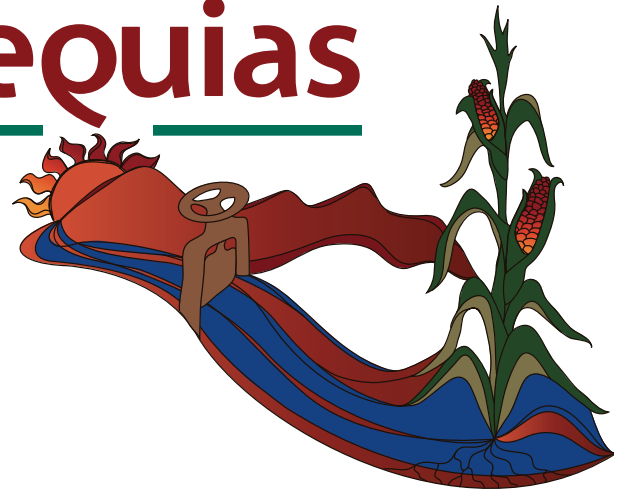


Noticias de las Acequias

New Mexico *Acequia* Association • Summer 2017



The Art of Acequia Irrigation



1. Irrigation rows on the contour allow for maximum water conservation and allow water to flow from both sides of the field. Irrigation using this strategy depends on the lay of the land as opposed to property lines and can be used to re-create terracing and agricultural production/irrigation units known as *melgas*. 2. An irrigation row on the contour will flow from both sides and often needs coaxing from the irrigator to make the water flow to all areas. 3. The slope of the land and the direction of water flow can be determined with a water level, constructed with about 26 feet of clear tubing and two yardsticks. All photos by Miguel Santistevan.

by Miguel Santistevan

Irrigating the land can be the best part of the acequia season next to the harvest. After all the meetings, the acequia cleanings, and hours upon hours of getting the land ready; there is hardly a feeling more satisfying than watching the first water flow onto your land to quench its thirst. As the water seeps into the soil, sighs of relief bubble forth like an exhalation from the water percolation that awakens the soil biology and recharges the shallow aquifer. The plants perk up with the water soaking their roots and the birds come to sing, bathe, and hunt worms while the noble irrigator oversees and directs the water to flow onto every square inch of the land possible. The feeling of satisfaction is augmented knowing that this sacred act embodies the continuation of ancient culture, provides an opportunity for livelihood, and is the basis for food traditions that are best when they are homegrown.

As has been noted by many *acequeros* y *acequieras*, irrigation requires a considerable amount of skill to move water effectively across the landscape. Flowing water can easily be underestimated and get out of control while the landscape also has its character of high points, low points, rocks, and vegetation patches that can affect how water moves or doesn't move. Luckily, many fields come with intergenerational improvements and practices that are carried on from

centuries of irrigation refinement. In other cases, *acequias* have been impacted by development and have had laterals and other structures all but erased, complicating the continuation of irrigation. Many fields shifted from mixed-use agriculture production to pasture and have been negatively impacted with tractors and other machinery. The use of tractors and machinery is a more recent development that redefined our agricultural production and brought possibilities and efficiency in times when help from the community became harder to find.

An unintended effect in the use of tractors on our lands was impacts to a terracing system across property lines that was created over the life of the *acequia* and maintained with the force of water, animal, and community power. Over time the delineations of the terraces, their connections to the overall *acequia* landscape, and their uses can be lost along with local knowledge and *acequia* structure and function. Terms that relate the proximity to the *acequia* and land uses such as in the *altitos*, *la joya*, *la vega*, and *la cienega* or *estero* can be lost along with laterals and irrigation units known as *melgas* and *eras*. These terms and their application could be helpful in understanding the relationship of the land to irrigation and its *acequia* source while conserving the connection between culture, language, and resource management.

Fortunately, an understanding of the landscape that is based on as much historical knowledge as possible, can help restore and re-create irrigation structures on the land. An understanding of the topography, slope, and watershed/*acequia* context of the land to be irrigated is essential for the effective movement of water. The contour of the land can be identified with an A-frame, transit, or water level, and can aid in the establishment of irrigation channels that flow slowly over the landscape and are directed using the slope, gravity, and a shovel as the guides. The ultimate goal is to keep all the water on your land while providing maximum opportunity for absorption and percolation into the soil. Only through practice and observation, with respect given to the memory held in the landscape, can a person ever hope to be a *regador* or *regadora*, master irrigator.



Miguel Santistevan has been dedicated to agriculture/*acequia* conservation and education for 23 years. He has a Master's in Agriculture Ecology and design certifications in Permaculture and ZERI and does consulting. His greatest accomplishment is husband and father for his family in Taos, NM. He can be contacted at solfelizfarm@gmail.com 💧

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Support Acequias this Irrigation Season



Dedicated farmers sacando la acequia de San Jose in the snow. Photo by Beverly Tafoya.

It's summer and acequias around New Mexico are flowing with mountain runoff and nurturing gardens, orchards, and green fields. Acequia waters continue to be the lifeblood of our communities providing us with food, livelihoods, and cultural traditions. But acequias also need us—people—to be their caretakers. Past generations have sustained acequias with their labor and resources—now, it is our turn.

NMAA is asking all acequia irrigators and supporters to become members and join together to defend and protect our acequias. We follow in footsteps of the past but face modern and more complex challenges, including a changing climate. Mounting demands for scarce water threaten to unravel the fabric of acequias through the transfer of water rights out of agriculture. Acequias are called upon to meet ever growing technical requirements for infrastructure funding and to legally defend their water rights.

NMAA is a unique organization that honors our ancient legacy of water governance while also working to adapt for the future. For nearly 30 years, NMAA has been responding to challenges through communication, training, and education for acequias. Together we have built a movement around the principle that Water is Life, El Agua es Vida, and that we are defenders of the precious waters that nurture our communities.

NMAA is a membership based organization that depends on your support to continue our vital work! Because of your past support, just in the past year, NMAA has worked with hundreds of acequias to secure infrastructure funding, to update bylaws, and address governance issues. And we have held training educational events with over 1,200 participants including Acequia Day at the State Legislature where we championed the cause of protecting our water.

As we irrigate our fields this summer in anticipation of a good harvest, we invite you to join us in our movement with deep roots in our past and vision for the future. Join today or send a donation if you are already a member. Thank you!!

Que Vivan las Acequias!

Con amor y respeto,
Paula Garcia

MEMBERSHIPS:

Parciante Member

\$25/year

Acequia Member

\$50/year

Regional Association Member

\$75/year

DONOR LEVELS:

Padrino/Madrina de las Acequias

\$500 and above

Hermano/Hermana de las Acequias

\$250-\$500

Amigo/Amiga de las Acequias

\$25-\$250



**NEW MEXICO ACEQUIA ASSOCIATION:
MISSION & VISION**

The New Mexico Acequia Association is a state-wide, non-profit organization founded in 1990.

MISSION

Our mission is to protect water and our acequias, grow healthy food for our families and communities, and to honor our cultural heritage.

VISION STATEMENT

In our vision, acequias flow with clean water, people work together to grow food, and communities celebrate cultural and spiritual traditions. People honor acequias as part of our heritage and express *querencia* through a strong connection to land and community. Knowledge and experience about growing food, sharing water, and saving seed are passed on from generation to generation.

Guided by our core values, the New Mexico Acequia Association grows a movement of people of all ages and walks of life to defend and protect our precious water by resisting its commodification and contamination. Through involvement in NMAA, families and youth are inspired to cultivate the land, care for our acequias, and heal past injustices. Communities have an abundance of healthy, locally-grown food because we recognize agriculture as a respected and dignified livelihood and way of life.

Proposed Federal Budget Slashes Funding for Farmers and Ranchers



(l to r). The old infrastructure on Acequia de la Jolla, built in 1947. Acequia de la Jolla replaces an old flume with a self supporting steel flume in 2016. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program of USDA funded this infrastructure project; this vital funding would no longer be available under the proposed budget cuts. Photos by Edward Romero.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Trump administration released the executive budget for the next fiscal year and it would cut USDA programs by 21 percent. This would dramatically affect programs that benefit acequias. Most alarmingly, the budget would eliminate the Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which is a relatively new Farm Bill program that has resulted in over \$4 million in funding for New Mexico acequias. The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition provided a summary of the budget cuts. The article notes that Congressional members from both parties have stated that the Trump budget is "dead on arrival" but also that the draft budget sets a very negative tone for numerous programs benefiting rural America. The full text of the article is available at www.sustainableagriculture.net. Here is an excerpt from the article:

Budget Overview

If Congress were to enact the Administration's budget proposal as written, USDA would be subject to a discretionary funding cut of 21 percent (\$47 billion over 10 years). If Trump's proposed farm bill policy changes are added in, another \$228 billion would be cut from USDA programs over the next 10 years.

