

Tierra Y Montes SWCD

Annual Accomplishment Report FY23-24

Local Funding

- Approximately \$550,000 in Mill Levy funding was received by the District. This funding is used to leverage and provide landowners with technical assistance on any natural resource conservation issue they may have. It is also used to leverage educational programs provided to the public and all students throughout the area schools.
- District Cost-Share projects have been underway for several years. \$130,000 of Mill Levy funding is provided for landowners, per fiscal year, to assist with acequia requests (headgates, etc.), riparian restoration, erosion control problems and rainwater harvesting programs. A total of 15 landowners were assisted this fiscal year with \$40,727.61 reimbursed through this program.
- Technical advice is provided to landowner and various stakeholders.

Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration

- The District received funding in the amount of \$150,000 from Partner's for Fish and Wildlife for at least 5 USFWS private landowner projects, 28 other landowners have been assisted and closed out within the past seven years. This grant will enable the landowners to complete wildlife habitat development activities such as follows: rock structures, fencing, critical area planting, masticating juniper encroached areas, and installation of wildlife drinkers. Tierra Y Montes SWCD implemented projects with 2 landowners utilizing \$24,518.80 in USFWS grant funds.

State Funding

- Tierra Y Montes SWCD completed a grant project in the amount of \$20,037 from NM State Forestry to implement Invasive Plant Management practices on private lands in Mora and San Miguel Counties. Tierra Y Montes SWCD mapped, applied herbicide treatments, reseeded and monitored 56 acres of private land with 8 landowners receiving assistance during this period. This project utilized \$6,328.00 of NM State Forestry grant funds during FY 23-24. The completed grant project treated, mapped and reseeded 112 acres of private land in both Mora and San Miguel Counties.
- Tierra Y Montes SWCD received \$18,372.42 in state allocation funding awarded through SWCC in coordination with NMDA.
- Tierra Y Montes SWCD received a new grant from NM State Forestry in the amount of \$ 28,776 to map, treat and reseed 120 acres on private land within Mora and San Miguel Counties.
- Tierra Y Montes SWCD served as an eligible entity for a Healthy Soils Program Recipient. The project totaled \$3,045.87. The District provided technical assistance, assistance with soil testing, assisted landowner with tree felling operations and served as the fiscal agent for the property.

Community Collaboration & Coordination

- TyM continues to work with the Las Vegas Tree Board and maintains a voting seat on the Board. The District is instrumental in making recommendations to the City of Las Vegas to consider developing an Urban Forest Management Plan. The recommendation was heeded and NM State Forestry provided funding to produce an Urban Forest Management Plan for the City of Las Vegas. The plan should guide future decisions, projects and grant applications regarding the urban forest.
- Partnership with Hermits Peak Watershed Alliance and the Gallinas River Park Collaborative has been formed to revitalize the Gallinas Riverwalk.
- The Noxious Weed program continues within Mora-San Miguel Counties. Our District has a full-time coordinator and work continues on this project assisting landowners with mapping and treatment of noxious weeds. Rehabilitation of treated areas are also being implemented. The communities within San Miguel County and Mora County have united to form a Cooperative Weed Management Area. The noxious weed program assisted approximately 37 landowners in FY 23-24 with approximately 300 acres mapped, 277 acres treated and 112.9 acres reseeded. The coordinator also assisted landowners with educational outreach, noxious weed identification, The CWMA was not able to conduct the usual outreach activities due to pandemic restrictions. The noxious weed committee consists of representatives from: San Miguel and Mora Counties, City of Las Vegas, NM State Highway Dept., San Miguel and Mora County Extension Office,

US Fish and Wildlife, USDA Forest Service, NM State Forestry, Mora-Wagon Mound SWCD, Western Mora SWCD, USDA-NRCS, NM State Land Office, NM Highlands University, and NMDA.

Education & Community Outreach

- At all Riparian Restoration and Erosion Control project sites, training is provided to volunteers on installation of structures, rolling dips, purpose of reseeding, fencing out riparian areas, or anything else that project consists of. Landowners and their volunteers are required to assist at all projects implemented.
- 06/11/2024 Highlands STEM Camp – Provided education to high school students regarding what SWCD's do and the how we conduct assessments for private landowners.
- 06/18/2023 Attended FEMA Advocate Stakeholder Roundtable Updates
- 06/13/2023 Community Forum with NRCS and FEMA - San Miguel County
- 06/15/2023 Community Forum with NRCS and FEMA – Mora County
- 5/2/2024 Hosted WLVS Educational Outreach at Union Elementary
- 4/10/2024 Hosted Noxious Weed Public Forum Villanueva NM Cultural Center
- 03/21/2023 Envirothon – Co-hosted a regional Envirothon to prepare teams for statewide competition.
- 3/21/2024 Hosted Noxious Weed Public Forum/Mora Public Library
- 03/15/2023 Hosted FFA Forestry team training – assisted FFA with tree identification in preparation for District and State Competitions.
- 3/7/2024 Educational Outreach with United World College Students
- 01/31/2024 Attended SWCD @ the Roundhouse
- 12/05/2023 Attended/Sponsored Prairie Partner's Meeting - Tucumcari
- 10/5/2023 Provided Assistance with Querencia Training/Weed ID Assistance in Sapello.
- 8/9-12/2023 Hosted San Miguel/Mora County Fair Noxious Weed and Cost-Share Informational

The District hosted, co-hosted and attended over 20 workshops and community forums throughout the year that provided information about post-fire recovery programs associated with the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire and subsequent flooding. There are too many to list individually.

Special Projects

Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)

- **Tierra Y Montes SWCD partnered with NRCS and the New Mexico Department of Finance & Administration to co-sponsor the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP) to assist landowners to mitigate imminent threats to life and property following the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire and post-fire flooding.**
- **To date, we have received over 700 request for assistance forms for EWP in our District alone, and over 1,100 for the Mora and San Miguel Counties Combined.**
- **As a co-sponsor for EWP, the District is tasked with securing the request for assistance forms, verifying landownership, securing permissions to install the recommended practices, coordinating with NRCS and DFA to get construction on the ground, periodic inspections of construction activities for DFA, monitoring and serving as a mediator in the event there are conflicts.**
- **As part of EWP, an aerial seeding and mulching operation is being conducted to help stabilize soils in the upper portions of the watersheds in an effort to lessen the flooding impact and loss of soils downstream. The District is involved in securing landowner permissions for the operation, coordinating and planning with NRCS and the aerial companies to ensure project success. To date, the aerial seeding and mulching operation has seeded approximately 56,000 acres and mulched 30,000 acres approximately \$135 million in NRCS EWP Funding.**
- **The second portion of EWP involves installation of practices intended to mitigate imminent threats to life and property following the HPCC Fire. Common installed practices include flood-barrier bags, earthen diversions, contour felling, critical area planting, trash racks, etc. To date, 230 sites on private property have been installed totaling approximately \$20 million.**
- **This astronomical increase in work load is occurring simultaneously while still fulfilling our normal work load.**
- **Tierra Y Montes SWCD has signed on as a sponsor for the NRCS Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) program. This program will address watershed scale concerns following the HPCC Fire.**
- **Tierra Y Montes SWCD is seeking other partnerships to assist in long-term recovery efforts.**