

Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Supervisor Training October 30, 2024

Presented by
New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts (NMACD)
and
New Mexico Department of Agriculture's (NMDA)
Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) specialists



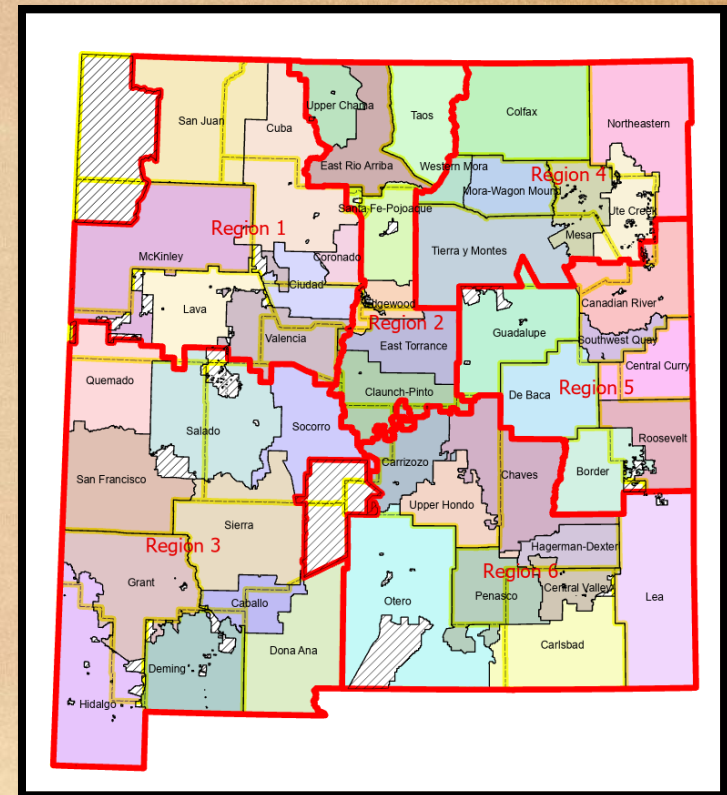
Meet your Team of NMACD and NMDA SWCD Specialists

Dean Bruce: NMDA's Healthy Soil Program and SWCD's as needed.

Katie Goetz: South-Central SWCDs in Region 6; also works with NMDA's Healthy Soil Program

Katie Kruthaupt: Southern SWCDs in Regions 3 and 6; also works with NMDA's Land of Enchantment Fund grant

Katie Mechenbier: Central SWCDs in Regions 1, 2, and 3; also works with NMDA's Agricultural Workforce Development Program



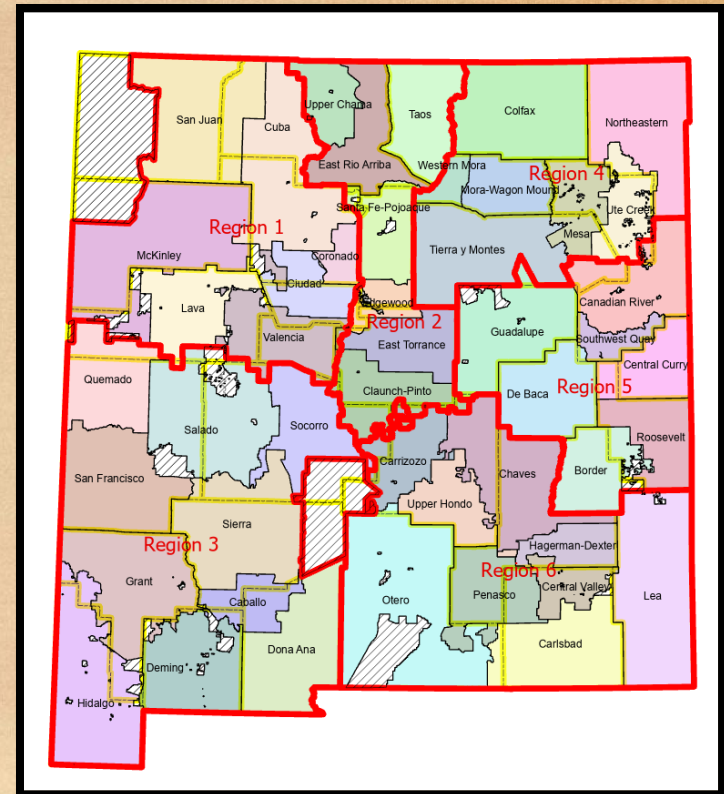
Meet your Team of NMACD and NMDA SWCD Specialists

