p.m.

The YCC has funded community improvement projects on public lands and facilities throughout New Mexico since 1992.

12. DFA NM Match Fund

Published at <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/nmmatchfund/>; retrieved by NMDA on July 22, 2025

The New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration invites state agencies, tribal governments, counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions to apply for the New Mexico Match Fund. See policy for full list of eligible entities.

The Match Fund provides a unique opportunity to leverage once-in-a-generation federal funding for infrastructure, research, economic development, the energy transition, and other critical projects that will benefit New Mexico.

FY26 Funding Available:

- **\$50 Million for Matching Grants**
- **\$4M for Project Implementation**
- **\$17.5M for Federal Compliance Offset**

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, first-come, first-served. DFA reviews complete applications and makes determinations within 20 business days.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/nmmatchfund/>

13. Free webinar August 14: “Growing with Grants: Preparing to Win and Manage Federal Awards”

Published by the National Grants Management Association at <https://www.ngma.org/growing-with-grants>; excerpted by NMDA June 26, 2025

This complimentary presentation is for state/local/county government organizations seeking guidance on starting and growing a grants management team.

Growing with Grants: Preparing to Win and Manage Federal Awards
1 - 2:30 p.m. ET Thursday, August 14, 2025

Guidance on how to begin your government’s journey to receiving and managing federal grants, including:

- Developing a proposal strategy
- Understanding the grants lifecycle
- Creating a checklist for success
- Discussing the basics of compliance
- Exploring the use of internal staff versus consultants

Register: <https://ngma.memberclicks.net/growingwithgrantsaug2025>

Who Should Attend: Personnel in state/city/county governments in supervisory, support, accounting and compliance roles who would be involved in the management of their organization's federal grant awards.

Guidelines for Proposals

OVERVIEW

- Only the state's 47 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) can apply for this funding. SWCDs can choose to partner together on a single proposal.
- This funding is not intended to replace capital outlay funding or existing grant opportunities that typically fund implementation of on-the-ground projects. The intent of this funding is to help SWCDs build capacity in Fiscal Years 2026, 2027, and 2028.
- NMDA invites each SWCD to submit a proposal on how it intends to use up to \$160,000 to build capacity over a 2.5-year implementation period. There will be a yearlong application period (July 15, 2025-July 15, 2026). The funding process is not competitive, and each SWCD can apply for an equal amount. However, each SWCD must submit a successful proposal to access their share of funding.

TIMEFRAME

- **Application Period:** **July 15, 2025 – July 15, 2026 (12 months)**
 - Funding that is not allocated to SWCDs at close of the application period *may* be offered in a *possible* second application period.
- **Implementation Period:** **August 1, 2025 – January 31, 2028 (up to 2.5 years)**
 - Each SWCD (or collaboration of SWCDs) can plan and spend its budget over any timeframe they choose within the 2.5-year implementation period.
 - Any funding not spent by an SWCD by February 1, 2028, will be distributed between SWCDs based on FY27 point system scores.

PROPOSAL PROCESS: Proposal Instructions found on Page 4

- To access their share of the funding, each SWCD (or each collaboration of SWCDs) will create a proposal including the following materials:
 1. **Proposal:** Includes summary, justification, and timeline for capacity building project.
 2. **Budget:** Complete budget showing goods and services on which the funding will be spent. A suggested budget template will be provided.
- The SWCD will email its proposal to its SWCD Specialist and pdepner@nmda.nmsu.edu.

- Proposals will be reviewed by NMDA staff. SWCD specialists at NMDA will work with SWCDs to ensure successful proposals.

CAPACITY BUILDING PURPOSES

- For the purpose of this funding, NMDA considers “capacity building” to include improvements to the following elements of long-term, organizational capacity:
 - Workforce capacity: adequate staffing and training
 - Ability to fulfill powers and responsibilities under the SWCD Act
 - Ability to serve constituent needs, including technical support
 - Ability to apply for, secure, and manage external funding
 - Ability to *administer* conservation projects, dam maintenance or disaster mitigation/recovery programs
- NMDA encourages SWCDs to think creatively about ways that this funding will improve their ability to promote conservation and serve to their constituents three years from now and beyond.
- This funding is not intended to replace existing funding sources available to SWCDs, such as capital outlay, DFA’s New Mexico Match Fund, NMDA’s Healthy Soil Program grants, Noxious Weeds Management Grants, or District Opportunity Grants for Landscape-Scale Restoration.

