

# Noticias de las Acequias

New Mexico *Acequia* Association • Fall 2018



## 19th Annual Congreso de las Acequias “Labor y Fe: Acequias Caring for the Land and Water in Times of Change”

by Olivia Romo, NMAA Staff

*“La mejor humedad para las matas es el sudor del frente del sembrador.” (The best moisture for plants is the sweat of the brow.)*

—Juan Pablo Garcia

Despite a dry year with little snow pack or rain, farmers still planted with faith! They continued to be good neighbors and enter water sharing agreements even when the heat boiled the blood and scorched the crops. Some let water flow through the ditch just enough for livestock to drink; many communities found ways to compromise! We must realize that acequias have thrived over the centuries because of collective interest, strength, and faith.

The NM Acequia Association invites you to gather at the 19th Annual Congreso de las Acequias on **November 17th, 2018 from 9:00am-3:30pm at the Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid Hotel**. This year’s theme is *“Labor y Fe: Acequias Caring for the Land and Water in Times of Change.”*

The Congreso is the largest gathering of acequia leaders, farmers, and advocates statewide! Join the NM Acequia Association for a celebration of acequia culture, to share tradi-

tional knowledge, and create strategies for protecting our acequias and the water that flows through them.

This year’s program will feature testimonies from commissioners and mayordomos who experienced challenges this year in sharing little water or having none at all. Afterward, farmers and ranchers will confront the changing climate and describe farming practices with new insight, techniques, and methods. The morning presentations will wrap up by calling attention to the Rio Fernando Revitalization Group a model initiative made up of critical stakeholders in the Taos Valley who are committed to healing and rejuvenating their watershed for a sustainable future.

Acknowledging our current struggles, history, and leadership NMAA will also host a panel of next generation acequia farmers. At the Congreso you will hear from young men and women dedicated to restoring agricultural land, farming, and el movimiento en defensa de nuestra agua!

There will also be a special presentation of “Nuestras Acequias,” an oral history project initiated by community volunteers to interview 7 acequia farmers of the Embudo Valley. The audio piece illustrates the joys, hardships and challenges in acequia management over the last 40 years.

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The Acequia de Santa Cruz cargada de agua para el primer riego. Concept, design and photo by Alejandro López. Muralists: Alejandro López, Arlene Jackson and Roger Montoya.

**NEW MEXICO  
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## *En Memoria: Remembering Our Acequero/as*

*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.*



### **John Joseph Carangelo**

**July 29, 1921 – August 4, 2018**

John Carrangelo was on the La Joya Acequia in Socorro County. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his efforts in protecting acequias in 2011. One of his many accomplishments was helping to oppose and prevent a water transfer by the Intel Corporation. John Joseph Carangelo, age 97, a resident of La Joya, NM passed away on August 4, 2018. He was born in Middlebury, Connecticut, graduated from Boston's Northeastern University, and was awarded a Purple Heart with oak leaf clusters during his service in the US Army Infantry during WWII. After his return from the European Theater, he devoted himself to his wife and family, his career as a chemical engineer for Uniroyal, and started on a life-long service to his community, especially in the areas of educational access and public good. He facilitated building North Smithfield High School in Rhode Island, CT and La Promesa Elementary School in Veguita, New Mexico. John was proud to have volunteered as a mayordomo of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in La Joya and also the La Joya Acequia, with various organizations such as the Socorro Soil and Water District, the Rio Grande Conservancy, the Rio Abajo Library, the La Joya Community Redevelopment Association, and the Sevilleta National Wildlife refuge. Whatever his project, John strove to attain the best for his community. He cherished his earlier life in New England and loved his life in La Joya. John is preceded in death by his son Peter Alex, his sister Elena and his parents Mariangela and Domenico. He is survived by his wife Martha, his children; Jack, Martha-Gail, and Paul, his sister Gloria, five grandchildren, six great grandchildren as well as many nieces and nephews.