Miles Mitchell: Northeastern SWCDs in
Regions 4 and 5

Mike Purdy: Northwestern SWCDs in
Regions 1, 2, and 4

Troy Hood: NMACD Farm Bill Program
Manager

Linda Hood: NMACD Administrative
Coordinator



District Supervisor Training
NMACD Albuquerque, New Mexico
Wednesday, October 30, 2024

Welcome ! Thank you for coming.

Please sign in.

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>DISTRICT</u> | <u>EMAIL ADDRESS</u> | <u>PHONE</u> |
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Agenda for Today's Training

- History: Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts Act
- Local Election Act
- Organizations and Partners
- Board Meetings and Supervisor Ethics
- Financial Operations
- Procurement Policies
- Records Management
- Personnel Management
- NMDA's Grant Programs for SWCDs
- Strategic Planning
- Evaluations
- Closing Remarks



History:

Soil and Water Conservation Districts



April 15, 1881, Anson County, NC
July 7, 1960, Burlington, NC

The Dust Bowl of the 1930's plus the Great Depression dramatically awakened the nation to the severity of problems encountered by agriculture in our country. Hugh Hammond Bennett is considered the Father of the conservation movement. Bennett's proposal of local control through soil conservation districts resulted in the following:



- (1) Creation of the Soil Erosion Service in 1933;
- (2) Public Law 46, the Soil Conservation Act, signed by the President of the United States on April 27, 1935;
- (3) Creation of the Soil Conservation Service in April 27, 1935, which became the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1985;
- (4) The Standard Soil Conservation District Law enacted in February 1937, which established the framework for states to enact soil conservation laws to conserve and improve their natural resources.
- (5) The New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation District Act passed on March 17, 1937, that allowed for the creation of individual Soil & Water Conservation Districts.



The first SWCD in New Mexico was the Mesa SWCD created in 1938. There were three other NM soil and water conservation districts created in 1938, including Central Curry, DeBaca, and Northeastern.



These Districts celebrated their 85th anniversary in 2023.

Former and present Mesa SWCD Board members with Gabe Estrada, former NM SWCC.



NMACD

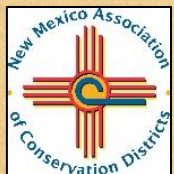
NMACD was formally organized by soil and water conservation districts March 10, 1948:

NMACD's Mission is "To facilitate conservation of the natural resources in New Mexico by providing opportunities and quality support to local conservation districts through representation and leadership."

