



NEW MEXICO ACEQUIA ASSOCIATION DECLARATION OF CORE VALUES

1. We honor the connection between water, land, life, and communities. We believe that our acequias express the values of our culture and identity as a land-based people. Just as our *herencia* came from generations before us, we now have the responsibility of passing on our traditions to youth and future generations.
2. For generations, the well being of our communities has been sustained by sharing for the benefit of the common good, a tradition known as the *repartimiento*. Through our acequias we have shared scarce water, between our families we have shared food and seed, and through our labor we have helped one another. The acequia cleaning, *sacando la acequia*, is an example of the shared work inherent to our way of life.
3. We view water as a *don divino* or divine gift from God and as a common resource that sustains all life. Making a profit from selling water rights is a form of disrespect to our ancestors, our core values, our way of life, and our children and grandchildren.
4. Water rights should remain connected to the acequia to nurture agricultural traditions, to replenish aquifers, and to support the green ribbons of life along our rivers.
5. We respect the traditional knowledge of our elders which guides the day-to-day operation of acequias, the cultivation of ancestral crops, and the care of our animals. The *querencia* we inherited includes love of our land, water, and community.
6. The worldview that treats land, water and food as commodities threatens the continued life of our communities. The pressures to move water out of agriculture threaten to unravel acequias and the fabric of our communities.
7. We believe that we have the power to grow our own food locally rather than importing most of our food through the industrial food system and that this local food should be available and affordable to all our families not only the wealthy.
8. We believe that our ability to grow our own food with the water from our acequias, the lands of our families, and the seeds of our ancestors make us a free people. Our self-determination depends on retaining our ancestral lands and waters under the stewardship that we inherited from our parents and grandparents.
9. We believe that our acequias will remain resilient by remaining rooted in centuries of traditions while also involving new community members who embrace the culture and customs intertwined with our acequias.

10. We seek to strengthen and revitalize our acequias so that we can build vibrant and healthy communities in which we grow more of our own food and we govern and manage our waters for the benefit of our communities.