### **Thomas K. Myers**

**1948–2018**

Age 70, passed on June 2nd, 2018, from lymphoma. He is survived by his children; Nathaniel Evans (Montserrat Oyanadel Tolmo), Teresa Myers (Everett Martinez), grandchildren; Augustin, Alejandro and Sofia Martinez. Brothers; J. Leston Myers (Suzanna), William Myers (Virginia Dudley), niece; Ann Myers (Erik Burton), and many friends. Tom was born in Grove City, PA, in 1948, the family then moved to Florida in the 1950s. Tom attended college at Florida Presbyterian College in St. Petersburg, Florida. He moved to Taos in 1974, where he worked as a bartender for the Taos Inn; picture framer for The Cut Corner Frame Shop and Papillion Studios which he owned; self-employed chimneysweep (Firelight Chimneysweep); Stage Manager for the Taos Community Auditorium; IT for La Plaza Telecommunity, Teacher at Chamisa Mesa High School; Videographer for Taos Local Television; Treasurer for the Taos Valley Acequia Association, he was an active volunteer at Taos Charter School, a beekeeper, an artist, a photographer and much more. Tom was a regular at the Taos Farmer's Market, Taos Plaza Live, and many local cafés for conversation with friends and anyone else who wanted to talk. In honor of Tom, clean your acequia's and never use Roundup. Tom was true to his morals and loved by so many. He is missed. A memorial will take place this summer.



**\* On Friday Nov. 16th, 3:30-5:30pm NMAA will host a pre-Congreso Farm Tour at Cornelio Candelaria Organics a beautiful and historic farm owned and operated by Lorenzo Candelaria and Dora Pacias.** The farm hosts youth from throughout the region to learn about acequia history, culture, and agriculture. Numerous young farmers have learned to grow food under their mentorship. The tour will include brief presentations, poetry, and light refreshments. (505 Foothill Rd SW, ABQ). Registration for the farm tour is \$10.00.

Lorenzo Candelaria picking chile with his grandchildren. Photo by Travis McKenzie.



Lorenzo Candelaria cruzando la acequia. Photo by Brooks Mc Quade.



## Cómo ser un buen vecino? Déja el agua correr



Enrique Romero presenting at the 18th Annual Congreso de las Acequias. Photo by Seth Roffman.

by Enrique Romero, NMAA Staff Attorney

Good walls make good neighbors. Robert Frost's observation about respecting your neighbor's property – good fences keep your goats from munching your neighbor's carrots – appears at first glance to be universally applicable. The story of one acequia's recent victory in magistrate court suggests a twist: good walls, especially concrete ones, on acequia laterals do not make for good neighbors. Sr. Escarcha, had he irrigated in New Mexico, at some point in his dealings with his neighbors may have found some wisdom in this dicho: *Agua que no has de beber déjala correr* (Water that is not for drinking, let it run). On an acequia, a good flow makes for good neighbors. And, as the acequia proved in court, a good flow keeps you out of trouble.

The facts of the case are straightforward. Landowner A obstructed a lateral that ran through his property by filling it in with concrete. Landowner B explained to the Commission that he could not exercise his water rights because of the obstruction. The Acequia's Commission notified Landowner A in writing of the problem, explained the law, and requested that he fix the problem he created. Delivery of the letter was made by the Sheriff.

Imagine you're landowner A for a moment and you suddenly find yourself in a "pick your adventure" story. The wise choice – we will call it Option 1 – would be to apologize for the trouble you've caused your commission and your neighbor, explain that you didn't realize that you'd broken the law, and work diligently to remove the obstruction not only to keep the peace but to avoid, at a minimum, a fine, a criminal record, and the embarrassment that comes with both.

Or, if you're the more adventurous type, you could choose what Landowner A chose: flippantly explain that you don't

really care and be willing to call the commission's bluff about being sent to jail. Being an attorney my character tends toward avoiding risk, but I recognize that there is merit in taking calculated risks. Landowner A's calculus was probably pretty basic and along the lines of a "wait and see" approach, or the acequia is "all bark, no bite", or "better to beg for forgiveness than ask for permission," etc.

The thing about life "choices" is that usually there is an element of free will. To quote Led Zeppelin: *"There are two paths you can go by/But in the long run/There's still time to change the road you're on."* Here, Landowner A, after having been visited by the Sheriff a second time, then by the District Attorney's investigator, could have jumped back to Option 1. Alas, he did not.

Often, our tendency in the face of criticism or impending doom is to deny our role in its creation and to double-down on our choices. Notwithstanding Led Zeppelin's advice, the farther down the road you go, the more difficult it is to change paths. Landowner A chose to go all the way – and so did the Acequia. It convinced the District Attorney to file a criminal complaint in magistrate court – one of the remedies under Section 73-2-64 NMSA 1978. A deputy was assigned to con-

The thing about life "choices" is that usually there is an element of free will. To quote Led Zeppelin: "There are two paths you can go by/But in the long run/ There's still time to change the road you're on."

duct the investigation and collect evidence. This was now a criminal case: landowner A was arraigned, a pretrial hearing was set, and a public defender was assigned.