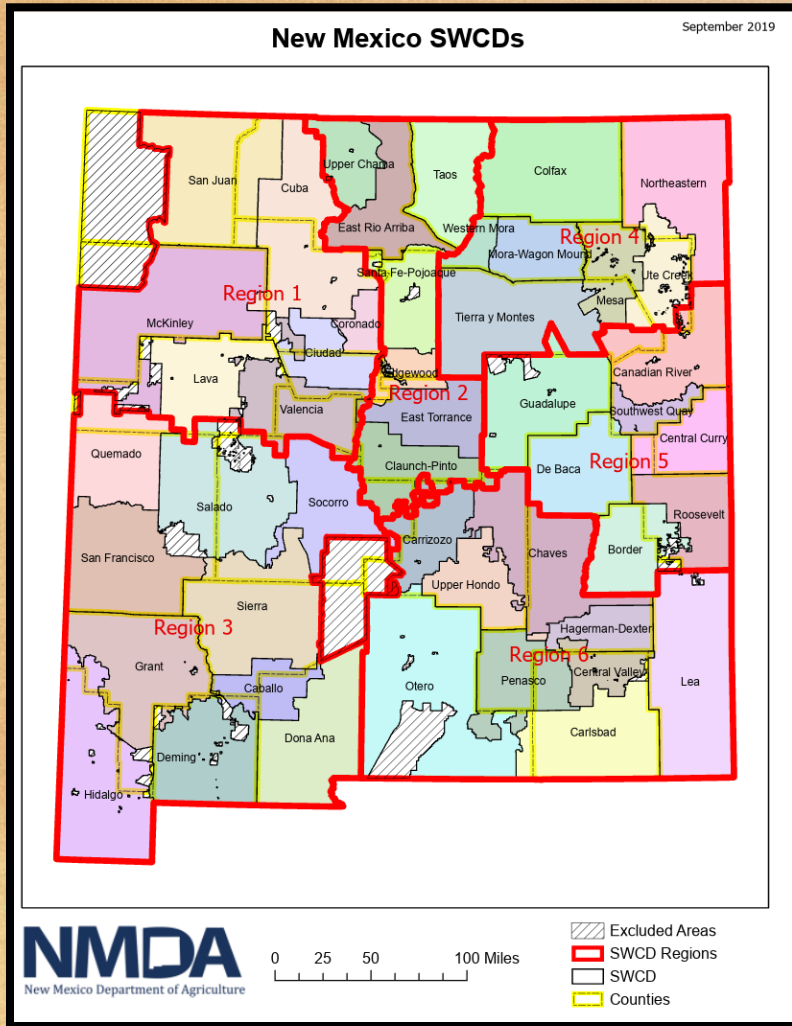


One of the most important factors in the creation of soil and water conservation districts, and the cornerstone of Mr. Bennett's philosophy, was the need for local leadership in natural resource management. **Locally led conservation** is the basis for soil and water conservation districts.

Locally led conservation is resource driven, not program driven, and under the leadership of citizens within each soil and water conservation district.



New Mexico's SWCDs at a glance



- 47 SWCDs, each recognized as a political subdivision of the state
- Organized into 6 regions
- Certain parts of the state aren't included in an SWCD

Purpose of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

As stated in the Soil and Water Conservation Act:

- Control and prevent soil erosion
- Prevent floodwater and sediment damage
- Further the conservation, development, beneficial application, and proper disposal of water
- Promote the use of impounded water
- Conserve and develop the natural resources of the state

SWCD Board Supervisor Qualifications

- **Positions 1-4: Must reside, be registered to vote, and own land** within the SWCD
- **Position 5: Must reside in and be registered to vote** within the SWCD, but need not own land
- Each position serves a 4-year term
- Terms are staggered by two years or by election to an appointed position

5-Member Boards vs. 7-Member Boards

- By statute, SWCD boards consist of 5 members
- A board may opt to become a 7-member board
 - To become a 7-member board, the SWCD must seek approval from the Soil & Water Conservation Commission (SWCC)
 - Positions 6 and 7 are appointed by the SWCC on a yearly basis
 - Positions 6 and 7 **do not require land ownership, residence in the district, or be registered voters** within the SWCD

