



March 25, 2019

State Wildlife Plan 2019 - 2022 NRCS New Mexico

Introduction

This plan replaces the 2014-2017 New Mexico NRCS state wildlife plan (SWP) and defines a conservation implementation strategy used by NRCS to apply wildlife conservation program funding. Furthermore, this plan outlines a strategy to include priority at risk fish and wildlife species in addition to concerns with pollinating insects and common fish and wildlife.

The 2014-2017 NRCS state wildlife plan reflects the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS) of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF). The NM NRCS State Technical Committee recommended this strategic plan in 2014 with subsequent NRCS State Conservationist approval. The CWCS has been a guiding document used in NRCS conservation program delivery.

The NMDGF updated the strategic plan in 2016, now called the [State Wildlife Action Plan \(SWAP\)](#). The locally lead effort, directed by numerous stakeholders helped define priority species and habitats. The involvement of resource professionals, conservation organizations, commodity interests, private individuals, tribal interests, municipal governments, and others aided in this assessment to construct a better wildlife conservation overview for New Mexico.

USDA Conservation Programs

The Farm Bill is the largest source of federal funding for private lands conservation, and provides opportunities for producers to benefit wildlife habitat on working lands. NRCS administers or provides technical support to many USDA Conservation Programs which benefit wildlife.

The 2018 Farm added no new NRCS programs and none were eliminated. The Conservation Title increases funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and direct funding for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Support for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) remains despite a reduction of funding levels. Additional highlights include:

- ACEP will provide entities who will hold easements more flexibility and control over land stewardship requirements and other management actions.
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program contains improvements to make it more efficient and effective. Impediments are removed, enabling NRCS and partners to better manage funding throughout the duration of projects.
- Grasslands receive some focus through the new Grassland Conservation Initiative within CSP and the continued incentives to protect grasslands of special environmental significance within ACEP.
- **Wildlife** resource concerns are supported through the Working Lands for Wildlife effort, through ACEP-WRE, and through increased funding levels through EQIP.

Farm Bill programs are administered to provide for National, State, and Local priorities. All program applications are accepted, evaluated, and administered in a fair, transparent, and consistent process. Screening and ranking criteria in the form of questions are used to establish priority and application scores. Ranking criteria is used to determine applications which provide for the greatest environmental benefit.

National Wildlife Priorities

To promote conservation of at-risk species habitat including development and improvement of wildlife habitat the following national ranking questions are currently utilized:

- Implementing practices benefitting threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern?
- Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program?
- Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators?
- Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife?

National Wildlife Priorities

NRCS uses targeted landscape-level initiatives to accelerate conservation work where it can net the biggest impacts. The Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has expanded to target conservation on numerous at-risk and their habitat. WLFW now focuses on 24 wildlife initiatives throughout the nation. Dedicated Farm Bill funding for these initiatives primarily comes from the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).

WLFW in New Mexico:

- Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
- Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative
- Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout

State Wildlife Priorities

The New Mexico State Conservationist has established state priority natural resource concerns using recommendations of the State Technical Committee and tribal Conservation advisory councils.

Inadequate habitat for Fish and Wildlife has consistently been a state level priority. This Plan identifies the New Mexico NRCS state wildlife priorities as to:

- Protect, restore or enhance Key Rare or Declining Habitats.
- Protect, restore or enhance habitat for at-risk species: Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), pollinating insects, and/or common game species.

This Plan expands the strategy outlined in the 2014-2017 NRCS plan to not only include at risk species but also to include pollinators and common species habitats of a management concern to landowners. This Plan utilizes the 2017 NMDGF's SWP to identify priority habitats.

NM NRCS Wildlife Initiative (state level EQIP):

The purpose of the Wildlife Initiative EQIP Fund Pool is provide financial and technical assistance to agricultural operators who want to create, improve or enhance fish or wildlife habitat for species of greatest conservation need, pollinator, or common species on farms, ranches and non-industrial forestlands.

The SWAP provides NRCS one component in the overall strategy to assist in delivery of this plan. This Plan expands this strategy to include Pollinators and Common species. At-risk or common species and their habitats are identified through the planning process to determine the beneficial outcomes of a proposed conservation plan alternative. Priority habitats identified from the SWAP have been adopted in the delivery of this strategy. Appendix A provides a summary of the priority habitat categories with reference to associated SGCN.

A SGCN list for each county can be downloaded by a query within the NMDGF database system, Biota Information System of New Mexico (BISON-M; www.bison-m.org). Within the SWAP (2016), SGCN are further identified as declining, vulnerable, endemic, disjunct, or keystone species.

Appendix B: NM State Wildlife Initiative fund pool description

Appendix C: NM State Wildlife Initiative ranking questions

Note: Funding pool description and ranking questions are subject to annual change dependent on the program need.

Local Wildlife Priorities (Local Work Groups)

Fish and wildlife priorities are identified in the “conservation needs assessment” completed through the annual Local Work Group Meetings. Meetings generally occur on a county-level from August to October of each year. The NRCS programs staff and the NRCS state biologist will review the conservation needs assessments annually and incorporate any identified wildlife-related items into the local ranking questions.

Common species at the local level may include those fish and wildlife species and their habitat that are a local concern and by which specific conservation program recommendations are provided by the local work group. The recommendations may provide for local funding within a conservation implementation strategy (EQIP-local proposal) focused on measurable outcomes.

Members of the LWG may prioritize management of small or big game wildlife as Common species to focus local conservation efforts. Wildlife habitat conservation opportunities may also present themselves because of natural resources being present on lands (i.e. riparian areas) which may focus on a holistic approach that benefits many wildlife species.

Historically approximately one half of the local work groups have identified fish or wildlife as a concern within their annual workgroup proposals (webpage link to [LWG Proposals](#)) which identifies priority resource concerns. Examples of identified fish and wildlife resource concerns include:

- Population Imbalance, Inadequate Food/Water, T&E Species, Wetlands
- Rangeland - Inadequate Food/Water and Shelter
- Playa Restoration/Wildlife Habitat
- Inadequate Habitat and T&E Plant Species

Often wildlife has perceived and real detrimental effects to agricultural producers. Crop and livestock depredation are of economic concern, although the NRCS does not provide technical nor financial assistance to address these concerns. USDA-Animal Plant Health Inspective Services-Wildlife Service and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish employ specialists to provide the public with programs to address these concerns.

Other Farm Bill Conservation Programs

Conservation Programs are utilized to promote conservation of at-risk species habitat. The primary financially assisted program utilized is EQIP. Various initiatives such as WLFW or RCPP have utilized EQIP as the funding source program.

- NRCS provides technical assistance to the Farm Service Agency in the delivery of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Lands enrolled in CRP continue to support wildlife habitat.
- The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) strives to provide incentive to landowners willing to target specific management alternatives for wildlife benefit.
- The Agricultural Land Easement program (ALE) provides opportunities to landowners who decide preserving working agricultural lands or wetlands is a legacy they wish to leave for their children and the wildlife which depend on these open spaces.

Regardless of program, a conservation planning procedure to inventory habitat and associated at-risk species is provided by the NMDGF State Wildlife Action Plan. The plan provides the most current statewide strategy used and adopted by practitioners in wildlife conservation.