There is no indication that the trial took long – the law and facts were presented to the judge and it was clear that the defendant had violated the statute. The Commissioner who spearheaded the prosecution recounts the proceeding this way: "The District Attorney asked the Acequia what it wanted as a fine. The Acequia said it didn't necessarily want a fine; it





Good acequia parcientes and neighbors working together to clear the logs that fell into the Cecilia Ditch in Gallina, NM. Photo taken by Victoria Suzao-Chanza.

just wanted the Landowner to acknowledge his wrongdoing and to assure the Commission and the Mayordomo that it would comply with their orders moving forward – in writing. The Defendant, in open court, first refused to apologize, but after a sidebar with his public defender, was persuaded that a formal, written apology was the only way to bring an end to this conflict without incurring a fine and/or jail time. The judge gave him a lecture about the history of acequias and the dependence of everyone on the good behavior and goodwill of their neighbors.”

Here are a few concrete (no pun intended) lessons. First, acequia commissioners are persistent and their relentlessness pays off. This ordeal began in the early spring of last year and was resolved this fall, with action taking place on nearly monthly intervals. Second, acequia commissioners are often educators on the law of acequias. This commission had to educate the Sheriff and the District Attorney on the legal and policy implications of enforcement (or non-enforcement) on acequia laterals. Third, acequia commissioners are evidence gatherers. Document, document, document – today's paper trail is tomorrow's evidence. Finally, acequia commissioners are setting precedent on their respective ditches and bringing closure to volatile situations. In the acequia world, turmoil and

conflict are cyclical. It's no coincidence that tension is at its peak during irrigation season. Problems that arise during the irrigation season are sometimes left unaddressed as the land retreats to its winter rest. But, rest assured, Spring's renewal brings life and water and with it a renewal of past grievances.

Now, we come full circle, and hoping to tie our quoted artists together, I will end this piece with another line from Sr. Escarcha: *Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.* Our tendency to fight over water, to deny our neighbors their legal right to water, is just that: a tendency which is much like a well-traveled path. My hope is this true story of the recalcitrant acequia parciente teaches us to take the less traveled path of humility and accepting responsibility early on and privately, so if nothing else our errors are not made a matter of public record.

*P.S. Our friend and colleague, David Benavides, Esq., wrote an article in our Spring Noticias regarding acequia laterals. Let us know if you need a copy. The article summarized the rights and obligations of acequias when it comes to enforcement on acequia laterals. His article was provided to the District Attorney as evidence in the case. 💧*





Paula Garcia, Executive Director of NMAA, chanting along with acequia leaders for Acequia Day 2018 at the legislature. Photo by Seth Roffman.

## Acequia Legislative Preview

by Paula Garcia, Executive Director of NMAA

The 2019 legislative session is around the corner and the NMAA has been working with acequia leaders and advocates across the state to develop policy recommendations. Because we are a membership-based organization and a federation of regional associations, we actively seek input from regional leaders throughout New Mexico in identifying important policy issues. Looking ahead to the 2019 session, NMAA has developed policy recommendations related to the following topics:

**Protecting Water Rights:** NMAA will support legislation that will seek to improve notice of water transfers and protect due process in protesting water transfers as well as legislation that improve transparency within local governments and state agencies in their decision making regarding water.

**Investing in Infrastructure:** NMAA will support efforts to restore the Irrigation Works Construction Fund balance and limit spending from the fund to irrigation projects rather than agency spending. NMAA will also advocate reforming the capital outlay process to ensure that acequias have

access to the process, can obtain funding for engineering design, and obtain full funding to complete projects within 1 to 2 years.

**Local and Regional Initiatives:** NMAA will support local and regional funding initiatives for local projects as well as regional efforts that support multiple acequias such as improving regional water supplies, infrastructure development, and other needs.

**Acequia Governance:** NMAA will support policies to support the important role acequias play in local water management as well as policies that are deferential to local decision making.