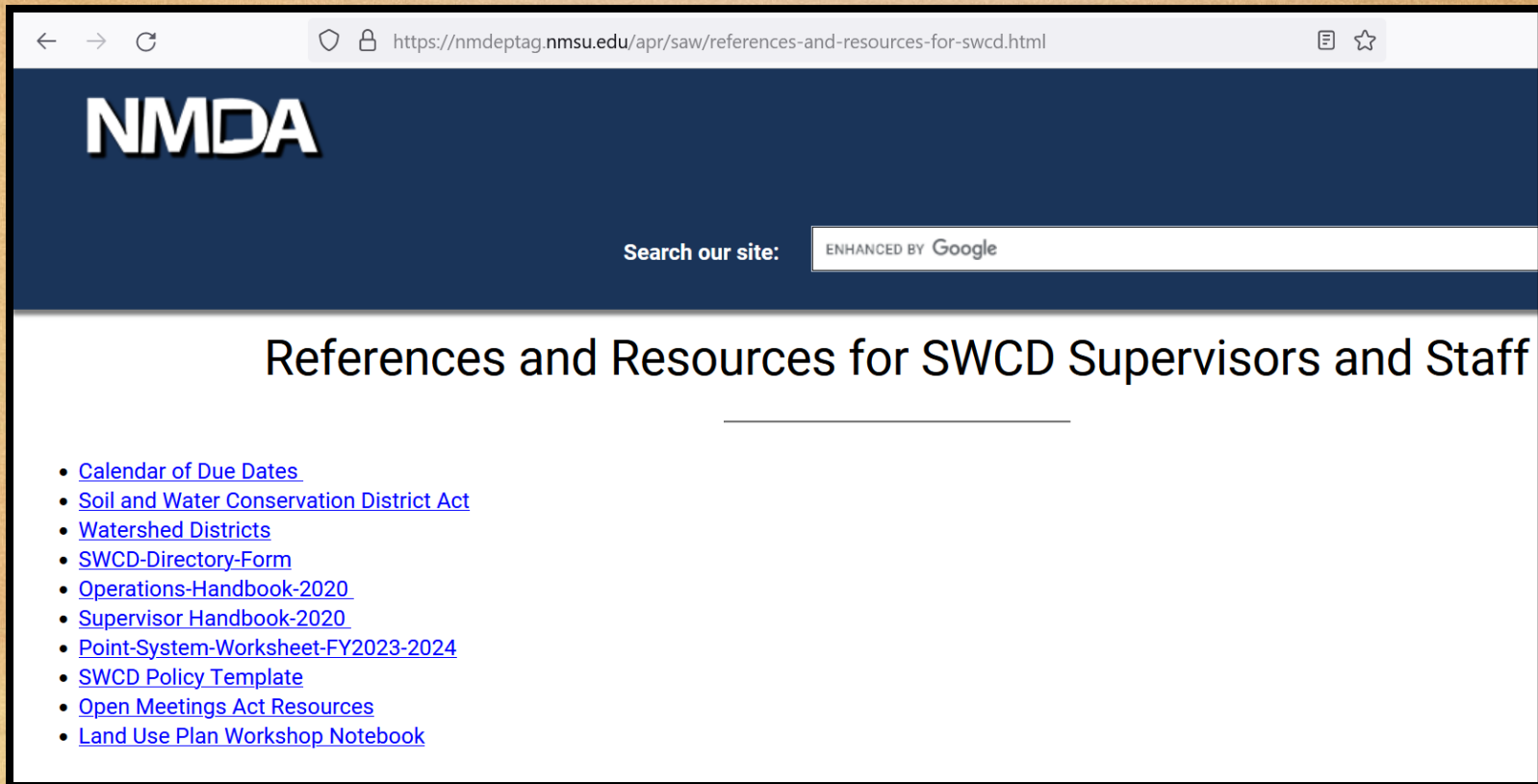
Duties of SWCD Supervisors

- Supervise SWCD staff & volunteers
 - Administer the district
 - Budgeting, reporting & financial oversight
 - Maintain appropriate records and files
- Coordinate SWCD assistance and funding
- Participate with organizations and partner agencies to represent the SWCD's interests

Soil and Water Conservation District Act

- **Soil and Water Conservation District Act:**
73-20-25 through 73-20-48 NMSA 1978. The District Act defines an SWCD as “a governmental subdivision of the state, a public body politic and corporate.”
- The SWCD Act defines the SWCC, SWCD powers/duties, supervisor elections, district assessments, cooperation between districts, and more.

Linked on the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) website: <https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/saw/references-and-resources-for-swcd.html>



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/saw/references-and-resources-for-swcd.html>. The page features the NMDA logo in the top left corner. Below the logo is a search bar with the text "Search our site:" and "ENHANCED BY Google". The main heading of the page is "References and Resources for SWCD Supervisors and Staff". Below this heading is a list of eight blue hyperlinks:

- [Calendar of Due Dates](#)
- [Soil and Water Conservation District Act](#)
- [Watershed Districts](#)
- [SWCD-Directory-Form](#)
- [Operations-Handbook-2020](#)
- [Supervisor Handbook-2020](#)
- [Point-System-Worksheet-FY2023-2024](#)
- [SWCD Policy Template](#)
- [Open Meetings Act Resources](#)
- [Land Use Plan Workshop Notebook](#)

Watershed District Act

- 73-20-1 through 73-20-24 NMSA 1978
- Linked on the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) website:
<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/saw/references-and-resources-for-swcd.html>
- Purpose: “to secure the federal assistance...for New Mexico in its program to further the conservation, development, utilization, flood prevention and disposal of water, and thereby preserve and protect New Mexico's land and water resources.”
- Watershed districts may be formed on watershed boundaries as subdistricts of soil and water conservation districts
 - WDs have separate board of directors from the SWCD’s board of supervisors
 - WD must report to and seek approval from their allotted SWCD (quarterly budget reports, mil levy resolution, etc.)