Conservation Planning

Conservation planners utilizing NRCS programs must have knowledge of the NMDGF State Wildlife Action Plan as it provides a foundation to wildlife conservation efforts employed by NRCS.

Wildlife habitat maps are developed for planned land units. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) have become a critical tool to assess landscapes for multiple purposes. For wildlife conservation one purpose is to identify habitat types across planned management units. Habitat categories provided in the SWAP and used by NRCS in planning processes are further classified utilizing GIS data sets; US National Vegetation Classification System (USNVC) and Southwest Regional Gap Analysis (SWReGAP). Species of greatest conservation need are correlated with the GIS habitat inventory of planned land units.

Wildlife habitat assessments are conducted in the field and may be land use or species-specific assessments. Field inventories are essential to determine actual benchmark habitat conditions, threats, or otherwise limiting habitat factors influencing wildlife species.

Proposed conservation practices shall address the identified limiting habitat factors. Core conservation management practices are planned with facilitating practices to achieve the desired wildlife conservation goals and objectives of the landowner. A general list of these conservation practices is provided in *Appendix D*.

Implementation requirements for conservation practices are developed based on the practice standards and specifications ([Conservation Practices | NRCS](#)). Consideration is given to site conditions, design alternatives, and knowledge and ability of landowners to implement the practices. There are apparent needs associated with addressing special environmental concerns. Many of the SGCN and their habitats are protected resources.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partners are essential to the success of NRCS conservation programs and in the conservation of our nation's biodiversity. NRCS strives to build and maintain partnerships at all levels; from international agreements to national/regional partnership initiatives. However, special emphasis is placed upon local partnership with the acknowledgement that effective conservation cannot be achieved unless the people who live and rely on those lands are an integral part of the conservation process.

New Mexico's wildlife partners represent a wide array of special interests which help to bring diversity and new ideas to our program. Provided below are partnerships that have essential roles in the implementation of the NRCS conservation programs.

Conservation Districts

Conservation Districts and Tribal Conservation District responsibilities may include: assisting with program outreach activities, accepting applications to forward to NRCS, providing technical assistance, administrative support for contracts, and working with NRCS on issues. (M_440_517_517.5)

Tribal Conservation Advisory Council

Their role is to provide recommendations concerning the implementation of the program and to establish program direction on applicable tribal land. (M_440_517_517.7)

Local Working Groups

Are a subset of the State Technical Committee, their role is to facilitate locally led conservation and to provide advice to NRCS on implementation of conservation programs. (M_440_517_517.8)

State Technical Committee

Their role is to provide recommendations concerning the implementation of the program and to establish program direction within the State. Specifically, in regard to the Wildlife State Plan, the state priorities, and the ranking criteria. (M_440_517_517.6)

A wildlife subcommittee has formed to specifically provide wildlife-related recommendations. Refer to *Appendix E* for a listing of committee members.

Other Agencies and Tribes

Other Federal, State, local agencies, and Tribes responsibilities may include:

- serves as a member of the State Technical Committee, local working group, or both,
- provide input and recommendations to NRCS for developing program guidelines,
- assist with outreach activities, and
- providing technical assistance

Performance Measurement and Accountability

Performance Measurement. NRCS uses the Performance Results System (PRS) to report 'performance measures' which show how planned and applied conservation activities link to wildlife priorities. This reporting system is available to the public online at: [USDA-NRCS PRS - Menu](#).

Accountability. The NRCS employs periodic national program reviews, annual state program reviews, and annual conservation planning quality assurance reviews to ensure programs and conservation technical assistance are achieving their intended purpose.

Additional Reporting. When requested, specific program and implementation information will be collected at the field level and submitted to the state office. These special requests are often the result of congressional reviews, Endangered Species Act reporting requirements, FOIA requests, or national program reviews. Field level requests will only be made when the information cannot be obtained by querying PRS or other data sources.

Approval

This plan was developed with recommendations provided by the New Mexico State Technical Committee.

Date _____

State Conservationist for New Mexico

Natural Resources Conservation Service

END

Appendix A - Summary of Habitat Categories and associated SGCN

Appendix B - NM State Wildlife Initiative fund pool description

Appendix C - NM State Wildlife Initiative ranking questions

Appendix D - List of Conservation Practices

Appendix E - State Technical Committee members

Literature Referenced

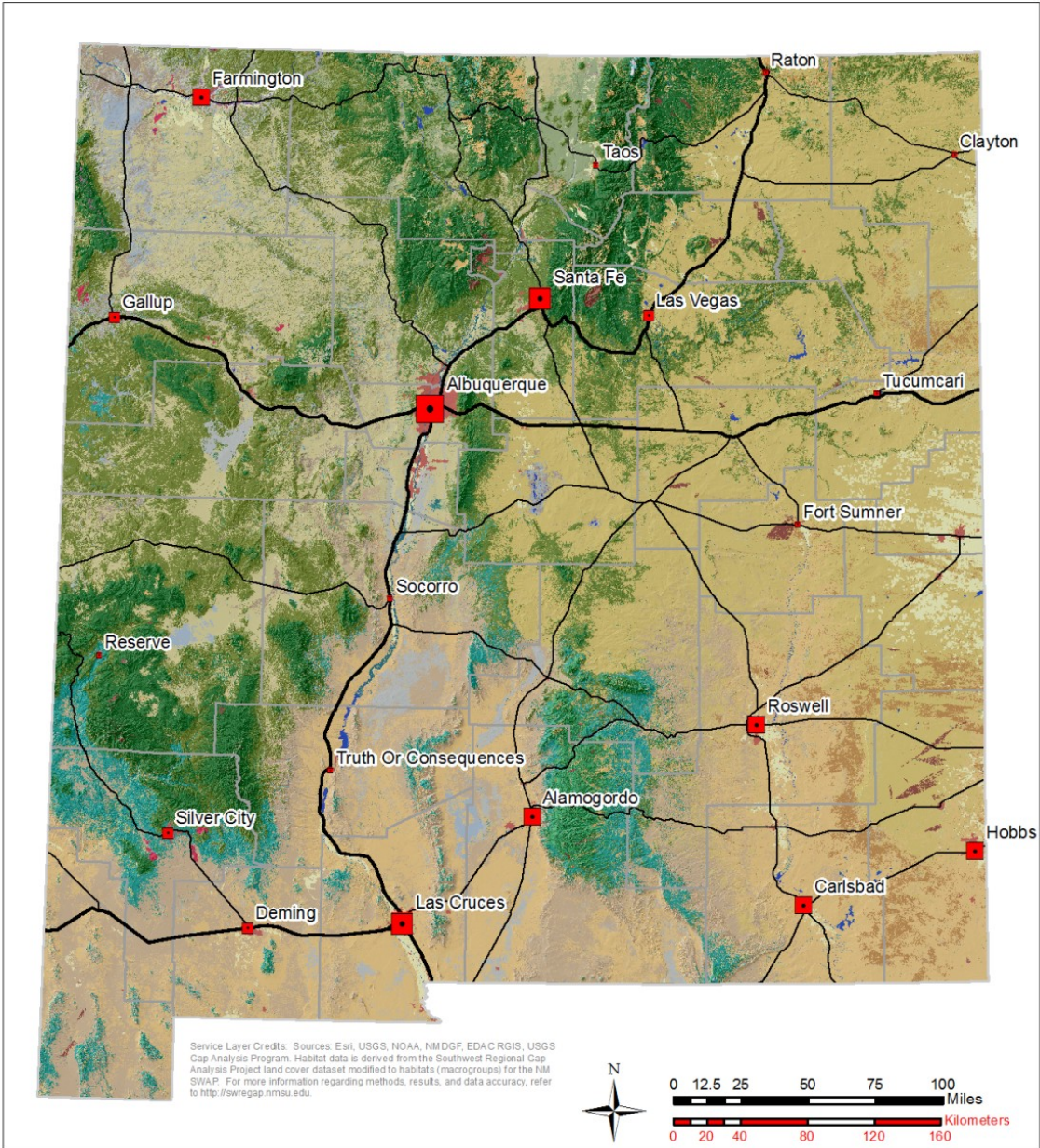
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. 2016. State Wildlife Action Plan for New Mexico. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA.