Some of the biggest cuts proposed for FY 2018 include: \$193 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) over ten years, \$91 million from the Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) program, and a cut of \$95 million that would eliminate USDA's rural business and cooperative development programming. Within the category of budget and farm bill recommendations for next year, the Trump budget plan recommends the elimination of the Conservation Stewardship Program and Regional Conservation Partnership Program, as well as the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program and Specialty Crop Block Grants.

In this breakdown of the President's budget proposal, we have outlined areas of particular interest and concern to the sustainable agriculture community, including:

- Conservation
- Nutrition Assistance
- Research and Food Safety Outreach
- Socially Disadvantaged Farmers
- Rural Development
- Local and Regional Food Systems
- Farm Loans
- Crop Insurance and Commodities

Conservation Programs

The budget proposes a \$325 million cut to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), a voluntary conservation program that provides farmers and ranchers with financial and technical support to adopt conservation on their lands in agricultural production. The President's request did not include sequestration for mandatory programs, so when combined with sequestration cuts, this level of reduction would eliminate nearly 25 percent of funding as authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill. In recent years these types of cuts (known as Changes in Mandatory Program Spending, or CHIMPS) have forced USDA to turn away up to three-quarters of eligible EQIP applicants seeking conservation assistance.

The President's budget also proposes cutting \$91 million from Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA), which is in line with the President's recommendation that conservation planning be privatized. A cut of this proportion would eliminate nearly 500 NRCS field staff who deliver critical services and support across the country and greatly limit farmers' ability to access farm bill conservation programs.

Farm Loan Program

Despite the fact that Congress prioritized support for USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan programs in the FY 2017 omnibus by significantly expanding the agency's lending authority for Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loans, and Direct and Guaranteed Operating Loans in the face of the multiyear downturn in the farm economy, the Trump budget proposes dramatic cuts in FY 2018 – which would no doubt leave thousands of farmers stranded without access to the capital they need to sustain their farms.

According to the President's proposal, Guaranteed Farm Ownership loans would be cut by \$250 million, Direct Operating Loans would be cut by \$225 million, and Guaranteed Operation Loans would be cut by \$566 million.

Given the dramatic downturn in the farm economy, now is not the time to be restricting farmer access to crucial credit and loan programs—especially for new farmers who are left with few other options to finance their farm expenses. American producers are currently suffering through an extended period of low prices, during which banks are scaling back their own lending and FSA-backed loans have been in extremely high demand.

What Happens Next?

The President's budget proposal is an important document in that it sets the tone for debate in Congress around the federal spending for the year. Fortunately, it is only a proposal and congressional appropriators are under no obligation to take all or part of the President's recommendations. Congress is also just beginning the budget process, which is usually concluded by now. It will now be up to the Budget Committees to decide whether or not to provide reconciliation instructions to the Agriculture Committees that would implement the Administration's SNAP or farm program overhaul policy proposals. ♦



-\$4.7B
21% DECREASE FROM 2017

Agriculture Department

2017 discretionary budget: \$22.6B | 2018 proposal: \$17.9B

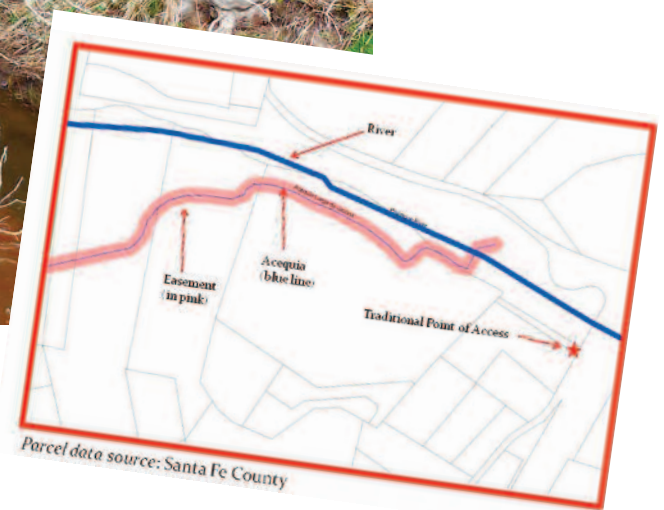
The Washington Post

Governance Tips:

Enforcement & Protection of Acequia Easements



Acequia Rio de la Vaca. Photo by Thomas Hamm.
 Source: Acequia Easement Map.



by Olivia Romo, NMAA Staff

NMAA recommends that conflicts within acequias be resolved to the extent possible by reaching internal agreements. However, it may sometimes become necessary for acequia officials to take certain actions to enforce acequia bylaws, rules and regulations, in the interest of fairness or protecting the health and integrity of the acequia. One common area requiring enforcement is easement violations. The following are some proposed guidelines for enforcement:

1. Whenever possible, attempt to resolve conflicts with violators by reaching an agreement through discussion. Keep a written record of those attempts.
2. If discussion fails, the Mayordomo should issue a first citation as an order to stop the violation.
3. If the violation has not ceased after the first citation, the Mayordomo should issue a second citation with a penalty that corresponds to the violation such as suspension of the right to vote, suspension of the right to use the ditch, or a monetary fine.
4. After two unsuccessful citations, the Commission or Mayordomo may take appropriate legal action. Depending on the violation, the Commission or Mayordomo may involve the District Attorney in prosecution.

What is an easement?

An easement is a legal right-of-way onto another person's land. Acequias have a type of easement that is well-established and often centuries-old. An acequia easement runs along the ditch and its laterals. The "bordo" of the acequia is generally within the easement of that acequia. State law says that the width of the easement should be adequate for reasonable maintenance, use, and improvements. The easement carries with it the right to access (maintain, use, or improve) the entire length of the ditch. The acequia easement includes the right to make reasonable improvements. This includes the use of certain machinery as long as its use is for "reasonable maintenance, use or improvements." The acequia easement also includes the right to gain access to the ditch through traditional points of access, even when that includes crossing a person's property. There must be legitimate acequia business to be done each time there is entry onto someone's property.

What are some examples of violations of an acequia easement?

Access to the acequia is very important. In addition to informing your parciantes about your easement, acequia officials should also carefully monitor any actions by landowners that may be violations of the acequia easement. Some of these violations include the following:

- Building fences across the acequia which block the ability to walk or use equipment along the length of the ditch.
- Building structures like houses, decks, or corrals within the easement or across the acequia.
- Blocking access to the acequia through a traditional point of access. Landowners, particularly new ones, attempt to block acequia officials or cleaning crews from crossing their property to get to the acequia.

According to Section 73-2-5, NMSA 1978 (p. 167 of the "blue book") it is unlawful to interfere with the easement or prevent access to the ditch by the acequia. The easement shall be adequate to allow for reasonable maintenance, use and improvements to the acequia. If a parciante or a landowner is preventing access to the easement or ditch, here are some action points to consider:

1. Send a letter to the landowner requesting for the removal of obstruction, a key to the gate, or reminder that for cleaning and maintenance all commissioners, elected officials, and contractors can enter the property to access the ditch.
2. After education and warning of violation of the acequia easement, if the issue is not rectified the commission may send another citation/letter to the landowner and District Attorney via certified mail.
3. If the landowner continues to violate the easement, the commission can file a criminal or civil complaint and pursue the issue in magistrate court. The landowner could be charged with a criminal misdemeanor and fined \$300-\$1,000 and/or sentenced up to 90 days imprisonment in county jail.
4. The acequia or the D.A. may also file a civil complaint seeking a civil penalty up to \$5,000 or may seek damages and/or request an injunction in district court to restrain any person from violating or continuing to violate the acequias easement rights.

If your acequia has any easement concerns or violations please contact NMAA for templates of civil and criminal complaint letters, coaching on how to mitigate the situation before seeking legal relief, and to better understand acequia easement rights. Contact NMAA Staff Olivia Romo at 505-995-9644 or Olivia@lasacequias.org for further assistance. 💧

12th Annual Ówîngeh Táh Pueblos y Semillas Seed Exchange

by NMAA Staff

On Earth Day, April 22, 2017 well over 180 acequia and pueblo farmers came together for the 12th Annual Ówîngeh Táh Pueblos y Semillas Seed Exchange. The gathering was a celebration of the sacred traditions of farming and seed saving with the mission of continuing to be good neighbors and stewards of mother earth.