**Acequia Youth Education:** NMAA will propose an effort to include education about acequias in public schools.

To learn more about NMAA's work on policy, attend this year's Congreso de las Acequias where we will be discussing the above recommendations in greater detail. Contact the NMAA for more information at 505-995-9644. 💧



2019

# Acequia Day

## At the Legislature

“Pala Power!”

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

RALLY WITH FARMERS AND RANCHERS TO CELEBRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF ACEQUIAS TO NEW MEXICO!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL NM ACEQUIA ASSN. AT (505) 995-9644 | [WWW.LASACEQUIAS.ORG](http://WWW.LASACEQUIAS.ORG)



Photo taken by Seth Roffman.





# Sembrando Semillas 2018

Mentors, families, and Sembrando Semillas youth plant rows of habas and alberjón at Los Luceros. Photo by Miguel Santistevan.

by Miguel Santistevan

The Sembrando Semillas (SemSem) program of the New Mexico Acequia Association began in 2005. "Sembrando Semillas" means "planting seeds" and the name is making reference to planting seeds of our culture in the minds of our next generation of acequeros y acequeras. Since our inception, the SemSem program has involved dozens of youth over the years and has even been called the "flagship" of youth-in-agriculture mentorship programs in New Mexico. We are now seeing some of our first generation participants becoming farmers on their own. A notable example is Nicanor Ortega who is a first generation SemSem participant who later completed the NMAA's "Sembradores" program and has a sizeable farming operation in Arroyo Hondo. Another example is Donne Gonzales, who now serves as a trainer in the Sembradores Farmer Training program that teaches farming from three hoop houses and a large field in Chamisal.

The SemSem project of 2018 is coordinated by Miguel Santistevan in Taos and mentors Margaret Garcia, Isabel Trujillo, Donne Gonzales, and Lorenzo Candelaria of Taos, Abiquiu, Chamisal, and the South Valley of Albuquerque, respectively. Our season began with an "Encuentro" held on April 7, 2018 at the historic Los Luceros ranch in Alcalde. Paul Romero, caretaker of the land at Los Luceros, graciously prepared several rows for our SemSem team to plant several rows of habas (fava beans) and alberjón (peas) and irrigated them for us over the season.

Several other SemSem gatherings were held over the growing season while each individual site maintained ongoing activities. A highlight of the season included a Summer Encuentro held on Día de San Juan on June 24, 2018. This day was to reflect on our progress, reaffirm our connection to each other and acequia culture, and have good time being blessed by swimming in the flowing waters of the Río Grande!

Other notable gatherings were the planting of maíz concho (white corn) and calabazas (squash) in Taos with three families and our Taos SemSem intern, Anthony Zamora. The reality of drought impacted our harvest, however, exemplifying another challenge in youth mentorship and acequia culture conservation. A later gathering was held in Abiquiu where we helped to install a water tank and water line to a recently constructed hoop house that will serve to extend the growing season and conserve scarce water supplies.

Though many acequias went dry this year, there was an abundance of fruit in Taos and Chamisal that allowed us to get together to harvest apples, core, peel, and slice for freezing. We are planning on hosting a Winter Encuentro in which we will get our SemSem team together to make pies from our apple and calabasa harvests from this year.

*continued on page 9*



The South Valley SemSem internship program was focused on teaching about larger-scale market farming techniques.

The SemSem project continues to cultivate enthusiasm amongst the youth participants, parents, mentors, and the larger acequia community. While many acequeros are dedicated to maintaining the physical or political integrity of acequia culture, the SemSem program affirms and addresses the need to bring in a new generation of farmers, ranchers, and acequia advocates for the future! The voices and perspectives of some of our youth, mentors, and parents can be heard in the NMAA's "¡Que Vivan las Acequias!" radio programs that can be accessed from YouTube at [www.youtube.com/GrowFarmers](http://www.youtube.com/GrowFarmers) or downloaded from [www.culturalenergy.org/listenlinks.htm](http://www.culturalenergy.org/listenlinks.htm) in the monthly listings, starting in May 2018. Stay tuned to the radio and this publication for updates on our SemSem program! 💧



Youth and Mentors do a soil compaction dance to prepare the base for a large water tank. Photo by Juliet Garcia-Gonzales, NMAA Staff.

## Luján Applauds Grants to Benefit New Mexico's Acequias and Tribal and Pueblo Farmers and Ranchers

Washington, D.C. –October 22, 2018. Rep. Ben Ray Luján (D-NM) applauded the announcement that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has awarded over \$330,000 in grants to benefit New Mexico's acequias and farmers and ranchers from tribal and pueblo communities. Both grants have been awarded through the USDA's Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program (or, the 2501 program).