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy For New Mexico. February 2006

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Appendix A. Habitats (Vegetation Class Type, and Codes) and associated SGCN, Common fish and wildlife, Pollinator species list.

<u>Habitat Category</u>	<u>USNVC Name (SWReGap)</u>	<u>Codes</u>	<u>SWAP Tier Priority</u>
Riparian Woodlands and Wetlands			
	Arid West Interior Freshwater Emergent Marsh	M888	1
	Western North American Montane-Subalpine Wet Shrubland & Wet Meadow	M075	1
	Rocky Mountain & Great Basin Montane Riparian Forest	M034	1
	Southwest Riparian Forest	M036	1
	Great Plains Floodplain Forest	M028	1
	Great Plains Wet Meadow, Marsh, & Playas	M071	1
	Warm Desert Lowland Freshwater, Shrubland, Meadow & Marsh	M076	1
	Warm & Cool Desert Alkali-Saline Wetland	M082	1
	Open Water (Stream, lakes, cirques, ponds)	N11	1
Arroyo Riparian			
	North American Warm-Desert Xeric-Riparian Scrub	M092	2
	Great Basin & Intermountain Xeric-Riparian Scrub	M095	2
Plains-Mesa Grasslands			
	Great Plains Mixed Grass & Fescue Prairie	M051	2
	Great Plains Sand Grassland & Shrubland	M052	3
	Great Plains Shortgrass Prairie	M053	3
Desert Grassland and Scrub			
	Great Basin & Intermountain Dry Shrubland & Grassland	M171	2
	Chihuahuan Semi-Desert Grassland	M087	2
	Great Basin & Intermountain Tall Sagebrush Shrubland & Steppe	M169	3
	Great Basin Saltbush Scrub	M093	4
	Great Basin & Intermountain Dwarf Sagebrush Shrubland & Steppe	M170	4
	Chihuahuan Desert Scrub	M086	4
Alpine and Montane Vegetation			
	Rocky Mountain & Vancouverian Subalpine - High Montane Mesic Meadow	M168	2
	Madrean Montane Forest & Woodland	M011	3
	Rocky Mountain & Sierran Alpine Scrub, Forb Meadow & Grassland	M099	3
	Southern Rocky Mountain Montane Shrubland	M049	3
	Rocky Mountain Subalpine-High Montane Conifer Forest	M020	4
	Southern Rocky Mountain Lower Montane Forest	M022	4
	Madrean Lowland Evergreen Woodland	M010	4
	Southern Rocky Mountain Two Needle Pinon-One Seed Juniper Woodland	M027	4
	Intermountain Singleleaf Pinon-Western Juniper Woodland	M026	4
	Warm Interior Chaparral	M091	4
Cliff, Scree & Rock Vegetation (4)			
	Western North American Temperate Cliff, Scree & Rock Vegetation	M887	4



Land Cover - Habitats

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| Cliff, Scree & Rock Vegetation | Intermountain Dwarf Sagebrush Shrubland | Rocky Mountain Alpine Vegetation |
| Arid West Interior Freshwater Emergent Marsh | Intermountain Juniper Woodland | Rocky Mountain Lower Montane Forest |
| Barren | Intermountain Saltbush Shrubland | Rocky Mountain Montane Riparian Forest |
| Chihuahuan Desert Scrub | Intermountain Tall Sagebrush Shrubland | Rocky Mountain Montane Shrubland |
| Chihuahuan Semi-Desert Grassland | Introduced Riparian Vegetation | Rocky Mountain Pinyon - Juniper Woodland |
| Developed & Urban | Annual Grassland | Rocky Mountain Subalpine-High Montane Conifer Forest |
| Great Plains Floodplain Forest | Perennial Grassland | Rocky Mountain Subalpine-High Montane Meadow |
| Great Plains Mixedgrass Prairie | Madrean Lowland Evergreen Woodland | Southwest Riparian Forest |
| Great Plains Sand Grassland & Shrubland | Madrean Montane Forest & Woodland | Desert Alkali-Saline Wetland |
| Great Plains Shortgrass Prairie | Montane-Subalpine Wet Shrubland & Wet Meadow | Warm Desert Lowland Riparian Shrubland |
| Herbaceous Agricultural Vegetation | Open Water | Warm Interior Chaparral |
| Intermountain Arroyo Riparian Scrub | Quarries, Mines, Gravel Pits and Oil Wells | Warm-Desert Arroyo Riparian Scrub |
| Intermountain Dry Shrubland & Grassland | Recently Disturbed or Modified | |