The gathering began with a blessing and prayer for our departed farmers, acequeros and community members by Los Hermanos Penitentes de La Morada del Alto (Abiquiu), La Morada de Nuestro Señor de Esquipula (Chimayo), La Cofradia de la Santísima Trinidad (Santa Cruz) y otras Moradas. Following the alabados, seed, earth and water offerings were brought from all 4 directions in which the Rain Dancers from Santa Clara Pueblo blessed with their dance and song. In the afternoon we were also honored to have Los Genizaros de Abiquiu dance and share their history, a truly unique multi-cultural congregation and ceremony.

At the gathering, the Alliance awarded Cornelio Salazar and Clara Salazar-Suazo with the Anciano Se:daa Lifeways Award for their outstanding contribution and commitment to teaching their family, community, and others about the sacredness of seeds and cultural life-ways. They were also recognized for the contribution to the Sembrando Semillas Program in Abiquiu where they mentor and inspire young people in the community to farm, plant, and engage in food preservation techniques.

We also had powerful presentations by Marian Naranajo, Beata Tsosie-Peña and Louie Hena on the theme of the conference, "acknowledging indigenous truth." Marian Naranajo explained the sacredness of the land referring to it as the church of indigenous peoples and asked that all peoples who came later acknowledge that history and treat the mother earth and one another with respect in order to survive. Poems, stories, and seeds of testimony were shared. Following, Virgil Trujillo presented the history of the Genizaro people of the Pueblo of Abiquiu, where descendants of various indigenous peoples mixed with Spanish/Mexican ancestors continue traditions such as Matachines along with land-based, agricultural traditions connected to native seeds. Lastly, we had a group of young women present on Seeds of Hope & Healing whose message rang strong about the importance of the unity of all people to protect our water, land and culture

in a world where they are becoming more threatened under an extractive industries.

We are honored and thankful for this gathering and want to give great thanks to those who traveled and made the journey to celebrate the sacredness of our seeds, traditions and culture!"

The NM Food and Seed Sovereignty Alliance would like to thank the following for their support with the gathering:

El Pueblo de Abiquiu Library & Cultural Center, Sembrando Semillas de Abiquiu youth and Northern Youth Project

Los Hermanos Penitentes

Santa Clara Pueblo Dancers

Dexter Trujillo y los Genizaros de Abiquiu

Land and water offerings:

(North) Tayler Suazo & Jesus Montoya, (West) Kateri Peña & Josh Tsosie, (South) Kasey Naranjo & Ethan Naranjo, (East) Donne Gonzales & Ignacio Gonzales

Margaret Garcia of Taos Real Food for the delicious and healthy lunch

All of the afternoon presenters for their informative presentations

All of the volunteers for giving us your time and good energy

David F. Garcia and Jeremias Martinez for the wonderful music

All of the families and individuals who brought seed -- you are our reason and inspiration for this gathering!

Que Viva la Gente de la Tierra!



Special thanks to all our sponsors and donors who made this event happen!

American Friends Service Committee, Casa Vieja Farm, Communities for Clean Water, Costco, Dixon Cooperative Market, Española Fiber Arts Market, Flowering Tree Permaculture Institute & Roxanne Swentzell, Fourbridges Traveling Permaculture & Agri-Kidz, FedCo Seeds, La Montanita Coop, La Tiendita de Paz, National Immigrant Farming Initiative (NIFI), Native Seed Search, Northern Youth Project, Red Willow, Rio Arriba County, Rio Arriba County Cooperative Extension, Romero's Fruit Stand, Santa Cruz Farm, Sam's Club, SeedBroadcast, Sembrando Semillas de Chamisal, Virgil & Isabel Trujillo, Xochitl & Gilberto Romero, Zenitram Industries

Please contact NMAA to become a sponsor of next year's Seed Exchange! We accept in-kind and monetary donations (505) 995-9644 or Juliet@lasacequias.org



Olivia Chavez and Son Toribio exchanging seeds with other women farmers; Virgil Trujillo presents Cornelio Salazar with the Anciano Se:daa Lifeways Award; Dancing, Singing & Sharing Seeds!; Seed Balls made by Sembrando Semillas Youth. Photos by Seth Roffman. Sharing seeds and stories. Photo by Toribio Garcia, NMAA Staff.

Embudo Valley Regional Acequia Association (EVRAA)

by Robert Templeton

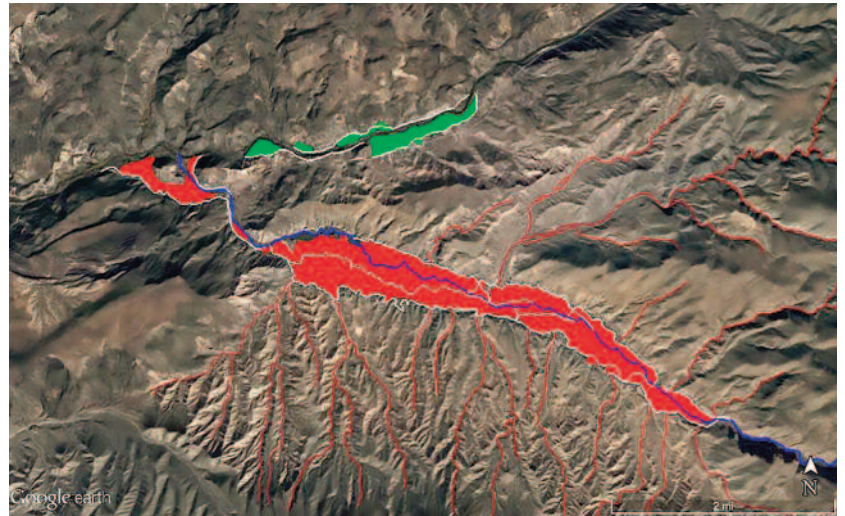
Organized in the year 2000, the original mission of the EVRAA was to help local acequias prepare for adjudication. Under the leadership of Estevan Arellano, the local Celebrando de las Acequias was developed and a working relationship with the California based Arid Lands Institute was formed. Over the years, the Institute has provided extensive GIS mapping and water quality monitoring in the Embudo Valley.

Documentation of acequia paths and irrigated acreages continues as a focus of the EVRAA. In addition, work on mapping and understanding of the entire Río Embudo watershed is being pursued. Other efforts at documentation include creation of a Parciante Handbook and a Commissioner Handbook for one of the local acequias. These documents both historical and current practices.

Keeping alive the local traditional practices of repartimiento in the Embudo Valley is an essential focus. This voluntary “sharing of the shortages” has been carried out via a protocol that has served generations of acequeros. In the driest of times, comisionados have found creative ways to keep the water flowing. Within the context of the NM State Engineer’s Water Master Program, maintaining the integrity of that system seems critical.

Currently, the EVRAA holds monthly meetings to share information and to educate ourselves on acequia topics. Topics have included: Integration of drip technology; NM Open Meetings Act implementation; Financial record-keeping strategies; Dealing with delinquent accounts; Strategies for la jara and la saca; Sharing workers and equipment among local acequias; Increasing agriculture and parciante involvement; Maintenance issues; Education and involvement of young acequeros; Documentation of acequia history; Permaculture and soil development.

Several members of the EVRAA have joined with personnel of the Embudo Valley Library to gather oral histories from local acequeros. Supported by a grant from the NM Humanities



Map of Embudo Valley Regional Acequias & Irrigated Acreage.

Council, oral histories will be recorded beginning with our most experienced acequeros. A local public program will share some of the materials and provide a discussion among local parciantes of traditional practices. We will also share this information with the NMAA at next year’s Congreso.

Currently the EVRAA is participating as a cost-share partner in a NM Rio Grande Basin study. This study is focused on developing adaptation and mitigation strategies to deal with the effects of climate change. The study was initiated by the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and will consider the Rio Grande basin from the NM-CO border south to Elephant Butte Lake. The findings of the study are not binding, but will certainly be looked at by NM decision makers in the future.

The EVRAA feels it is critical for the unique perspective of northern acequias to be heard in the process. Acequias under the MRGCD are represented simply by the MRGCD being involved. For the more than 350 independent northern acequias in the study area, no such umbrella organization exists. The study process will provide a variety of opportunities for those acequias’ concerns to be heard.