Powers of SWCDs

- Foster, publish, and promote district natural resources plans
- Administer the projects of other governmental agencies
- May hire employees
- Provide a corporate surety bond

(continued)

Powers of SWCDs (cont'd)

- Invite county/municipal legislative body to advise and consult
- Adopt and publish rules for district activities
- Keep full and accurate records of all district proceedings
- Ability to seek legal counsel from district attorney or hire own attorney

SWCDs' Specific Powers

as stated in the SWCD Act

- Sue and be sued in the name of the district
- Contract, convey, and make and execute contracts
- Borrow money
- Acquire real and personal property
- Improve, rent, lease and sell district property
- Receive, invest, and reinvest rents and income from property
- Accept donations (land, equipment, money) to the SWCD to further district purposes



Local Election Act

- The Local Election Act changed in the election process for SWCDs, when passed into law in 2018.
- Each county clerk is now responsible to run the election with the assistance of the SWCD.
- Elections are held in odd numbered years; the first Tuesday, after the first Monday in November.
- The positions 1, 2, and 5 are held one year, with positions 3 and 4 held the following odd numbered year.

Local Election

- SWCDs have the responsibility to report to each county clerk, within the district's boundary, the local government positions to be filled at the election. The district is responsible to report this information to the county clerk no later than 120 days before the next election, and no earlier than 150 days before the next local election.
- SWCDs are required to report to the county clerk a list of voters within the district boundary.
- Candidate filing in-person in County Clerk's Office (August and September)
- NMDA strongly encourages SWCDs to build a relationship with their county clerk(s)

Elections, Mil Levy

- Statewide Local Election occurs every November of odd-numbered years for ballot questions.
- Special elections can occur at other times of the year for ballot questions; all postage is pre-paid by business-reply mail by the SWCD.
- Mil levies passed after 2018, no longer sunset.
- Mil levies passed prior to 2018 still retain the sunset clause.
- SWCD mil levies can go up to 5 mil, due to the 2018 Local Election Act.

Election of Supervisors

Secretary of State and your local county clerk are solely responsible for elections and referendums

- Most SWCDs are governed by five elected supervisors. The five elected supervisors are elected to staggered four year terms
- Voting is the first Tuesday in November of odd-numbered years
- The oath of office for elected supervisors is given in January following the election

Election of Supervisors (cont'd)

- One vacancy in an unexpired term may be filled by appointment, but the position is still treated as an elected position.
- The appointed position will be placed on the general ballot, during the next SWCD election.
 - Two vacancies occurring at the same time must be filled by the SWCC.



Organizations Created by State Law

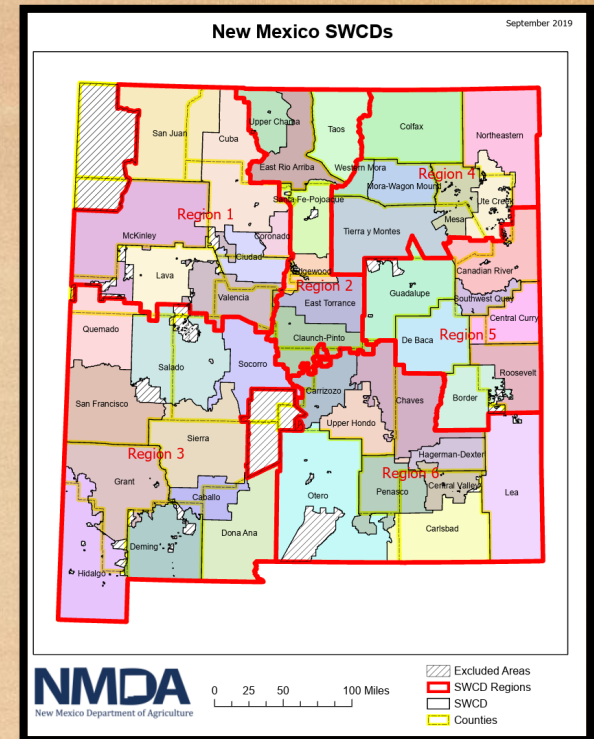
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- New Mexico Department of Agriculture
- Soil and Water Conservation Commission