Riparian Woodlands and Wetlands

Abert's Towhee	Grace's Warbler	Peregrine Falcon
Alamosa Springsnail	Gray Redhorse	Pinyon Jay
American Bittern	Gray Vireo	Plain-bellied Water Snake
American Marten	Gray-banded Kingsnake	Razorback Sucker
Arid Land Ribbonsnake	Green Rat Snake	Red-faced Warbler
Arizona Montane Vole	Greenthroat Darter	Red-headed Woodpecker
Arizona Shrew	Headwater Chub	Reticulate Gila Monster
Arizona Toad	Jaguar	Rio Grande Chub
Arizona Treefrog	Jemez Mountains Salamander	Rio Grande Leopard Frog
Arkansas River Shiner (Native pop.)	Jemez Woodlandsnail	Rio Grande Silvery Minnow
Bald Eagle	Juniper Titmouse	Rio Grande Sucker
Bank Swallow	Koster's Springsnail	Roswell Springsnail
Bell's Vireo	Least Shrew	Roundtail Chub
Bendire's Thrasher	Least Tern	Sacramento Mountains Salamander
Big Bend Slider	Lewis's Woodpecker	Sangre de Cristo Woodlandsnail
Bigscale Logperch (native pop.)	Lilljeborg's Peaclam	Snowy Plover
Black Swift	Loach Minnow	Socorro Isopod
Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Loggerhead Shrike	Socorro Springsnail
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Long-billed Curlew	Sonora Sucker
Blue Sucker	Lowland Leopard Frog	Sonoran Desert Toad
Boreal Owl	Lucifer Hummingbird	Sonoran Mud Turtle
Boreal Toad	Lucy's Warbler	Southern Redbelly Dace
Botteri's Sparrow	Mexican Long-nosed Bat	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
Broad-billed Hummingbird	Mexican Spotted Owl	Spikedace
Burrowing Owl	Mexican Tetra	Spotted Bat
California Kingsnake	Mineral Creek Mountainsnail	Star Gyro
Chihuahua Chub	Mountain Plover	Suckermouth Minnow
Chiricahua Leopard Frog	Mountain Skink	Texas Hornshell
Chupadera Springsnail	Narrow-headed Gartersnake	Thick-billed Kingbird
Colorado Pikeminnow	Neotropical Cormorant	Tularosa Springsnail
Common Black Hawk	New Mexico Hot Springsnail	Varied Bunting
Common Ground-dove	New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse	Violet-crowned Hummingbird
Costa's Hummingbird	Noel's Amphipod	Western Narrow-mouthed Toad
Desert Sucker	Northern Beardless Tyrannulet	Western River Cooter
Dona Ana Talussnail	Northern Leopard Frog	Western Yellow Bat
Eared Grebe	Obese Thorn Snail	Whiskered Screech-Owl
Elegant Trogon	Olive-sided Flycatcher	White Sands Pupfish
Elf Owl	Ovate Vertigo Snail	White-tailed Ptarmigan
False Marsh Snail	Painted Redstart	Williamson's Sapsucker
Flammulated Owl	Pale Townsend's Big-eared Bat	Wrinkled Marshsnail
Gila Chub	Pecos Assiminea	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Gila Springsnail	Pecos Bluntnose Shiner	Yellow-eyed Junco
Gila Topminnow	Pecos Gambusia	Zuni Bluehead Sucker
Gila Trout	Pecos Pupfish	
Gila Woodpecker	Pecos Springsnail	
Gould's Wild Turkey	Penasco Least Chipmunk	

Arroyo Riparian

Abert's Towhee	Gunnison's Prairie Dog	Rio Grande Leopard Frog
Arkansas River Shiner (Native pop.)	Loggerhead Shrike	Rio Grande Silvery Minnow
Bank Swallow	Lucy's Warbler	Snowy Plover
Bendire's Thrasher	Mexican Long-nosed Bat	Sonoran Desert Toad
Bigscale Logperch (native pop.)	Mexican Tetra	Spotted Bat
Botteri's Sparrow	Northern Beardless Tyrannulet	Suckermouth Minnow

Burrowing Owl	Organ Mountains Colorado Chipmunk	Varied Bunting
California Kingsnake	Pecos Bluntnose Shiner	Western Narrow-mouthed Toad
Common Black Hawk	Pecos Gambusia	White Sands Pupfish
Costa's Hummingbird	Pecos Pupfish	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Gray Vireo	Pinyon Jay	Yellow-eyed Junco
Gray-banded Kingsnake	Rio Grande Chub	

Plains-Mesa Grasslands

Arid Land Ribbonsnake	Flammulated Owl	Northern Leopard Frog
Arkansas River Shiner (Native pop.)	Gray Redhorse	Pecos Bluntnose Shiner
Baird's Sparrow	Gray Vireo	Pinyon Jay
Bald Eagle	Gunnison's Prairie Dog	Red-headed Woodpecker
Bell's Vireo	Least Shrew	Rio Grande Chub
Bendire's Thrasher	Lesser Prairie-Chicken	Rio Grande Sucker
Bigscale Logperch (native pop.)	Loggerhead Shrike	Suckermouth Minnow
Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Long-billed Curlew	Western Narrow-mouthed Toad
Burrowing Owl	Mexican Tetra	White-sided Jackrabbit
Desert Massasauga	Mountain Plover	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Dunes Sagebrush Lizard		

Desert Grassland and Scrub

Abert's Towhee	Gould's Wild Turkey	Pecos Pupfish
Arid Land Ribbonsnake	Grace's Warbler	Peregrine Falcon
Arizona Toad	Gray Redhorse	Pinyon Jay
Arkansas River Shiner (Native pop.)	Gray Vireo	Plain-bellied Water Snake
AZ Grasshopper Sparrow	Gray-banded Kingsnake	Razorback Sucker
Baird's Sparrow	Green Rat Snake	Reticulate Gila Monster
Bald Eagle	Greenthroat Darter	Rio Grande Chub
Bell's Vireo	Gunnison's Prairie Dog	Rio Grande Silvery Minnow
Bendire's Thrasher	Jaguar	Rio Grande Sucker
Big Bend Slider	Least Tern	Rock Rattlesnake
Bigscale Logperch (native pop.)	Lesser Long-nosed Bat	Roundtail Chub
Black-tailed Prairie Dog	Lesser Prairie-Chicken	Slevin's Bunchgrass Lizard
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Loach Minnow	Snowy Plover
Blue Sucker	Loggerhead Shrike	Sonora Sucker
Botteri's Sparrow	Long-billed Curlew	Sonoran Desert Toad
Broad-billed Hummingbird	Lucifer Hummingbird	Spikedace
Burrowing Owl	Lucy's Warbler	Spotted Bat
California Kingsnake	Metcalf Holospira Snail	Suckermouth Minnow
Colorado Pikeminnow	Mexican Gray Wolf	Texas Liptooth Snail
Common Black Hawk	Mexican Long-nosed Bat	Varied Bunting
Common Ground-dove	Mexican Long-tongued Bat	Violet-crowned Hummingbird
Costa's Hummingbird	Mexican Tetra	Western Narrow-mouthed Toad
Desert Massasauga	Mountain Plover	Western River Cooter
Desert Sucker	Mountain Skink	Western Yellow Bat
Dona Ana Talussnail	Northern Beardless Tyrannulet	White-sided Jackrabbit
Dunes Sagebrush Lizard	Ovate Vertigo Snail	Woodlandsnail
Elf Owl	Pale Townsend's Big-eared Bat	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Flammulated Owl	Pecos Assiminea	Yellow-eyed Junco
Gila Chub	Pecos Bluntnose Shiner	Zuni Bluehead Sucker
Gila Woodpecker	Pecos Gambusia	