"In New Mexico, we know that water is life. I have acequias on my land and I grew up working with my family and community to maintain them. This grant will allow NMAA's New Mexico Acequia Farmer and Rancher Education Project to continue that tradition," said Luján. "I'm proud to be a strong supporter of New Mexico's acequias and of USDA's 2501 program. I will continue to work in Congress to protect funding for projects like this and to ensure that our traditional communities can continue their work."

To read the rest of this press release, please follow: <https://lujan.house.gov/press-releases/lujan-applauds-grants-to-benefit-new-mexicos-acequias-and-tribal-and-pueblo-farmers-and-ranchers2/?fbclid=IwAR3gqBE2-moQUC9G4FbL-Ery15q-hDzbBz9J1IkFJrRy37xovp-YFJPano0> 💧



Jospeh C Gallegos irrigating his filed in Costilla, NM. Photographer unknown.



# Cultivating Querencia: Next Generation Acequia Farmers

by Essence Quintana, Los Sembradores  
Farmer Apprentice

Starting the apprenticeship I was excited and prepared to learn everything I could in order to start my own garden. Now I know what it is going to take to keep and maintain my land. This coming year, I plan to work at least 1 acre of my land, where I have irrigation rights from the



Essence Quintana planting starters with the Los Sembradores crew. Photo by Donne Gonzales.

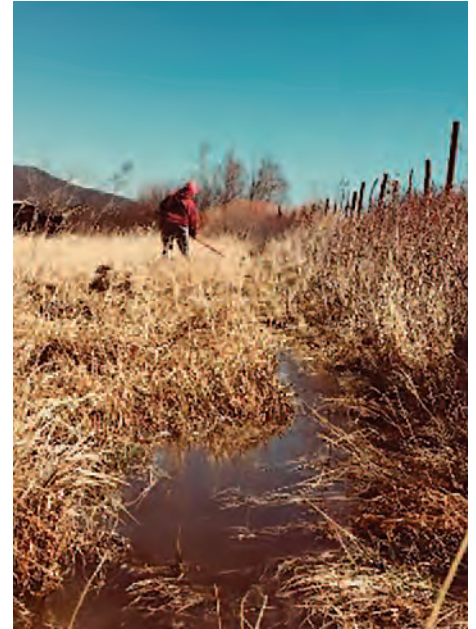
acequia. I will be planting sweet peas, corn, squash, herbs, and perennials such as blackberries and strawberries. I will use some of my produce to maintain my family's health, sell to my neighbors and if there's ever extra I hope to sell it to the Cosecha Del Norte Co-op.

Growing up I always saw my grandparents growing a small garden. They invested time and energy into something that was going to feed the family. They grew corn, squash, havas, peas, along with some fruit trees. I helped them with a small cavador (hoe) they made for me. I feel like I've always been passionate about working in the garden. This year, having the opportunity to be part of this team, I've realized how farming can be a lifelong learning journey. It's not something that may come easy, but the outcome is worth it. Every little aspect of gardening is a learning adventure, sometimes good and others hard or bad. Regardless taking care of the land, water, and seeds that have been passed down through my family is where my heart is.

Everyone got to participate in the first acequia cleaning of the year and got to see where it flows through. Our first couple weeks we did soil preparation such as tilling and sculpting raised beds. We learned how to use and set up a drip irrigation line which came in especially handy this year since we didn't get to irrigate off our acequia. We also had to get the cold storage ready for when we start harvesting.

Last year was a really cold one so we didn't get any apples as they all froze. This year at the beginning of our apprenticeship we pruned all the apple trees. In return for all the love we gave, the trees gave us more apples than we could handle. We also learned how to save and store apples for later use such as pies and we pressed apples for cider.

I learned that soil nutrients can help your plants grow beautifully, especially the chicken pellets. We also prepped the



Essence Quintana regando con la acequia Chamisal y Ojito. Photo by Donne Gonzales.

soil for the new hoop house with another kind of soil nutrients which was basically a blend of worm compost. In the past, Donne has bought lady bugs and praying mantises. This year we didn't buy any, but we had good volunteer/ helper bugs in the hoop houses.