If you would like to have more information about the study and how to get your concerns heard, feel free to contact the EVRAA representative, Robert Templeton at 505-579-4095. 💧

Funding Sources for Acequias

- **ISC 90-10 Program:** This program has \$1.9 million annually for acequia projects. The ISC will fund up to \$150,000 per project and will cover 90% of the cost while the acequia is expected to cover 10% of the cost.
- **ISC Special Funding Opportunity:** In 2013, the State Legislature appropriated \$2 million to the ISC for acequia projects statewide. While that appropriation will be expended by June 30, 2017, there is potential for future similar opportunities depending on funding available from the Legislature.
- **NRCS Acequia Initiative (EQIP):** This is a set aside pool of funds available through NRCS. The State Conservationist created this set aside to encourage acequias to apply for EQIP. However, this funding requires that the acequia members form a Joint Venture. This program is funded as part of the EQIP program in the Farm Bill.
- **NRCS RCPP (Resource Conservation Partnership Program):** This funding is available through the NM Association of Conservation Districts (NMACD). To apply, acequias can contact their local Soil and Water Conservation District office or contact NMAA or NMACD directly. This program also uses EQIP funds but because it is part of a partnership between NMACD, NMAA, ISC, and local SWCD offices, the acequias who go through this program are not required to form a Joint Venture. The funding flows through a special funding arrangement through NMACD. This program is funded through the Farm Bill.

- **Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE):** The ACOE has funding available when Congress appropriates funding to the Acequia Program. This funding is for projects that are larger than \$150,000. There are two funding tiers: 1) Up to \$500,000 and 2) Greater than \$500,000. The ACOE works with the ISC in identifying potential projects to fund. Acequias should contact Jonathan Martinez at the ISC if they have a large project that may be eligible for ACOE funds.

- **Capital Outlay:** The State Legislature appropriates funds through severance tax bonds in years when funding is available. In recent years, Capital Outlay funds have been uncertain because of a downturn in oil and gas revenues. When funding is available, each legislator can appropriate funds in their respective districts to local projects. There are several proposals being circulated to reform the Capital Outlay process that may change how local projects can access such funds.

Policymakers/Elected Officials are Essential Advocates for Acequia Funding

- **The US Congress will take the new Farm Bill funding** under consideration in the next budget cycle. The funds currently appropriated in the Farm Bill historically have had strong support from the New Mexico Congressional delegation. This year’s Executive Budget recommendation slashes funding for EQIP by \$325 million and ELIMINATES funding for the RCPP Program. (See article on page 3).

continued on page 7



Enrique Romero and his son Taiyari in Nambe, NM. Photo by Rita Topete.

Ask a Water Lawyer: Change in Purpose of Use of A Water Right

by Enrique Romero, NM Legal Aid

A member is proposing to change permanently the place of use of his water rights served by our Acequia. No other changes are proposed. The Acequia is capable of serving the new place of use, but it is not located on any historically irrigated land. The Acequia has adopted the transfer bylaw. Does the Acequia have jurisdiction over this type of change?

This is a fascinating question for water nerds like us – the staff at NMAA and NMLA – and presumably you, dear reader. I appreciate this question because it gives us the opportunity to review some of the differences between water banking and water transfers. Here’s a head’s up (and a spoiler alert): the change in the place of use described in the question is in fact a water transfer and is not the type of “temporary reallocation” accomplished through water banking. Let’s talk about why that is.

Acequias that have adopted the transfer bylaw from NMAA’s template have clear jurisdiction over this type of “transfer”, namely, a change in the place of use. Appendix A of the template states: “[Any] proposed transfer by any person or entity must be formally considered by the Commission using the procedure set forth below, and must be approved prior to application for the transfer to the Office of the State Engineer. As used in this document, ‘transfer’ means any type of change or modification whatsoever to the point of diversion, *and/or place of use*, and/or purpose of use of a water right...” This provision is, of course, consistent with the state laws that give acequias authority over all water transfers: “Pursuant to the rules or bylaws duly adopted by its members, an acequia or community ditch may require that a change in point of diversion or *place or purpose of use of a water right served by the acequia or community ditch*...shall be subject to approval by the commissioners of the acequia or community ditch.”

Now, as you must know after diligently reviewing NMAA’s governance handbook, every acequia water right has certain elements. For example, every acequia water right has a specific point of diversion (which is the acequias point of diversion off the water source, and not, as is sometimes thought, where the individual member takes his or her water from the acequia, i.e. an individual

head gate), a purpose of use, and a specific place of use. The place of use is the historically irrigated parcel on which water has been continually and beneficially used. When a member wants to change the place of use to a location that has not been historically irrigated by the acequia – whether to a place off the ditch completely or to a place on the ditch capable of receiving water from and being served by the ditch – the commission of the acequia must make a determination as to whether the change will be detrimental to the acequia or its members.



Enrique Romero talks water law with the Acequias in Pecos, NM. Photo by Paula Garcia, NMAA Executive Director.

water banking statute allows for “temporarily re-allocating water without change of purpose of use or point of diversion to augment the water supplies available for the places of use served by the acequia or community ditch.” Ok, that’s a mouthful! Reread this passage and give yourself a minute to think about why the proposed change does not fall under water banking, and is instead a water transfer.



Enrique Romero, Attorney with NM Legal Aid, presenting at the Statewide Commissioner Mayordomo Conference. Photo by Toribio Garcia, NMAA Staff.

Great! You’re back! Two key terms in the statute eliminate the possibility that the change of place of use proposed by the member is allowed through water banking: “temporary” and “served by”. What the member is proposing is to transfer *permanently* his water rights to a *new place of use* currently *not being served* by the acequia. Even if he fashioned his application to allow for a temporary transfer to a new place of use, the new place of use *is not currently served by the acequia*. The proposal is a water transfer subject to the formal requirements of the acequias water transfer bylaw, and don’t let anyone tell you otherwise. 💧

Policymakers/Elected Officials are Essential Advocates for Acequia Funding

continued from page 6

• **During the development of the most recent Farm Bill**, Congressman Ben Ray Lujan had passed legislation through the US House of Representatives to make acequias eligible for the EQIP program (without having to form Joint Ventures). The legislation passed on a voice vote in the House but did not pass the Senate. However, US Senator Tom Udall worked to add language that created the RCPP program to ensure that acequias would be eligible for that funding.

• **At the New Mexico State Legislature, the funding for the ISC 90-10 Program** has strong support but will require special attention in the next few years. Several legislators, including Senator Carlos Cisneros, Representative George Dodge, Representative Paul Bandy, former Representative Lucky Varela, and others have expressed interest in continuing to fund the acequia 90-10 program with funding from the Irrigation Works Construction Fund. NMAA is working with various policymakers to ensure that the funding continues to be available.

• **Additionally, in 2013, the State Legislature appropriated \$2 million** (with bipartisan support and approval by the Governor) to the ISC for acequia projects statewide. The ISC funded over a dozen projects with the funding. The guidelines were that projects had to have a design, they had to be completed within a year, and the funding available was up to \$150,000 per project. This was a successful approach to funding projects. The appropriation had many legislative supporters but it was championed by Senator Carlos Cisneros, Representative George Dodge, and Representative Jim Trujillo.

Funding Agency Contacts:

Jonathan Martinez, Interstate Stream Commission - Acequia 90-10 Program and ACOE
505-827-6680 or jonathanc.martine@state.nm.us

Norman Vigil, NM Association of Conservation Districts - RCPP
575-684-0042 or nvigilsr@hotmail.com

Local Soil and Water Conservation Districts - RCPP and NRCS Acequia Initiative
Debbie Hughes (575) 981-2400 or www.nmacd.org

Report from the Special Legislative Session

by Paula Garcia, NMAA Executive Director

The Special Session ended on May 30, 2017, with some resolution on the state budget situation. The Governor signed HB 1 which was a supplemental budget that restored line item vetoes from the regular session for higher education and the legislative branch. Martinez also signed HB 2 which has several items including a tax stabilization reserve referred to as a “rainy day fund” and limits contributions to the legislative retirement fund. SB 1, which was signed but had some line item vetoes, had sweeps from various funds and a mechanism to move \$81 million in severance tax funds to the General Fund. The Governor vetoed SB 2 which had revenue increases. Without the increases, the state’s reserves are at ½ percent or about \$30 million. The state is seeing an uptick in oil and gas revenue and gross receipts were higher than projected for January so there is hope that further solvency actions will not be required for the current fiscal year.