Alpine and Montane Vegetation

Abert's Towhee	Gila Woodpecker	Pale Townsend's Big-eared Bat
American Marten	Gould's Wild Turkey	Pecos Bluntnose Shiner
Animas Peak Woodlandsnail	Grace's Warbler	Penasco Least Chipmunk
Animas Talussnail	Gray Vireo	Peregrine Falcon
Arid Land Ribbonsnake	Green Rat Snake	Pinyon Jay
Arizona Montane Vole	Gunnison's Prairie Dog	Red-faced Warbler
Arizona Shrew	Hacheta Grande Woodlandsnail	Reticulate Gila Monster
Arizona Toad	Jaguar	Rio Grande Chub
Arizona Treefrog	Jemez Mountains Salamander	Rio Grande Sucker
Bald Eagle	Jemez Woodlandsnail	Rock Rattlesnake
Bell's Vireo	Juniper Titmouse	Roundtail Chub
Bendire's Thrasher	Lesser Long-nosed Bat	Sacramento Mountains Salamander
Bigscale Logperch (native pop.)	Lewis's Woodpecker	Sangre de Cristo Woodlandsnail
Black Swift	Loach Minnow	Shortneck Snaggletooth Snail
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Loggerhead Shrike	Silver Creek Woodlandsnail
Boreal Owl	Lowland Leopard Frog	Slevin's Bunchgrass Lizard
Boreal Toad	Lucifer Hummingbird	Sonora Sucker
Botteri's Sparrow	Lucy's Warbler	Sonoran Mud Turtle
Burrowing Owl	Metcalf Holospira Snail	Southern Redbelly Dace
Chihuahua Chub	Mexican Gray Wolf	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
Chiricahua Leopard Frog	Mexican Long-nosed Bat	Spikedace
Common Black Hawk	Mexican Long-tongued Bat	Spotted Bat
Common Ground-dove	Mexican Spotted Owl	Suckermouth Minnow
Costa's Hummingbird	Mountain Plover	Thick-billed Kingbird
Cross Holospira Snail	Mountain Skink	Varied Bunting
Desert Sucker	Narrow-headed Gartersnake	Violet-crowned Hummingbird
Dona Ana Talussnail	New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse	Western Yellow Bat
Elegant Trogon	New Mexico Ridge-nosed Rattlesnake	Whiskered Screech-Owl
Elf Owl	Northern Beardless Tyrannulet	White-tailed Ptarmigan
False Marsh Snail	Northern Leopard Frog	Williamson's Sapsucker
Flammulated Owl	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Fringed Mountainsnail	Organ Mountains Colorado Chipmunk	Yellow-eyed Junco
Gila Chub	Oscura Mountains Colorado Chipmunk	Zuni Bluehead Sucker
Gila Trout	Painted Redstart	

Cliff, Scree & Rock Vegetation

Animas Peak Woodlandsnail	Gray-banded Kingsnake	Razorback Sucker
Animas Talussnail	Jaguar	Red-faced Warbler
AZ Grasshopper Sparrow	Jemez Mountains Salamander	Rio Grande Chub
Bald Eagle	Juniper Titmouse	Rio Grande Silvery Minnow
Bendire's Thrasher	Lesser Long-nosed Bat	Rio Grande Sucker
Bigscale Logperch (native pop.)	Loach Minnow	Rock Rattlesnake
Black Swift	Loggerhead Shrike	Roundtail Chub
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Lucifer Hummingbird	Snowy Plover
Botteri's Sparrow	Mexican Long-nosed Bat	Sonora Sucker
Burrowing Owl	Mexican Spotted Owl	Spikedace
Common Black Hawk	New Mexico Ridge-nosed Rattlesnake	Spotted Bat
Common Ground-dove	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Varied Bunting
Cooke's Peak Woodlandsnail	Organ Mountains Colorado Chipmunk	White Sands Pupfish
Desert Sucker	Pale Townsend's Big-eared Bat	Williamson's Sapsucker
Flammulated Owl	Pecos Bluntnose Shiner	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Gila Trout	Penasco Least Chipmunk	Zuni Bluehead Sucker
Grace's Warbler	Peregrine Falcon	
Gray Vireo	Pinyon Jay	

Common Native Fish and Wildlife.

Bobwhite Quail	Rocky Mountain Mule Deer	Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout
Scaled Quail	Desert Mule Deer	Gila Trout
Gambles Quail	Virginia whitetail	Blue Catfish
Montezuma Quail	Coues deer (Arizona whitetail)	Flathead Catfish
Mourning Dove	Desert Bighorn Sheep	All other Native fish.
White Wing Dove	Rocky Mountain Bighorn	Northern Leopard frog
Gould's Turkey	Antelope	
Rio Grande Turkey	Elk	
Merriam's Turkey	Snow Geese	
Broad-tailed Hummingbirds	Canada Geese	
Black-chinned Hummingbirds	Sandhill Crane	
Rufous Hummingbirds	Ducks, dabblers	
Calliope Hummingbirds	Ducks, divers	

Pollinator Species

Insect pollinators include bees, (honey bees, solitary species, bumblebees); pollen wasps; ants; flies including bee flies, hoverflies and mosquitoes; lepidopterans, both butterflies and moths; and flower beetles. Vertebrate pollinators include hummingbirds and Frugivorous and nectivorous species of bats

Appendix B. 2019 NM Wildlife Initiative EQIP Fund Pool

The purpose of the NM Wildlife Initiative EQIP Fund Pool is provide financial and technical assistance to agricultural operators who want to create, improve or enhance fish or wildlife habitat for at-risk or common species on farms, ranches and non-industrial forestlands.

This initiative can provide financial and technical assistance to producers to voluntarily meet agency requirements for implementation of approved conservation practices that provide significant resource benefit to create, improve or enhance fish or wildlife habitat for species of concern.

At-Risk species includes

- Species of greatest conservation need. Those species listed with the NMDGF State Wildlife Action Plan. These species include federally threatened, endangered, candidate, or proposed; State listed as threatened or endangered, or
- Honey bee populations or other pollinators.

Common species include those of a management concern to landowners. These species are typically game species known to occur on the operating unit.

Land Uses for the EQIP Fund Pool

Only applications for agricultural operations that address resource concerns on at least one land use type listed below will be considered for financial assistance from this EQIP Fund Pool. The descriptions below are the general NRCS land use definitions - applications should fit within, but do not need to exactly match, these descriptions.

- **Crop:** Land used primarily for the production and harvest of annual or perennial field, forage, food, fiber, horticultural, orchard, vineyard, or energy crops.
- **Forestland:** Land on which the primary vegetation is tree cover (climax, natural or introduced plant community) and use is primarily for production of wood products or non-timber forest products.
- **Pastureland:** Land composed of introduced or domesticated native forage species that is used primarily to produce livestock. Pastures receive periodic renovation and cultural treatments, such as tillage, fertilization, mowing, weed control, and may be irrigated. Pastures are not in rotation with crops.
- **Rangeland:** Land used primarily for the production of grazing animals. Includes native plant communities and those seeded to native or introduced species or naturalized by introduced species that are ecologically managed using range management principles.
- **Farmstead:** Land used for facilities and supporting infrastructure where farming, forestry, animal husbandry, and ranching activities are often initiated. This may include dwellings, equipment storage, plus farm input and output storage and handling facilities.
- **Associated Agricultural Lands:** Land associated with farms and ranches that are not purposefully managed for food, forage, or fiber and are typically associated with nearby production or conservation lands. This could include incidental areas, such as, odd areas, ditches

and watercourses, riparian areas, field edges, seasonal and permanent wetlands, and other similar areas.

- **Irrigated:** Where an operational irrigation system is present and managed to supply irrigation water.
- **Grazed:** Where grazing animals impact how land is managed.
- **Wildlife:** Where the applicant is managing for wildlife.

Resource Concerns for the NM Wildlife Initiative EQIP Fund Pool

Only applications for agricultural operations that address the resource concern listed below will be considered for financial assistance through this EQIP Fund Pool. The descriptions below are general NRCS natural resource definitions, applications should fit within, but do not need to exactly match, these descriptions.