It was helpful to learn which plants like warm weather such as the melons, lemon cucumbers, tuscano kale, chiles, and the squash that did extra well, with some weighing up to 15 pounds. The plants that love the cold are what I looked forward to growing, because up where I live I'd have about a month shorter growing season so I wanted to know what would do well in the cold. The first crop we planted was all root crops (carrots, radishes, turnips) and of course, they all did super well and gave us plenty.

It has been a great year and a wonderful learning experience. When you learn to care for your land and the food you grow, you are learning to care for yourself, your mind, body and soul. Thank you for this wonderful learning opportunity. 💧





Norval Bookout, Commissioner of Tularosa Community Ditch, offers water from his acequia for the annual bendición de las aguas. Photo by Seth Roffman.

## 19th Annual Congreso de las Acequias *continued from page 1*

This year we are honored to have Deacon Alex Valdez sanctify the acequia waters offered during our annual Bendición de las Aguas. In addition to this, we will also be honoring the lives of acequia leaders who have recently passed John Carangelo of La Joya and Tom Myers of Taos.

As always, there will be an exciting repertoire of music, entertainment and film! Anticipate a live performance by Grupo Teatro Acequero, premier of Bendición del Agua, a poem film by Olivia Romo, and "Acequia" Film Trailer by Arcy Chapa.💧

**Register now for the Congreso de las Acequias at:**  
[lasacequias.org/product/congreso-de-las-acequias-registration](http://lasacequias.org/product/congreso-de-las-acequias-registration)  
 or call NMAA at (505) 995-9644. **Early Bird Registration: \$30.00; At the Door: \$35.00**

Please  
 support  
 the nmaa annual  
 Congreso de  
 las Acequias!

### It's almost time for the 19th Annual Congreso de las Acequias and we need YOUR SUPPORT!

We have raised just \$5,500 of our goal of \$10,000. Sponsorship helps us cover costs for food, venue, special presenters and outreach.

#### THANK YOU TO OUR CURRENT SPONSORS!

*American Friends Service Committee • Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District  
 Tewa Women United • Guadalupe Credit Union • Santa Cruz Irrigation District  
 Gregory Swift, Acequia Commissioner • Con Alma Health Foundation (In Memory of Facundo Valdez)  
 Waterwise Gardening, LLC • Del Norte Credit Union • Grant Soil and Water Conservation District  
 Youth Fellowship Fund • Taos Soil and Water Conservation District • NM Healthy Soil Initiative  
 Sierra Soil and Water Conservation District • Del Norte Bank*

#### And YOU can Sponsor the Congreso too!!!

##### Maíz -- \$1000 Sponsorship receives:

- REGISTRATION waived for 8 individuals
- DISPLAY BOOTH in Exhibit Area
- COLOR HALF (1/2) Page Ad in Program
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENT in our Print and Electronic Newsletters, and on our Website

##### Chile -- \$500 Sponsorship receives:

- REGISTRATION waived for 4 individuals
- DISPLAY BOOTH in Exhibit Area
- COLOR QUARTER (1/4) Page Ad in Program
- ACKNOWLEDGMENT in our Print and Electronic Newsletters, and on our Website

##### Hava -- \$250 Sponsorship receives:

- REGISTRATION waived for 2 individuals
- DISPLAY BOOTH in Exhibit Area
- COLOR Business Card Ad in Program
- ACKNOWLEDGMENT in our Print and Electronic Newsletters, and on our Website

##### Alverjon -- \$100 Sponsorship receives:

- REGISTRATION waived for 1 individual
- NAME Listed in Program
- ACKNOWLEDGMENT in our Print and Electronic Newsletters, and on our Website

**Please call or email Lori Spillman, 505-995-9644 or [lori@lasacequias.org](mailto:lori@lasacequias.org)**



# Los Sembradores Farmer Training Opportunity!

Apply  
NOW!



Sembradores 2018 team, hard at work and having fun. Photo by Donne Gonzales, NMAA Farmer Training Coordinator.

**Are you interested in learning how to be an organic acequia farmer in northern New Mexico?**

**Do you want to learn how to increase your production to sell commercially?**

**Are you looking for ways to put your agricultural land and water rights to use?**

**Are you interested in learning best practices and techniques from other local farmers?**

NMAA is pleased to announce that we will be starting the second year of our Farmer-to-Farmer training program, Los Sembradores, based in northern NM in 2019! The program uses a hands-on approach and an 18-point curriculum created by our partners American Friends Service Committee, based on the successful farm model pioneered by Don Bustos.