Regarding acequias, the regular session saw no major changes and no harm done to programs that support acequias. The ISC 90-10 program continues to be funded for another year. The NM Acequia Commission and the Education Program (which funds NMAA’s Governance Project) had across-the-board cuts like other agency reductions of about 5% but those cuts will not significantly affect the services provided to acequias. After completion of both the regular and special sessions, it became clear

that there would be no Capital Outlay for any local projects, including acequias. State policymakers have had to work hard and make very difficult decisions in balancing the state’s budget. Many people remain hopeful that revenues will increase and remain stable so that services and infrastructure needs can continue to be met. 💧

Update on SB 222

In the 2017 regular session, the State Legislature passed SB 222 (Stefanics) which would have increased the threshold for budget reporting to DFA from \$10,000 to \$50,000. For purposes of budget reporting, state statute defines “local public bodies” to be those with over \$10,000 in expenditures in a fiscal year. The bill sought to increase this number to \$50,000 so that small political subdivisions under that amount of expenditures would have been exempt from budget reporting to DFA. The bill was vetoed but the veto is being challenged by the legislature. Updates will be forthcoming. The existing law remains in place and any political subdivision with expenditures over \$10,000 must report to DFA. Please call NMAA for more information.



“Pala Power” at the Roundhouse on Acequia Day, February 16, 2017. Photo by Seth Roffman.

US Forest Services Seeks Participation in Planning

by Paula Garcia, NMAA Executive Director

The Santa Fe and Carson National Forests are undergoing a Forest Plan Revision. According to the USFS website, a Forest Management Plan is a document that guides the management, protection, and use of the national forests. All subsequent projects and programs must comply with the plan.

NMAA strongly encourages acequia leaders and members to play an active role in the planning process. Forest and watersheds are the source of water for our acequias and we have a stake in the long-term health of the forests. Many acequia communities also value having access to the forest for traditional uses such as maintenance and improvement of irrigation works, grazing, restoration of watershed health, and recreation. It is vital to provide input during the planning phase and to be informed about various policy proposals. For example, the plans will evaluate areas for special designations such as wilderness or wild and scenic rivers.

The Santa Fe National Forest has completed forest plan components that are available for review and comment. A Draft Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available later in 2017 for public comment. The Carson National Forest will have a Preliminary Draft Proposed Plan in the Summer of 2017 that will soon be available for public comment.

To learn more about the planning process and how to be involved, please contact the Forest Planning Teams at each of the offices or by visiting their websites:

Santa Fe National Forest
Forest Plan Revision Team
phone: 505-438-5442
E-mail: santafeforestplan@fs.fed.us
11 Forest Lane
Santa Fe, NM 87508
www.fs.usda.gov/detail/santafe/landmanagement/planning/

Carson National Forest
208 Cruz Alta Road
Taos, NM 87571
(575) 758-6200
www.fs.usda.gov/detail/carson/landmanagement/planning/

Additionally, Santa Fe National Forest is holding “Open Houses” on the planning process on the following dates:

Wednesday, June 21, at the Coyote District Office

- Topics: Grazing, Heritage, and Forest Plan
- Address: State Hwy 96, Drive 1707, Coyote, NM 87012

Tuesday, July 18, at the Supervisor’s Office

- Topics: Grazing, Recreation, and Forest Plan
- Address: 11 Forest Lane, Santa Fe, NM 87508

Tuesday, July 18, Pecos High School (School Board Rm)

- Topics: Archaeology, Forest Plan, and TBD
- Address: 28 Panther Pkwy, Hwy 63 N, Pecos NM 87552

Wednesday, August 16, at the Cuba District Office

- Topics: Archaeology, Oil & Gas, and Forest Plan
- Address: 04b, County Road 11, Cuba, NM 87013



Our acequia communities are precious because of the common themes and values that we share, but also because of the unique story that every acequia has. In this section we put a spotlight on different acequia communities to encourage our readers, parciantes, and acequeros to reflect on what makes their acequia special and to share their remarkable story.

Acequia del Alto al Norte's New Diversion Dam

by Paula Garcia, NMAA Executive Director

It took years of planning and persistence to complete a new presa (diversion dam) for Acequia del Alto al Norte in the Mora Valley. After working for nearly two decades with acequias around New Mexico, I finally had the experience of working to complete a project on my own acequia with our Commissioners, Mayordomo, and parciantes. Here is our story.

We opened the new presa in December 2016, and final work was completed in early 2017, just in time for the Spring runoff. The new presa replaces a very old rock and log structure, where the new infrastructure will allow our acequia to better divert water from the Mora River into our acequia madre and the various laterals that feed our fields and gardens. When I saw water flow through the acequia this Spring, my heart swelled with gratitude for water that flows from the sierra through our humble stream, the Mora River, that bisects green fields nurtured by the acequias. Beyond being thankful for the water, I was deeply thankful for the generations past who kept these acequias flowing and for my neighbors who worked together to make this project possible so that the acequia can continue to flow for many years in the future.

Acequia del Alto al Norte is likely one of the older acequias in the Mora Valley. Just upstream, there are acequias around the villages of Cleveland (formerly San Antonio), Encinal, and Cañoncito, who may pre-date Mora, but this acequia, along with its companion on the south side, Acequia del Medio del Sur, are undoubtedly very old, likely dating to the early 1800s. For generations, the families of these lands had to work together to build and maintain the acequia madre and laterals, of which there are three on our acequia. Altogether, it is estimated that this acequia provides water for over 400 acres and more than two dozen families who raise livestock and grow pastures and gardens. It is also home to Victory Ranch, well-known for the alpaca herd that is popular for tourists who visit the valley.

The diversion dam started several years ago when our Mayordomo, Peter Velasquez, asked for assistance from the local NRCS office. The project was on a waiting list for some time until an engineer at NRCS, Hope Tran, was able to dedicate time to working on the design. Around the time the design was underway, the acequia requested Capital Outlay and was appropriated \$50,000. However, during the economic crisis of 2008-2009, it was one of many projects swept (unfunded) by the state legislature.

Undeterred, the acequia pressed on and worked with NRCS to complete the design. Our local NRCS supervisor, Kenneth Alcon, also informed our acequia about the NRCS Acequia Initiative, which was a set aside specific to New Mexico for acequias to apply for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Parallel to

that effort, one of our Commissioners, Paul Lujan, took the lead to request state funds for the project. At the time, the State Legislature had made a special \$2 million appropriation to the Interstate Stream Commission which was intended for "acequia projects statewide." The ISC administered the funds in a similar manner to the existing 90-10 program and referred to it as a one-time "Special Funding Opportunity." There was an application process and projects were ranked higher if they had completed designs.

Part of the application process for the ISC funding was to submit up-to-date bylaws. Our acequia went through a months-long process of updating our bylaws, which had not been reviewed or amended since the 1980s. We had several meetings and made significant and substantive amendments to our bylaws with the assistance of the New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA) and NM Legal Aid. With that assistance, our acequia was able to submit updated and current bylaws with our funding application to the ISC.

Thanks to years of effort, the NRCS design was completed in time to be eligible for the ISC funding. Meanwhile, the acequia was making progress to be eligible for the NRCS Acequia Initiative (EQIP). To qualify for the EQIP funding, the acequia members had to form a Joint Venture. It is important to keep in mind that EQIP is generally for conservation projects for individual landowners. The Joint Venture is a tool to pool resources together as individuals. To form a Joint Venture, we developed a separate set of bylaws and opened a separate bank account. Through the Joint Venture, we applied for the EQIP funding. In this process, we were fortunate to have received the assistance of David Manzanares, who works on contract for the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts (NMACD). Again, we worked closely with our local NRCS office as well as the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Linda Alcon, who works at FSA, attended meetings of the acequia to sign up each of the individual landowners for the FSA. This involves creating a farm record including a certification of income and control (ownership or lease) of property. Once the FSA farm record is completed for a producer, that person can apply for a range of USDA programs. For this particular project, being signed up for FSA was a requirement for eligibility for NRCS.

During this entire process, our acequia worked with the NMAA on our ICIP and on requests for Capital Outlay. On an annual basis, NMAA assisted our acequia with an ICIP that outlined our project goals, funding sources, and timelines. It was a useful tool to plan and manage our project. Our



Completed Project on Acequia del Alto al Norte. Photo by Paula Garcia.

acequia also applied for Capital Outlay and was appropriated \$15,000 during the 2013 legislative session by our State Representative Nick Salazar. The funding came from proceeds from the sale of Severance Tax Bonds (sold by the state). For the project to qualify for the bond sale, which occurs in June and December, the acequia had to be compliant with Governor Martinez' Executive Order 2013-06, which requires that any governmental entity receiving state funds be current with audit and budget requirements.

Once our sources of funding were lined up, our acequia had to manage a procurement process compliant with State Law. This required us to prepare and publish a formal Request for Proposals (RFP). Jonathan Martinez at the ISC helped with every step of the procurement process. Our acequia received sealed bids and opened the bids in a public meeting. The Commission selected one of the bids and awarded the project to Barney and Sons (Clyde Alcon), a contracting company from the Mora area. Under the experienced leadership of Mr. Alcon, the construction of the project went smoothly and was completed on time and on budget. Another very important aspect of the construction process was that the NRCS provided an on-site inspector to be involved with monitoring the construction to ensure that the design specifications were followed. For our project, we were fortunate to work with Gilbert Borrego from the NRCS.