- ❖ **INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE** – Quantity, quality or connectivity of food, water, cover/shelter, habitat continuity and/or space is inadequate to meet requirements of identified fish, wildlife or invertebrate species.
 - **Habitat Degradation:** Conserving existing habitat and restoring habitat improves the odds that fish and wildlife communities will thrive. The availability and arrangement of food, water, cover, shelter, habitat continuity and space determine the number of organisms that a region can support, also known as carrying capacity. Increasing carrying capacity is critical to attaining long-term population stability.

Eligible NRCS Conservation Practices

All conservation practices planned for financial assistance must be included in the 'EQIP schedule of operations' and address a resource concern identified in this EQIP Fund Pool. NRCS conservation practices eligible for financial assistance through this EQIP Fund Pool are listed in the below table.

For more information about NRCS conservation practices visit the following website link for NRCS conservation practice standards:

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/technical/?cid=NRCSDEV11_001020

Appendix C. Ranking - NM Wildlife Initiative EQIP Fund Pool

State Issues

Fish or Wildlife Habitat for At-Risk or Common Species (Select "Yes" to Only One Answer) Conservation treatments that predominantly affect habitat that directly benefits species of greatest concern need, pollinator, or common species.

1. Fish or wildlife habitat improvements predominantly enhances habitat for Federal or State Threatened, Endangered, Rare species, Proposed, Candidate protected plant or animal species; or, predominantly affects habitat for selected species. Selected species included: Southwest willow flycatcher and Lesser prairie chicken, and aquatic species **100 pts**
2. Fish or wildlife habitat improvements predominantly affects habitat for Species of Greatest Conservation Need which are not federally or state protected. **75 pts**
3. Fish or wildlife habitat improvements predominantly affects habitat for Common plant or animal species or pollinators not listed in question 1 or 2 **50 pts**

Restoration of Native Plant Communities (Select "Yes" to Only One Answer) Conservation treatment with CORE and or SUPPORTING practices beneficial to fish or wildlife.

4. Producer will address resource concern(s) with at least one CORE conservation practice, which has been identified as having a primary purpose and description which benefits wildlife habitat, listed on the NM Wildlife Initiative Practice List. **50 pts**
5. Producer will address resource concern(s) with at least one SUPPORTING conservation practice, which does not have a primary purpose related to wildlife habitat but has been identified as being typically associated with core practices or projects that benefit wildlife habitat, listed on the NM Wildlife Initiative Practice List. **25 pts**

Connectivity to Fully Protected Areas (Select "Yes," if applicable).

6. Conservation treatment will enhance habitat where the project (treatment area) is directly adjacent to an existing U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Easement, National Wildlife Refuge, National Park, BLM Wilderness and Wilderness Study Area, USFWS Wilderness, private lands under conservation easement or other legally protected area that is managed for wildlife. **10 pts**

Extent of Habitat Improvement (Select "Yes" to Only One Answer)

7. Conservation treatment area is greater than 50 percent of the Management Unit (Pasture, Field) or greater than 50 acres or 0.5 mile in length. **40 pts**
8. Conservation treatment area is greater than 25 percent of the Management Unit (Pasture, Field) or greater than 25 acres or 0.25 mile in length **30 pts**

9. Conservation treatment area is greater than 10 percent of the Management Unit (Pasture, Field) or greater than 10 acres or 0.10 mile in length; and; conservation treatment area will remain undisturbed after restoration, except for beneficial management practices. **20 pts**

10. Conservation treatment project is less than 10 percent of the Management Unit (Pasture, Field) or less than 10 acres or less than .10 miles in length or is a single point habitat improvement that has a significant benefit (i.e. fencing off riparian area with specified grazing management to improve multiple resource concerns such as habitat-cover, shelter, spring development, erosion, other). **10 pts**

Please answer yes to one of the following questions from questions 11-14. Please keep in mind the majority of the project must be in the habitat listed in the question.

11. Will this application address wildlife resource concerns on a primary habitat listed in the NM NRCS State Wildlife Plan? Majority of the project is in a primary habitat **25 pts**

12. Will this application address wildlife resource concerns on a primary and a secondary habitat listed in the NM NRCS State Wildlife Plan? Majority of the project is split between a primary and secondary habitat (Close to 50% in each). **20 pts**

13. Will this application address wildlife resource concerns on a secondary habitat listed in the NM NRCS State Wildlife Plan? More than 50 percent of the project is in a secondary habitat. **15 pts**

14. Will this application address wildlife resource concerns on other habitats (not primary or secondary)? majority of the project is in other habitats. **10 pts**

State Category Seven – Partnership Contributions (Select “Yes” if applicable)

15. Does this application include a partner who is contributing financial assistance to the project? (FA has been secured to date) **25 pts**

16. Does this application include a partner who is contributing technical assistance to the project? **10 pts**

Local Issues

Local Category One – Riparian Zone (Select "Yes," if applicable)

1. Conservation treatment will include a beneficial structural and/or management practice within a riparian zone. **50 pts**

Local Category Two – Water Quality (Select "Yes," if applicable)

2. Conservation treatment will improve water quality for locally unique or at-risk species where the Riparian WHEG bench mark score is less than 0.5. **50 pts**

Local Category Three – Pollinator Habitat (Select "Yes," if applicable)

3. Conservation treatment will restore or enhance habitat for pollinators using the Pollinator Habitat Assessment with a minimum after score of 110 points with a minimum increase of 20 points. **50 pts**

Local Category Four – Fish Habitat (Select "Yes," if applicable)

4. Conservation treatment will restore or enhance habitat for native special status fish species. **50 pts**

Local Category Five – Food, Shelter and Cover (Select "Yes," if applicable)

5. Conservation treatment will enhance food, shelter and/or cover for T&E species where the WHEG bench mark score is greater or equal to 0.5. **50 pts**

Local Category Seven – Primary Habitat for Rare, Endangered or Threatened Plant Species (Select "Yes," if applicable)

6. Conservation treatment will restore or enhance regional or locally identified primary habitat that benefit rare, endangered, or threatened plant species. **50 pts**

Local Category Eight – Invasive Species (Select "Yes," if applicable)

8. Conservation treatment for the suppression of noxious and invasive weeds (listed as Class A, B or C invasive species on the New Mexico Noxious Weed List) on Non cropland to facilitate implementation of an NRCS-approved conservation practice will be completed on this application? **20 pts**

Common Species- Select Yes to all questions that apply

9. Will the application address the resource concern of Inadequate Habitat-Habitat Continuity (Space) for common species identified during the planning process. **20 pts**

10. Will the application address the resource concern of Inadequate Habitat-Food for Common species identified during the planning process? **20 pts**

11. Will the application address the resource concern of Inadequate Habitat-Water for Common species identified during the planning process? **20 pts**

12. Will the application address the resource concern of Inadequate Habitat-Cover/Shelter for Common species identified during the planning process? **20 pts**

Appendix D. Core and Supporting Practices

These core practices have been identified as having a primary purpose and description which benefits wildlife habitat.