**Training includes:** farm planning, business planning, season extension, fertility and soil health, maintenance of equipment and usage, planting and harvesting techniques, organic pest management, marketing, value added processing, community meals and an emphasis on network development/ aggregation of food.

**Applications are due January 4, 2019.**

**2018 Program dates:**

**Mid February – Mid December 2019**

**Participation is limited to three trainees and trainees must commit to 3 days a week for the full term of the training!**

**If you are interested in applying for this program, please contact Donne Gonzales at [Donne@lasacequias.org](mailto:Donne@lasacequias.org) or (505) 995-9644.**





Toribio Garcia & Olivia Chavez proudly stand in front of their new hoop house with their sons Toribio Jr & Francisco Garcia. Photo by Juliet Garcia-Gonzales, NMAA Staff.



**Eligible land includes:**

- Cropland and Hayland
- Rangeland
- Pastureland
- Non-industrial private forestland
- Other farm or ranch lands

**Eligible person(s) include:**

- Agricultural producers
- Owners of non-industrial private forestland
- Indian Tribes
- Those with an interest in the agricultural or forestry operations

Special Thanks to Taos Service Center USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mike Jones, District Conservationist; Vernon Mirabal, Soil Conservationist; and, Allen Mackrain, FSA Loan Manager, for assisting the Garcia family to make their dreams of growing food a reality! 💧

**Congratulations to Toribio Garcia on successfully utilizing the USDA EQIP program to install a new hoop house!**

Toribio is a parciante on the Acequia de Chamisal y Ojito and is a young farmer who aspires to grow food for his family and community! This spring, his family will plant mixed greens, vegetables, tomatoes, and a variety of herbs. They are committed to creating opportunities for their community to have access to traditionally grown food.

The EQIP program is critical for beginning farmers and ranchers to have the opportunity to invest in technology and equipment for conservation practices and to grow healthy food. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) helps agricultural producers confront farming challenges – all while conserving natural resources like soil, water and air. The program is a cost share program in which USDA covers most of the cost, while the landowner covers the remainder.

Applications are ranked, and if yours is funded, NRCS will offer you an EQIP contract to receive financial assistance for the cost of implementing practices. Applications are accepted year-round from all eligible lands and persons!

**Thank you to our congressional delegation for support of USDA programs to reach historically underserved communities such as acequias and tribes.**

NMAA recently received a USDA grant of over \$130,000 for the NM Acequia Farmer and Rancher Education project. The project's aim is to strengthen the agricultural operations of farmers and ranchers who use acequias or community ditches in New Mexico.

*"Acequias have sustained generations of families through farming and ranching. The NMAA is working to support acequias as part the local economy and culture with education and resources for acequia irrigation efficiency, beginning farmer and rancher training, and youth outreach."*

— Paula Garcia, Executive Director, New Mexico Acequia Association.





## JOIN THE NMAA AND THE MOVEMENT TO PROTECT WATER!!



The year 2018 was one of the most difficult in memory for acequias. The depth of the drought and water shortages during the growing season stretched our imagination and patience. These are times when it is more important than ever to communicate and to have access to a broad network of acequias statewide to share experiences and lessons learned.

The NMAA kept abreast of issues locally and statewide, convened leaders to discuss challenges, and stayed on track to be responsive to community needs. **Despite the challenges we collectively face as acequias, there are increasing numbers seeking guidance and support on governance, infrastructure funding, and intergenerational participation in our acequias.**

**There are over 125 acequias in some phase of planning an infrastructure project**, an indication of a deep commitment to keep waters flowing. **Over 100 acequias a month reach out to the NMAA for consultation** on issues that range from day-to-day concerns to major governance problems for which we provide tangible support.

In 2018, the **NMAA implemented the second year of Los Sembradores Farmer Training Project** with our second cohort of apprentices. We continued our **vital policy advocacy work and were called upon to share acequia concerns and knowledge with legislative committees and numerous conferences.**

This was also the year when **we had the largest ever Acequia Day gathering at the State Capitol** with over 300 attending and marching to the roundhouse with palas in hand. It is clear that our work is supporting a growing movement of people who care about our future and are devoted to caring for our land and water.