ELIGIBLE VS. INELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS

- Eligible uses of the funds include ***but are not limited to:***
 - Staffing needs
 - Trainings
 - Contracts for grant writers or other technical assistance
 - Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) development
 - Office rental
- Ineligible uses of the funds:
 - Inactive or unspecified uses of funding: Certificates of Deposit (CODs), deposits into savings accounts, vague reservation of funds, etc.
 - Purchases of capital goods (land, buildings, equipment costing \$5,000+, etc.).
 - These should be pursued via the capital outlay process. This capacity building funding ***can*** assist SWCDs in the ICIP development process.
 - On-the-ground projects: Money going directly toward on-the-ground projects, particularly when there are other applicable state funding programs.
 - Funding ***can*** be used for organizational capacity to apply for, secure, and administer project funding.
 - Proposals that do not improve SWCD capacity in the short or long term.

ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDS

- SWCDs with approved proposals will sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with NMDA.
- Cost reimbursement: In general, NMDA will distribute this funding via its standard process of reimbursing expenses that are part of an approved budget. NMDA will require quarterly invoices with corresponding documentation. SWCDs may invoice more frequently, if needed
- Alternative funding options: If NMDA's cost-reimbursement process poses an undue financial hardship to your SWCD or makes your proposal impossible, please reach out to NMDA to discuss possible alternatives. NMDA can make alternative arrangements with individual SWCDs to administer funds on a disbursement basis provided sufficient justification, documentation, and verification.
- Reporting: SWCDs receiving capacity-building funds must provide progress reports to NMDA on a quarterly basis using an NMDA-provided reporting template. The fourth quarter report for each year, as well as the final report, will include additional questions about the outcomes of the capacity-building funds.

ODDS & ENDS

- NMDA encourages SWCDs to submit their proposals as soon as possible to maximize the possibility of the funds being fully expended.
- Multiple SWCDs can apply together to pool their funds for greater impact. For example, two SWCDs working together can apply for up to \$320,000, three SWCDs working together can apply for up to \$480,000, etc.
- SWCDs have the option to be reimbursed via direct deposit rather than receiving a check in the mail. To opt into New Mexico State University's direct deposit system, please contact vendors@nmsu.edu.

If you have any questions or need assistance in developing a proposal to fit this capacity-building funding opportunity, please speak to your SWCD Specialist as soon as possible. They can provide guidance on how to submit a successful proposal.

Proposal Instructions

Please email the following documents as attachments to your SWCD Specialist and pdepner@nmda.nmsu.edu:

1. PROPOSAL

- a) **Project Summary:** 2-3 sentence summary of the SWCD's plan and justification for spending the capacity-building funding.
- b) **Project Justification (3 pages maximum):** Address the following questions:
 - i. What are your SWCD's objectives for improving its capacity over the next three years?
 - ii. How will this funding directly support your SWCD's capacity-building objectives?
 - iii. What specific outcomes will this funding help accomplish? Identify specific measures for success.
- c) **Timeline:** Detail when the SWCD will implement funded activities. Please provide in bulleted or table format.

2. BUDGET

Using Microsoft Excel, provide a complete budget showing all goods and services on which the funding will be spent. NMDA will provide a suggested budget template as a separate attachment.

3. SUPPORTING MATERIALS (OPTIONAL)

SWCDs are free to include any additional materials related to the proposal, such as images or letters of support. Please keep all optional materials to 3 pages or fewer.

Example			
Budget Item Description	Cost	Quantity	Unit
Wages	\$20.00	500	hours
Budget Item Description	Cost	Quantity	Unit

Total Expenses

[illegible]