327 - Conservation Cover
390 - Riparian Herbaceous Cover
391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
395 - Stream Habitat Improvement and Management
396 - Aquatic Organism Passage
422 - Hedgerow Planting
472 - Access Control
580 - Streambank and Shoreline Protection
643 - Restoration and Management of Rare or Declining Habitats
644 - Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
645 - Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
646 - Shallow Water Development and Management
647 - Early Successional Habitat Development/Management
657 - Wetland Restoration
658 - Wetland Creation
659 - Wetland Enhancement

These supporting practices do not have a primary purpose related to wildlife habitat, but have been identified as being typically associated with core practices or projects that benefit wildlife habitat.

314 - Brush Management
315 - Herbaceous Weed Control
328 - Conservation Crop Rotation
338 - Prescribed Burning
340 - Cover Crops
342 - Critical Area Planting
378 - Pond
380 - Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment
382 - Fence
384 - Woody Residue Treatment /Forest Slash Treatment
386 - Field Borders

393 - Filter Strip
394 - Fire Break
430 - Irrigation Water Conveyance-Pipeline
449 - Irrigation Water Management
490 - Tree Shrub Site Preparation
511 - Forage Harvest Management
512 - Forage & Biomass Plantings
516 - Livestock Pipeline
528 - Prescribed Grazing
548 - Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment
550 - Range Planting
560 - Access Road
561 - Heavy Use Area Protection
574 - Spring Development
575 - Trails and Walkways
578 - Stream Crossing
582 - Open Channel
584 - Channel Bed Stabilization
587 - Structure for Water Control
595 - Integrated Pest Management
612 - Tree / Shrub Establishment
614 - Watering Facility
642 - Water Well
654 - Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment
655 - Forest Harvest Trails & Landings
666 - Forest Stand Improvement
649 - Structures for Wildlife

New Mexico NRCS State Technical Committee, Wildlife Subcommittee

March 22, 2019

Appendix E.

<p>NM Department of Agriculture Julie Maitland, Division Director Phone: (575) 646-2642 Email: jmaitland@nmda.nmsu.edu</p> <p>Jim Wanstall, Noxious Weed Specialist Phone: (505) 231-3878 Email: jwanstall@nmda.nmsu.edu</p> <p>MSC APR, Box 30005 Las Cruces, NM 88003 Web: http://www.nmda.nmsu.edu/</p>	<p>U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, SW Region Division of Natural Resources Ed Lucero, Natural Resource Specialist 1001 Indian School Road, NW Albuquerque, NM 87104 Phone: (505) 563-3103 Email: ed.lucero@bia.gov Web: http://www.bia.gov/</p>	<p>U.S. Farm Service Agency 100 Sun Avenue, Suite 200 Albuquerque, NM 87109 (505) 761-4900</p> <p>Joilynn Garcia, CRP Program Specialist 505-761-4911 Joilynn.Garcia@nm.usda.gov</p> <p>Anthony Chavez, Program Specialist 505-761-4912 Anthony.Chavez@nm.usda.gov</p>
<p>NM Department of Game & Fish Bob Osborn, Private Land Programs <u>STTC Wildlife Subcommittee Lead</u> Phone: (505) 476-8044 Email: robert.osborn@state.nm.us</p> <p>Rey Sanchez Phone: (505) 476-8098 Email: rey.sanchez@state.nm.us P.O. Box 25112 Santa Fe, NM 87504</p> <p>New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Grant Beauprez, Lesser Prairie-chicken Biologist 202 CR 3 Texico, NM 88135 Ofc: 575-683-0333 Cell: 575-760-6085 Grant.Beauprez@state.nm.us</p> <p><i>Leland J. S. Pierce</i> Amphibians and Reptiles NM Dept. Game and Fish P. O. Box 25112 Santa Fe, NM 87504 505/476-8094 (voice) 505/476-8128 (fax) leland.pierce@state.nm.us</p>	<p>U.S. Forest Service – SW Region Wildlife, Fish, and Rare Plants</p> <p>Brian Dykstra, Wildlife Program Manager 333 Broadway SE Albuquerque, NM 87102 Email: bdykstra@fs.fed.us Phone: (505) 842-3268 Web: http://www.fs.fed.us/</p> <p>Esther I. Nelson, Wildlife Biologist Regional Reptile and Amphibian Coordinator USFWS Cibola National Forest Sandia and Mountainair Ranger Districts p: 505-281-3304 ext. 5108 f: 505-281-1176 einelson@fs.fed.us 11776 Highway 337 Tijeras, NM 87059</p> <p>Andre M. Silva, District Wildlife Biologist USFS Santa Fe National Forest , Jemez RD 051 Woodsy Lane Jemez Springs, NM 87025 p: 575-829-3535 andre.silva@usda.gov</p>	<p>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Region 2, NM Ecological Services</p> <p>Susan Millsap, Field Supervisor 2105 Osuna Road NE Albuquerque, NM 87113 (505) 761-4781 Susan_Millsap@fws.gov</p> <p>Michelle R. Christman 2105 Osuna Rd. NE Albuquerque, NM 87113 (T) 505.761.4715 michelle_christman@fws.gov</p> <p>Vicky Ryan, Biologist 2105 Osuna Road NE Albuquerque, NM 87113 Office: (505) 761-4738 Cell: (505) 238-2210 vicky_ryan@fws.gov</p> <p>Debra Hill, New Mexico Energy Streamlining Program Coordinator 2105 Osuna NE Albuquerque, NM 87113 Office (505)761-4719 Cell- (505) 234-4253 debra_hill@fws.gov</p>
<p>NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department - Forestry Division Daniela Roth, Botany Program Coordinator 1220 S. St. Francis Dr. Santa Fe, NM 87505 Phone: (505) 476-3347 Email: Daniela.Roth@state.nm.us</p> <p>EMNRD-Forestry Division Forest and Watershed Health Office Susan Rich 4001 Edith Blvd. NE Albuquerque, NM 87107 (505) 345-2200</p>	<p>USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services Alan May, New Mexico Wildlife Services State Director 8441 Washington NE Albuquerque, NM 87113 Phone: (505) 346-2640 FAX: (505) 346-2627 Toll-Free Number: 1-866-4USDAWS (1-866- 487-3297) alan.may@aphis.usda.gov www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/</p>	<p>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Region 2, Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program Gwen Kolb, State Coordinator 2105 Osuna Rd. NE Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113-1001 505/761-4711 gwen_kolb@fws.gov</p> <p>Maceo Carrillo Martinet, PhD Ecologist /Educator Albuquerque, NM 87113 Office: (505) 761-4752 Maceo_Martinet@fws.gov</p> <p>Angel Montoya 1800 Marquess Street Las Cruces, NM 88005 575-525-4350 angel_montoya@fws.gov</p>