In order to be compliant with audit and budget requirements, our acequia had to catch up with reporting to the Office of the State Auditor. We had to complete a Tier 1 Certification Form (certifying that our annual expenditures were less than \$10,000) for each of the years going back to 2011. Because we were under \$10,000, we were not required to submit budgets to the Department of Finance and Administration. Our bonds were sold and the funding was available to us in 2016. However, the project was delayed by various factors and was not completed in the Fall of 2016 as originally planned. The construction was not completed until early 2017.

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Santolina's water use is a ticking time bomb

By Norm Gaume / Former Albuquerque Water Resources Manager
Albuquerque Journal - Guest Columnns

Monday, June 5th, 2017 at 12:05am

<https://www.abqjournal.com/1013086/santolinas-water-use-is-a-ticking-time-bomb.html>

The Bernalillo County Planning Commission will soon decide whether it will ignore and jeopardize the region's water supply as it considers the proposed Santolina development. If the panel makes the wrong decision – to ignore water – and the Bernalillo County Commission approves that decision later this summer, the outcome will jeopardize our region's public water supply, negatively impact local consumers, and affect taxpayers throughout the state.

Santolina's proposed annual water use is large – 14,380 acre-feet – roughly equivalent to Rio Rancho's annual use. At the heart of this controversy lies a question that New Mexicans know is not simple: where will Santolina get the large amount of water it claims to need? Though the developers and the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority have a simple answer – from the authority – the truth is not simple. Undisclosed impacts could adversely affect New Mexicans for generations to come.

Bernalillo County's Planned Communities Criteria require Santolina developers to demonstrate they have adequate physical water and legal rights to it before being eligible for the green light. The developers dodged this requirement in their 2015 "Level A Master Plan" process by promising they would meet the requirement before approval of the Level B Master Plan. Now, at the developers' request, Bernalillo County is considering approval of the Santolina Level B Master Plan while continuing to ignore water.

Despite rhetoric to the contrary, the water authority does not have the water rights to supply Santolina. Worse, existing consumptive uses of water in the Middle Rio Grande exceed legal limits. Water availability in the Middle Rio Grande is a zero-sum game: any new use of water requires an equivalent existing use to stop.

The Middle Rio Grande as of April has a water delivery debt on the Rio Grande Compact books for the first time since 1990. Our water use has wiped out a 270,800 acre-foot credit in only 17 years. Still worse, the debt could grow to violate the Rio Grande Compact in 2018, inviting Texas to expand its Supreme Court

water under-delivery lawsuit – now limited to New Mexico below Elephant Butte Dam – to engulf the Middle Rio Grande.

Santolina's new depletions of water would aggravate the Middle Rio Grande's water budget deficit, the associated trend toward New Mexico's failure to comply with Rio Grande Compact delivery requirements, and the impacts of non-compliance on the water authority's water rights portfolio. Those impacts could severely constrain the water authority's ability to provide water to current customers.

As I testified in 2015, and emphatically repeat, the public and the water utility authority's existing customers deserve full disclosure of the terms and impacts of providing this large new water service. These disclosures then deserve the informed consideration of the planning commission, the Bernalillo County Commission and the water utility authority before Bernalillo County agrees to Santolina's proposed land uses or the authority commits to serve any new water demand the size of Santolina.

For the future of our city and our county, I exhort the commission to deny Santolina's request and require the developers to follow the rules designed to protect our limited water supply. I also urge my neighbors to attend the next planning commission meeting Wednesday, June 7, to demand Santolina's water supply details be disclosed and fully considered.

Why, I ask, as should you, would the county ignore water?

Norman Gaume is the architect of the 1997 Albuquerque Water Resources Management Strategy calling for full direct use of Albuquerque's San Juan-Chama water. He served as director of the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission and engineer-adviser to the New Mexico Commissioner, Rio Grande Compact Commission. His 2015 written testimony to the Bernalillo County Commission on the Santolina project is at:

www.nmelc.org/2015_ngaume_testimony.pdf

Noticias de las Acequias **EDITOR'S NOTE:**

On Wednesday, June 7, the Bernalillo County Planning Commission unanimously decided to change language in conditions of the plan approval. The developers will not be required to produce a Water Development Agreement for Santolina until Level C submittal. By delaying any requirement showing documented availability of water rights, the Planning Commission is choosing to allow growth to proceed without considering the impacts to the water in the Middle Rio Grande and potentially to the Rio Grande Compact with Texas.



Los Sembradores: Hoop House & Season Extension Workshop

by *Donne Gonzales,*
Farm Training Coordinator

Now that it is getting hot – plan on how to plant when it is cold.

Many of us farm out of habit, tradition, love. When we want to turn farming into a profession—a livelihood—there are some practices that will enable us to succeed. In the quest to find lucrative models of farming our historic lands, maestro Don Bustos (NMAA Board member) along with others have embraced season extension methods to increase farm revenue. Season extension includes many methods that allow you to grow crops beyond their usual times of production either by cooling or heating the air or soil. In times of climate instability these methods also allow us to adapt practices and prevent damages or losses to our crops. On March 15, 2017 the Sembradores Farmer Training Program at Chicoyole farm in Chamisal, NM was pleased to host a workshop on season extension. Our workshop consisted of a group discussion on various topics such as high tunnels, low tunnels, green houses, row covers and other methods of season extensions. A high tunnel, also known as a hoop house, is an unheated greenhouse that helps farmers extend their growing season so that they can improve the profitability and productivity of their farms. Low tunnels are constructed from metal or PVC pipes that are bent in an arc over garden beds, and then covered with fabric row cover or clear plastic sheeting. A green house is a glass or hard plastic building in which plants or starts are grown that need protection from all weather elements. It does incorporate heating appliances, cooling appliances, and various methods of climate regulation. All of these can be used in season extension projects. You can purchase building kits or plan to as-



Los Sembradores Workshop participants and trainees. Photo by NMAA Staff.

semble a primitive home made model. The NMAA offers assistance in applying for programs through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) for high tunnels in order to increase a farms year round production capacity. Please contact serafina@lasacequias.org or call the office.

Thanks to our partners at the American Friends Service Committee, the NMAA training site at Chicoyole farm has recently added a 106 x 30 ft hoop house from a kit. We also have a more primitive model that was built from fence posts that we bent and constructed, and this is a 45 x 30 ft model.

The farm apprentices, myself, (Donne the farm Trainer) and my dad, went over the step by step process of putting up the hoop house kit. It consisted of clearing and cleaning a piece of land, hammering in 3-4 feet posts, assembling arches, putting up purlins vertically and horizontally, and constructing the framing for doors. At the time of our workshop, we were not ready to plastic our large hoop house, but were fortunate enough to have a plastic cover and plenty of assistance needed to re-plastic the smaller structure.

As a group, we removed our old plastic that was used for approximately 5-6



Los Sembradores Farmer Trainees building a high tunnel. Photo by Serafina Lomabrdi, NMAA Staff.

years. It was sun beaten and had various holes that had been patched up. It was time for a new cover, and it was very nice to have a hands on activity with a group of 20 participants.

We covered many practical season extension details– best crops to grow, timing of planting, and especially access to water. Many acequias traditionally ran perennially, for a variety of reasons many no longer do. This means acequia farmers need to plan for supplemental water sources if the acequia is not flowing. We also introduced the topic of irrigation techniques explaining drip irrigation rather than flood. This uses a smaller amount of water, especially in the cooler late fall, winter and early spring months.

I personally felt like this was a wonderful workshop, we had enjoyable participants from the surrounding areas that were eager to learn, listen, and teach. The day went by very quickly, and it was very productive. 💧

Acequia del Alto al Norte's New Diversion Dam

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Since then we've learned that we are required to report to DFA for the year the Capital Outlay was expended. Additionally, because we spent Capital Outlay funding, we will be required to meet the requirements for Tier 3 in the tiered reporting system of the State Auditor. This will require us to complete a financial report similar to an audit (called an Agreed Upon Procedures Report, or AUP report) with the services of an Independent Public Accountant.