**NMAA needs your support to continue to build on this work.** Please become a member or renew your membership!! We are counting on you to continue to defend the precious waters of our communities, to support our acequias, and to educate our acequia youth!

***Que Vivan las Acequias!***  
Yours in service,  
Paula Garcia, Executive Director



Sembrando Semillas Youth learning about acequias in outdoor activities and games. Photo by NMAA Staff.



# Acequia Youth Education Initiative



of at least one experienced teacher and several younger staff who will be leading this initiative.

Starting in the Spring of 2019, NMAA is hopeful to have a robust youth education program that will inspire youth to appreciate acequias and to participate in them. We will also be encouraging local acequias to be more open and welcoming to youth at their meetings and to encourage their involvement. Community events such as acequia cleanings, el primer agua, and acequia blessings are also excellent ways to involve young people.

Please stay tuned to learn more about NMAA's education and outreach programs!



by Olivia Romo, NMAA Staff

Over the past several years, many of our members and supporters have suggested that the NMAA be more active in educating our youth about acequias. NMAA is creating a new youth outreach initiative to expose more children and youth in New Mexico to acequia history, culture, science, and language. In recent months, NMAA staff has been invited to classrooms, county fairs, and various events and we have reached hundreds of youth. We have also learned of some of the ways we can improve our outreach.

We are formalizing this effort as an initiative that will begin in 2019 in which we will develop a curriculum for youth that is aligned to standards and benchmarks for use by educators, acequia staff, or others who may be giving either classroom presentations or leading field trips to acequias. The exciting part of this effort is that we have a team at NMAA comprised

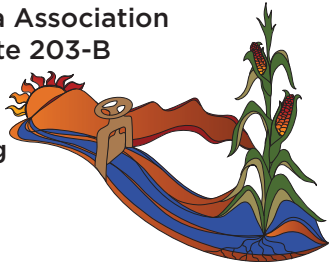
Olivia Romo surrounded by students of Saint Josephs Mission School in San Fidel, NM. Photo by David Benavides, Attorney with NM Legal Aid.





# Noticias de las Acequias • Fall 2018

New Mexico Acequia Association  
805 Early Street Suite 203-B  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
(505) 995-9644  
[www.lasacequias.org](http://www.lasacequias.org)



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## Fall Calendar of Events:

### CONGRESO DE LAS ACEQUIAS –

**LABOR Y FE: ACEQUIAS CARING FOR THE LAND IN TIMES OF CHANGE**

NOV. 17, 9AM-3PM

Marriott Pyramid Hotel, ABQ

Register at: [www.lasacequias.org](http://www.lasacequias.org) or \$35.00 at the door

### NEW MEXICO ACEQUIA COMMISSION MEETINGS

**USUALLY EVERY 3RD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH, 10AM**

Location varies

For details contact Chairman Ralph Vigil 505 603-2879, [molinodelaisla@gmail.com](mailto:molinodelaisla@gmail.com)

### THE NEW MEXICO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

**DECEMBER 12TH, 8:30AM-4:30PM**

UNM Valencia Campus, 280 La Entrada Rd., Los Lunas

Free – Topics Will include: Management Intensive Grazing; Bison, A Sustainable Choice?; Marketing the Grass-fed Label; Is Supplemental Feeding a Sustainable Way to Deal with Drought?; Using Guardian Animals to Protect Flocks; Launching a Legal Dairy; Breed Selection for Increased Sustainability; Grazing Poultry; Meeting Regulations & Fencing Options for Pastured Livestock.

<http://rsvp.nmsu.edu/rsvp/sustainable2018>

### ACEQUIA DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE 2019!

**FEBRUARY 5TH, 2019**

NM Round House, Santa Fe

Bring your pala and your parcientes to advocate for acequias!

### NM ORGANIC CONFERENCE

**FEBRUARY 15TH AND 16TH, 2019**

Hotel Albuquerque

Visit the NMAA table and check out our presentation Register: <https://tinyurl.com/NMOFC2019>

### REGISTER WITH THE FARM SERVICE AGENCY

**ONGOING - VISIT YOUR LOCAL FSA OFFICE**

Become eligible for USDA programs and get counted in the Ag Census

### SIGN UP FOR NATURAL CONSERVATION RESOURCE SERVICE ON FARM IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMS ONGOING

Visit the NMAA office or Call Serafina at NMAA 505-995-9644 for assistance.