New Mexico Department of Agriculture

- Assists SWCD boards with planning and development of programs and projects, as well as administrative matters
- Promotes cooperation between districts
- Secures cooperation and assistance of state and federal agencies
- Renders aid and assistance to districts

Soil & Water Conservation Commission (SWCC)

- Seven members serve at pleasure of governor
 - Six members are district supervisors
 - One at-large member
- Promulgates rules to carry out the Soil and Water Conservation District Act
- Advises NMDA on any matter that affects soil and water conservation

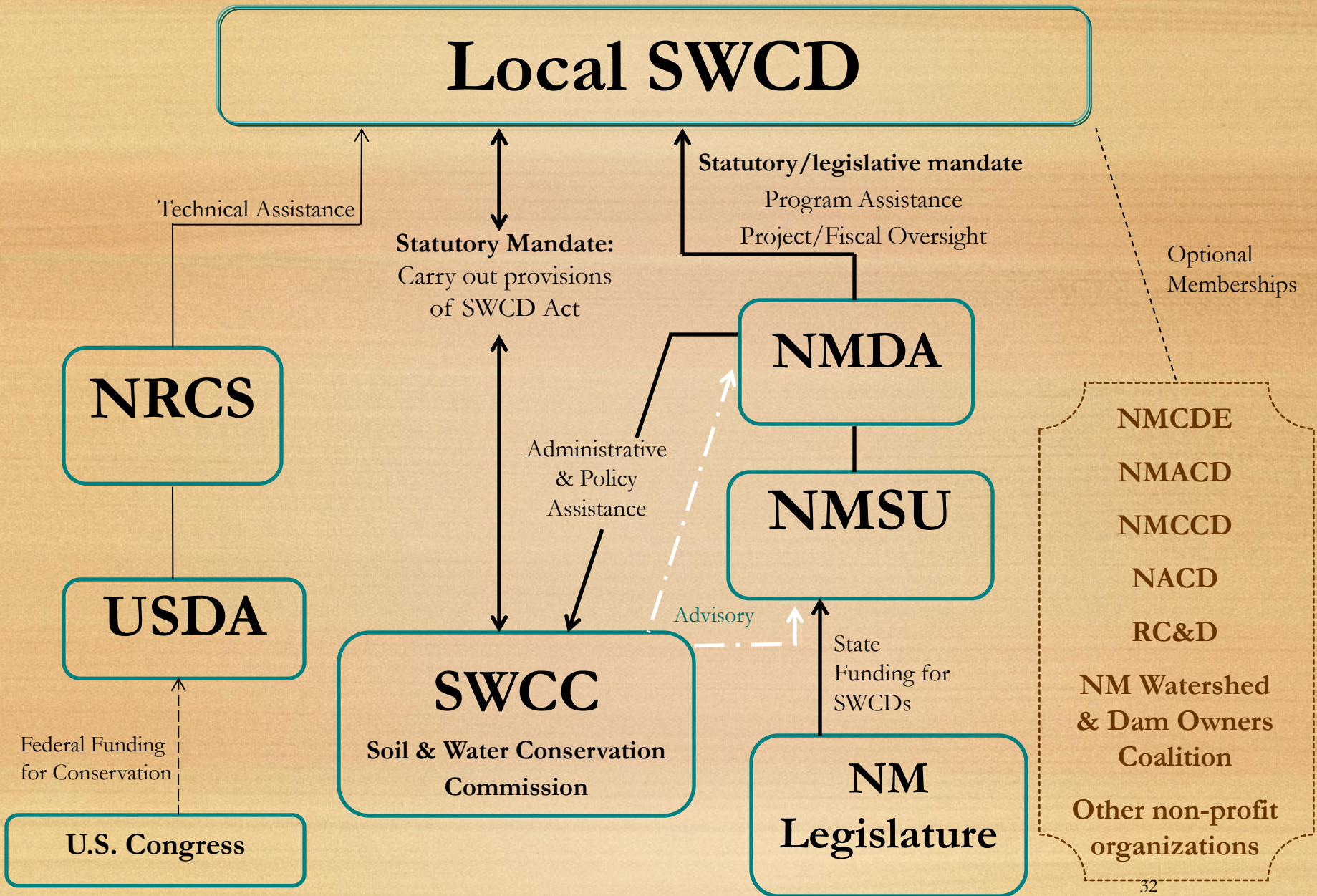


Organizations Created by Districts

- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is a national partner
- New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts (NMACD) is a state partner
- New Mexico Coalition of Conservation Districts (NMCCD) is a state partner
- New Mexico Conservation District Employees (NMCDE) is a state partner