For acequias who are interested in working on a similar project, here are some basic ballpark figures that are very approximate to illustrate the general idea:

Total Cost of Presa:	\$110,000
NRCS EQIP funds:	\$60,000
Capital Outlay:	\$15,000
ISC Funds:	\$31,500
Acequia Match:	\$3,500

It is important to point out that the ISC funds were a 90-10 match, whereby the acequia was required to cover 10%. The portion not covered by the sum of NRCS and Capital Outlay, \$35,000 was covered by the ISC (90%) and the acequia (10%). The acequia decided to cover this portion of the cost of the project with a one-time assessment on each of the members at a flat rate. Each of the parcientes paid about \$300 each.

The original request for assistance from NRCS was submitted in July 2008. The project was finally completed in February 2017. It took nearly ten years but the project is beautifully constructed and it is off to a good start this Spring. Each year, several similar projects are completed by acequias around the state through a team effort of local leaders, state and federal agencies, and advocates like NMAA, NMACD, and NM Legal Aid. We are hopeful that the new presa will serve our acequia for many years to come and that this story of cooperation will guide the future generations when it is time to upgrade and adapt their infrastructure in the years to come. 💧

More on Acequia Funding Sources for projects like this on page 6



(l) Paul Lujan, Commissioner for Acequia del Alto al Norte, opens the main headgate on the new presa recently completed with a combination of federal, state, and local funds. (r) Gilbert Borrego from the NRCS was on site during construction and at completion conducting inspections of the new presa for Acequia del Alto al Norte. Photos by Paula Garcia.

En Memoria: Remembering Our Acequeros

It is because of the work of our ancestors, elders and maestros that we now stand on the shoulders of giants, taking steps to ensure that our acequias and way-of-life will never be erased from this landscape. We pause to reflect on and honor the lives of the men and women who worked tirelessly for our acequias out of love and querencia.

WILFRED GUTIERREZ was born to Eufrosina Gutierrez on September 15, 1934, in Velarde, NM. At age 82, he died peacefully at his home in Velarde on March 10, 2017. A 1953 graduate of Espanola High School, he later served in the US Army for three years where he was honorably discharged and returned home to a 35-year career at Los Alamos National Laboratory. In 1960, he married Cleo Herrera of El Rancho and together, they raised five children. Beyond his love of God and for his family, Wilfred's passions were his apple orchard and working tirelessly to protect the acequias and water rights of the communities at large.



He was well known for his visionary leadership and his ability to deliver on those innovative ideas with impeccable principles, integrity and a sense of humor. Among his many accomplishments, he founded the Acequias Del Norte organization to highlight the needs of acequia owners and to give them a voice

in state policy. He also served as the chair of the New Mexico Acequia Commission which was formed by then Governor Gary Carruthers to help owners understand their rights and laws affecting the acequias. In the 1970's, he led the surrounding communities in a victory that prevented the federal government from developing the El Llano Canal which ultimately preserved water rights for the individual land owners. Later in his role as Chairman of the Las Nueve Acequias Steering Committee, he worked closely with U.S. Senator Pete V. Domenici and other congressional leaders to secure more than \$30 million of federal funding to improve and preserve nine acequias in Velarde and surrounding communities.

He is preceded in death by his mother, his sister Isabelle Gutierrez Salazar and husband Manuel Salazar, Jr., his sister Deliria Gutierrez, his father and mother-in-law Procopio and Adelicia Herrera, sister-in-law Edwina Herrera, brother-in-law Michael Herrera, niece Angela Salazar Riley and nephews Gilbert Pena, Adam Ortiz and Brian Pena. He is survived by the love of his life Cleo, his children, Joe, Lisa, Lawrence and wife Anna, Carmella and Ron. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Nikkileigh, Lance, Tyler, Anthony, Santana, Diego, Mateo and Mossimo. 💧

Be Counted for the Future of Agriculture!

The NMAA strongly encourages acequia farmers and ranchers to participate in the 2017 Census of Agriculture. The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of America's farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Taken every five years, the Census provides valuable information used at the local, state, and national level to plan for the future.

Data from the Census help to inform decision making to benefit farmers and ranchers. For example, data from the Census help:

- Shape programs and initiatives that benefit young and beginning farmers and ranchers;
- Expand access to resources that help women, veteran and minority farmers and ranchers;
- And help farmers and ranchers diversify into new markets, including local and regional food systems, specialty crops and organic production.

For purposes of the Census, USDA defines a farm as any place (urban or rural) that produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products during the Census of Agriculture year (2017).

The Census forms will be mailed in December 2017. To sign up to receive the forms, NMAA recommends that all farmers and ranchers sign up with the Census online by providing your name and address. If you sign up, you will receive a form in the mail and you will have until February 2018 to complete the form. Once you receive the form, you are legally required to complete and submit it to USDA. You will also have the option of completing the form online. If you do not have access to the internet, please call NMAA and we can assist you with signing up online or we can provide you with more information about how to be counted.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture, please go to www.agcensus.usda.gov 💧

THE 2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE IS COMING!
Make sure you are counted.
Sign up at www.agcensus.usda.gov.

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE
YOUR VOICE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

USDA 2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE
YOUR VOICE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

Dia de San Isidro Celebrations 2017

**The NM Acequia Association wants to honor the numerous acequia traditions and gatherings happening across the state in celebration of San Isidro that remind us why we continue to do this hard work, and also to credit the communities who carry on the love and sacred traditions of the acequias!*

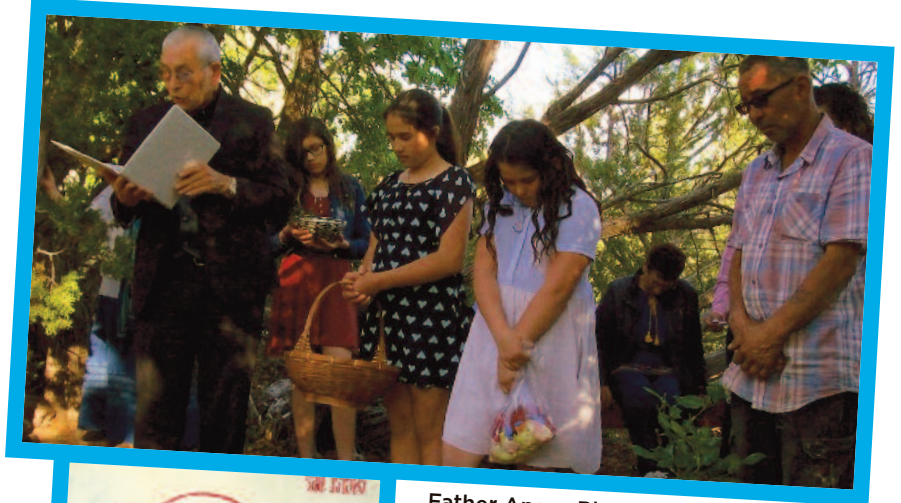
On May 15th 2017 in San Fidel, NM over 60 acequia par-ciantes and neighbors came together in celebration for the feast day of San Isidro, the patron saint of farmers. For 20 years now, the San Jose de la Cienega acequia association with the help of acequia leaders Beverly and Leon Tafoya have come together to bless their acequia, the farmers, and share a meal together all in honor of acequia lifeways.

The acequia blessing was led by Father Avella from the St. Joseph's Parish in Grants who reminded the elders and youth about a teaching he learned growing up in Mexico. The story goes that a small pueblito who had a very sacred water source began to fight over the water. As they continued to fight the water suddenly went dry. Padre Avella expressed that God, Mother Earth and our Ancestors want to remind us that water is sacred and only when a community comes together to plant food, irrigate, and feed their families, will the water continue to run. When we work hard with our sweat, carry on the traditions of our ancestors, love one another and the land, only then will the water continue to sustain us and bring us life.

After the prayer, Father Avella blessed the participants with water collected at the Congreso de las Acequias, agua bendita from the unified streams that feed acequias across the state. After anointing oneself with the water of all the acequias, each participant whispered intentions into a handful of rose petals then let them free into the running acequia.

After the blessing, the community had a huge feast as three discos sizzled with chicharrones, roasters topped with tamales, and traditional deserts filled the tables. Neighbors shared stories, laughs, and plans for the planting season. (Written by Olivia Romo, NMAA Staff)

Que Vivan las Acequias del Rio San Jose!



Father Anaya Blessing the Acequia San Jose de la Cienega in San Fidel, NM. Photo by Parciante, Dustin Vigil.



Retablo de San Isidro. Photo by Harding Polk, Commissioner on San Jose de la Cienega in San Fidel.



Making Chicharrones after the Acequia Blessings. Photo by Olivia Romo, NMAA Staff.



Dia de San Ysidro Procession in the historic village of Agua Fria in Santa Fe, NM. Photo by Anna Hansen.