New Mexico NRCS State Technical Committee, Wildlife Subcommittee

<p>U.S. Bureau of Land Management Melanie Barnes Deputy State Director, Resources NM State Office 301 Dinosaur Trail Santa Fe, NM 87508 Phone: 505-954-2180 Email: mgbarnes@blm.gov</p> <p>John Sherman, Wildlife Biologist Phone: (505) 954-2182 Email: jssherma@blm.gov</p>	<p>New Mexico State University Sam Smallidge, Wildlife Specialist Phone: (505) 646-5944 Email: ssmallid@nmsu.edu</p> <p>Bruce Hinrichs, CES bhinrich@nmsu.edu</p>	<p>New Mexico Cattle Growers Association Zach Riley 2231 Rio Grande Blvd. NW Albuquerque, New Mexico 87194 Phone: (505)-247-0584 Email: zach@nmagriculture.org Web: http://www.nmagriculture.org/</p>
<p>The New Mexico State Land Office Michael Perry, Assist. Commissioner Field Ops 310 Old Santa Fe Trail Santa Fe NM 87501 // P.O. Box 1148 Santa Fe, NM 87504 Phone: 505-827-5768 mperry@slo.state.nm.us</p> <p>Megan Boatright Range Conservationist 827-1245 mboatright@slo.state.nm.us</p> <p>Cassandra Hendricks Conservationist 827-5096 cmontoya@slo.state.nm.us</p>	<p>NM Association of Conservation Districts Debbie Hughes, Executive Director Phone: (575) 981-2400 Email: conserve@hughes.net</p> <p>Brent Van Dyke Phone: (575) 390-9266 Email: NMACD_brent@yahoo.com 163 Trail Canyon Road Carlsbad, NM 88220-9425 Web: http://www.nacdnet.org/</p>	<p>New Mexico Environment Department Surface Water Quality Bureau Maryann McGraw Wetlands Program Coordinator 1190 St. Francis Drive, Rm 2059 N P.O. Box 5469 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-5469 maryann.mcgraw@state.nm.us</p> <p>Abraham J. Franklin Program Manager, Watershed Protection Sect Surface Water Quality Bureau New Mexico Environment Department PO Box 5469 Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469 Phone: 505-827-2793 Abraham.franklin@state.nm.us</p>
<p>Ducks Unlimited New Mexico State Chairman Junior Kerns jkerns@prodigy.net Las Cruces, NM</p> <p>Regional Director - New Mexico & Arizona Clint Pace Phoenix AZ 85020 480-323-0545 cpace@ducks.org</p> <p>Web: http://www.ducks.org/New-Mexico</p>	<p>New Mexico Riparian Council Nina Wells, President Po Box 584, Albuquerque, NM 87103 Email: nina.wells@state.nm.us</p> <p>http://www.ripariancouncil.org/</p>	<p>National Wild Turkey Federation Scott Lerich, SW Reg. Wildlife Biologist PO Box 1281 La Luz, NM 88337 Phone: (575) 434-2936 Email: slerich@nwtf.net Web: http://www.nwtf.org/</p>
<p>Nature Conservancy New Mexico 212 East Marcy, Suite 20 Santa Fe, NM 87501 ph. 505-988-3867 Email: nm@tnc.org</p> <p>STATE DIRECTOR Terry Sullivan ph. 505-946-2033 Email: tsullivan@tnc.org</p> <p>CONSERVATION MANAGER Collin Haffey ph. 505-946-2037 Email: collin.haffey@tnc.org</p>	<p>New Mexico National Wildlife Federation Jesse Deubel, Executive Director Phone: (505) 299-5404 Email: nmwildlife@nmwildlife.org</p> <p>Ben Neary, Conservation Director Email: nmwildlife@nmwildlife.org</p> <p>John Crenshaw, Board President Email: nmwildlife@nmwildlife.org</p> <p>http://www.nmwildlife.org/</p>	<p>Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever Al Eiden, West Reg. Director Phone: (602) 513-6360 Email: aeiden@pheasantsforever.org</p> <p>Jordan Menge Lesser Prairie Chicken Range Coordinator 105 E. Avenue D, Muleshoe, TX 79347 (806)664-0608, OP. (806)272-0608 jmenge@pheasantsforever.org</p> <p>http://www.pheasantsforever.org/ http://www.quailforever.org/</p>

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<p>Audubon New Mexico Jon Hayes Executive Director Audubon New Mexico PO Box 9314 Santa Fe, NM 87504-9314 Office: (505) 983-4609 Cell: (303) 579-3092 jhayes@audubon.org</p> <p>Paul Tashjian Associate Director of Freshwater Conservation Audubon New Mexico 1800 Upper Canyon Rd. Santa Fe, NM 87505 c: 505 217 4531 w: 505 983 4609 (Santa Fe) ptashjian@audubon.org Web: http://nm.audubon.org/</p>	<p>Playa Lakes Joint Venture Christopher Rustay, Conservation Delivery Leader 7103 4th Street NW, Suite O-5 Los Ranchos, NM 87107 Email: christopher.rustay@pljv.org Phone: (505) 243-0737 Web: http://www.pljv.org/</p>	<p><u>Intermountain West Joint Venture- NM Staff</u> Donald Auer Habitat and Lands Assistant Chief, Wildlife Management Division New Mexico Department of Game & Fish One Wildlife Way Santa Fe, NM 87507 O: 505.476.8034 donaldp.auer@state.nm.us</p> <p>Jon Hayes Vice President and Executive Director Audubon New Mexico 1800 Upper Canyon Road Santa Fe, NM 87501 O: 505.983.4609 jhayes@audubon.org</p>
<p>NEW MEXICO LAND CONSERVANCY Connor Jandreau Conservation Project Manager P.O. Box 6759, Santa Fe, NM 87502 (T) 505-986-3801 (cell) 505.470.3745 cjandreau@nmlandconservancy.org</p>	<p>Rio Grande Agricultural Land Trust Cecilia Rosacker McCord, <i>Executive Director</i> PO Box 40043, Albuquerque, NM 87196-0043. Phone: (505) 270-4421. ceciliam@rgalt.org</p>	<p>New Mexico Federal Lands Council Staff Jean Bebohee Email: thehat@dellcity.com Web: http://www.nmfederallands.com</p>
<p>Trout Unlimited Toner Mitchell, New Mexico Public Lands Coordinator 142 Rio Seco Santa Fe NM 87501 505-231-8860 tmitchell@tu.org</p>	<p>Bird Conservancy of the Rockies Adam Beh, Stewardship Director 230 Cherry Street Fort Collins, CO 80521 (o) 970-482-1707 x12 (c) 970-443-4884 adam.beh@birdconservancy.org</p>	<p>Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Ryan Jonnes, Regional Biologist Cloudcroft, NM 208-996-6353 ryan.jonnes@wafwa.org</p>
<p>Santa Ana Pueblo Glenn Harper Glenn.Harper@santaana-nsn.gov</p>	<p>RCS Southwest Robert Sivinski 505-577-0287 bsivinski@cybermesa.com 1305 Malaga Lane Santa Fe, NM 87505</p>	<p>UNM, Natural Heritage Esteban H. Muldavin, Ph. D. Director, Research Associate Professor 505-277-3822 x228 muldavin@unm.edu</p>
<p>Thornburg Foundation Bryan Crawford-Garrett Food and Agriculture Policy Officer 2300 North Ridgetop Road Santa Fe, NM 87506 505-467-7323 bryan@thornburgfoundation.org</p>		