San Ysidro Day in Santa Fe, NM

The annual procession in Agua Fria was led in spirit and song to querido San Ysidro. Commissioner William Mee expressed the gathering as "flexible" as the Santa Fe River was dry but despite the interception of water for users above, Father John Cannon blessed their flowers, seeds, and puddles. After the blessing, the community gathered for a reception at the park. (Written by William Mee)

On Saturday, May 13th the Valle de Atrisco community gathered once again to celebrate San Ysidro and Maria de la Cabeza in the blessing of the waters. Every year South Valley residents gather and hold a procession that leads to the Armijo/Ranchos de Atrisco Acequia that runs along Sanchez Farms. When the community reaches the acequia, the children participate in the beautiful tradition of throwing flower petals into the running water. The procession is followed by a blessing from the various cultures that exist in our community - the Deacon, the Penitentes, and the Danzantes Aztecas. For the last several years the blessing of the waters has been followed by Danza and sharing of a meal. This year the Padrinos who hosted San Ysidro and Maria de la Cabeza in their home are long-time South Valley community members and advocates, Marcia Fernandez and Rip Anderson. This celebration is organized by the South Valley Regional Association of Acequias, American Friends Service Committee, and supported by many other organizations and community members. (Written by Virginia Necochea)



(l) Marcha and Pilgrimage for San Ysidro y Maria de la Cabeza in the South Valley of Albuquerque. (r) Annual Blessing of the Acequia in the South Valley of Albuquerque. Photos by Virginia Necochea.

Cultivando Nuestro Futuro Leadership Institute



(l) CESOSS Leadership Institute Cohort #4. (r) CESOSS Interns.

by Virginia Necochea, Executive Director of CESOSS

A few years ago, one of the visions that we had at the Center for Social Sustainable Systems (CESOSS), became a reality. That vision involved creating a community-led institute that focused on helping to develop the next wave of young leaders - Cultivando Nuestro Futuro Leadership Institute. A fundamental aspect of this institute would be to cultivate in these young people, a greater respect for land and water based traditions that are such an important part of New Mexico's social fabric and history.

We are proud to say that we have graduated four successful cohorts of future community leaders. These are young leaders who have a greater connection with culture, identity, traditions, policy development, and research.

As part of the Institute, interns choose an issue that is impacting the community that they want to better understand and to most importantly think of ways that this issue can be effectively addressed or even resolved. Although our Institute does not force the students to focus on water-related issues, a few of them always do because of the fundamental importance water is given throughout our sessions and work. This cohort was no different than previous cohorts and 3 out of the 4 interns chose to focus on water-related issues. The following provides a brief summary of their work.

Daniel V. Guerrero

Daniel focused on better understanding the cultural importance of acequias in New Mexico, especially the history of acequias in the South Valley. As part of his work he interviewed one of the South Valley's greatest acequia advocates - Santiago Maestas. Daniel learned a lot of acequia history and continued struggles during his visit. Here's one of the recommendations Daniel made during his final presentation:

"One of the greatest challenges we face in our community is that many youth have become disconnected from agricultural and acequia traditions, especially in the South Valley. How can we expect youth to protect and preserve these traditions if they are not learning their history and culture in schools? One way that we can help solve this knowledge gap that exists is by introducing the history and traditions at early stages of their lives and education. A way that I believe can help increase exposure to these important topics is by providing effective teaching about acequias, water resources, and agriculture. Not in a classic lecture or lesson plan, but in a more dynamic manner. Workshops, greater outreach, and fieldtrips can be used to make the lessons more impactful and less cut and dry. The scenario that I envision is to collaborate with STEM programs within middle schools and if possible, as early as elementary. Students need to become more conscious of their surroundings and life around them. I believe that this is a way that we can engage more youth in caring about local traditions and history."

Jasmyne Munoz

Jasmyne focused her work on the sacredness of the many water resources that exist in the South Valley, or to many elders and long-time families and residents, the Valle de Atrisco. Atrisco

from the Nahuatl word Atlixco, that translates to 'upon the waters.' Jasmyne was also interested in researching and better understanding water quality issues in the community. She states:

"Water quality influences the way in which communities use water that is available to them. It is important to understand that each water source that we have flowing through the Valle of Atrisco is all interconnected. Preserving the quality in our sources of water is dependent on preserving the culture and traditions that connect the land. If our water quality becomes degraded, the community stands to lose a valuable resource."

Jasmyne also felt that education would be a fundamental tool in reconnecting elementary-aged children with vital water resources in the community such as the acequias, river, groundwater, and the aquifer.

Stefany Olivas

Stefany focused her work on a long-standing practice called agroecology. Stefany used various sources to come up with the following definition:

"Agroecology can be a way of living, understanding and acting. It is a 'design' that transforms one's relationship with the land spiritually, culturally, and politically. This idea is used by communities around the world to address the complex issues they face. Many are already using some of the tools to address injustices around food, land and water."

Stefany's work was powerful in that she made the connection that agroecology has been happening in our communities - as in acequia traditions and culture and agricultural efforts that continue to grow in the South Valley. This is how Stefany described this important connection:

"Quite simply we can translate 'agro' as growing food, and ecology as the relationship of organisms to each other and their environment. In practice, it brings maximum diversity to food production, and in turn, to our environments. Our earliest ancestors lived by the land, water, the cosmos and the sustenance that the three combined provided- food and medicine. These three elements are and always have been what dictates life since time immemorial. To return back to the land, water and cosmos reaffirms the knowledge that many in the Valley of Atrisco still know and gives a pathway to envision a future that is tangible and familiar. For many generations, our ancestors' methods of sustainable farming and irrigation with acequias and other traditional watering methods, helped recharge the water table, keep our ecosystem alive, and provided a foundation for communities to thrive."

All of us at CESOSS are very proud of each of our Institute interns and of their work and commitment to better understanding the importance of land and water based traditions in the semi-rural community of the South Valley. Each of the interns' briefs will be available on our website in a special edition of our community publication, *La Voz del Valle de Atrisco* - www.cesoss.org. 💧



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Rancho La Fina after land revitalization.

Photos by Patricia Quintana, Vice President of the Taos Valley Acequia Association.

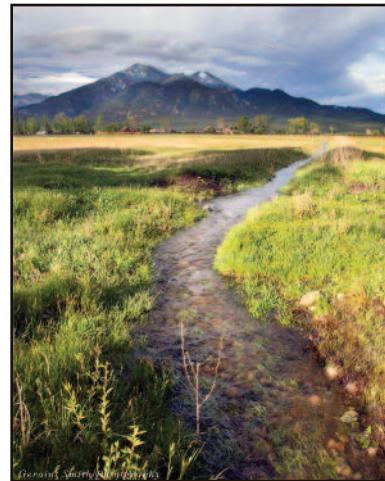
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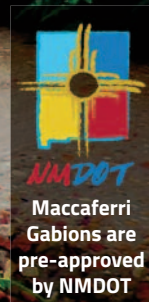


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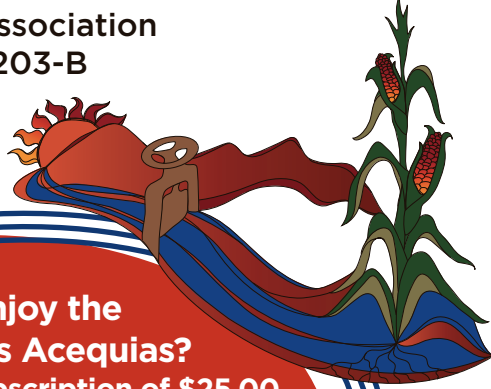
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Summer Events:



Acequia de Los Luceros in Mora, NM. Photo by Rosalie Mondragon.

NMAA PATHWAYS TO FUNDING: FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE WORKSHOP JUNE 27TH, 1-4PM

NM State Archives, 1205 Camino Carlos Rey, Santa Fe, Yucca Rm.
Every Acequia is required to be in Financial Compliance with the State -
please send a commissioner. Call NMAA for more info 505-995-9644

LOS SEMBRADORES IRRIGATION TECHNIQUES AND WEED CONTROL WORKSHOP JULY 17, 9AM-12PM

Chicoyole Farm, Chamisal, NM
RSVP only to NMAA 505-995-9644

NMAA STATEWIDE CONFERENCE: "PROTECTING FARMLAND AND WATER RIGHTS: TOOLS FOR LAND RESTORATION" AUGUST 18, 9AM-3PM

Los Luceros Historic Ranch, Alcalde
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NEW MEXICO ACEQUIA COMMISSION MEETINGS USUALLY EVERY 3RD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

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