New Mexico Conservation District Employees

- Non-profit organization for district employees
- Promotes professional improvement
- Provides networking system
- Identifies and uses resources to strengthen conservation districts
- Aims to Improve conditions for districts and employees
- Membership is optional



Potential Partners

- Other local governments
 - County
 - City, town, & village governments
 - Irrigation districts, etc.
- Other SWCDs
- State Agencies (NMDA & others)
- Federal Agencies (NRCS & others)
- Non-profit organizations

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

- Formerly Soil Conservation Service
- Established 1935
- Provides technical assistance to SWCDs and landowners
- Role of the districts in the NRCS program
 - Districts can facilitate the disbursement of federal funding
 - Outreach partners

Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Councils

- Non-profit organizations
- Promote rural economic development
- Local governments (incl. SWCDs) can be members
- Local volunteers form an RC&D council



Open Meetings Act

- Chapter 10, Article 15, NMSA 1978
- Pass an annual resolution notifying the public **when, where, and how** meetings will be held
- Meeting notice requirements:
 - regular meetings: ten (10) days
 - special meetings: three (3) days
 - emergency meetings: twenty-four (24) hours
- Meeting notices shall include an agenda listing specific items of business or information on how to obtain the agenda
- **Final agenda must be available to the public 72 hours prior to the meeting; items added later can be discussed, but not voted on.**

Open Meetings Act (cont'd)

- Criteria to be met at a minimum to maintain compliance
 - A quorum must be present to take any action
 - Quorum: majority of members present
 - Members must be present and able to participate in order to cast a vote. (Proxy voting is not allowed)
 - Agenda must be reasonably specific
 - Each action item must be listed
 - Items not listed on the agenda can be discussed but no votes can be taken

Executive Session

- Closed/Executive sessions:
 - Must be a specific agenda item:
 - Requires a roll call vote to enter into executive session
 - Motion must state the exception to the Open Meetings Act that allows the executive session
 - *Only* the subjects announced in the motion may be discussed in executive session
 - No minutes are taken in executive session
 - **No action (vote) can be taken in executive session**
 - **If an action vote is needed, the motion is made after the meeting is motioned to go back in an open meeting, with the minutes capturing the action vote made.**

Executive Session

Exceptions

- Section 10-15-1(H)(2) for limited personnel matters pertaining to the (Executive Director) position
- Section 10-15-1(H)(6) for the Board to discuss the contents of competitive sealed proposals solicited pursuant to the Procurement Code
- Section 10-15-1(H)(7) for the Board members to discuss pending litigation. (This motion can only be made if an attorney is present).
- Section 10-15-1(H)(8) for the Board to discuss the purchase, acquisition or disposal of real property or water right by the board

Conducting Meetings

- Nature of the Deliberative Assembly
 - Definition (A kind of gathering to which Parliamentary Law is generally understood to apply.)
 - Type Applicable to SWCD - “The Board” – A board, in the general sense of the term, is an administrative, managerial, or quasi-judicial body of elected or appointed persons
 - **Order of Business**
 - 1) Reading & Approval of Minutes
 - 2) Reports of Officers & Standing Committees
 - 3) Reports of Special Committees
 - 4) Unfinished or General Orders
 - 5) New Business
 - **Minutes** (Requirements for documentation of proceedings of a meeting)
 - Document once approved, is a permanent document that is recorded indefinitely and can be view at anytime through the Inspection Public Records Act.

Parliamentary Procedures

Basic Procedures to conduct proper transaction of business.

- President or Chairperson Responsibilities
- Main Motions (Original & Incidental)
- Subsidiary Motions
- Incidental Motions
- Motions that again bring a Question again for the Assemble
- Voting Rights & Obligations

Helpful hints to maintain decorum and move through business items & discussion in a timely manner.

Supervisors Conduct - Ethics

- Governmental Conduct Act - <https://nm DOJ.gov/wp-content/uploads/Governmental-Conduct-Act-Compliance-Guide.pdf>

Key Takeaways:

- Maintain trust and transparency, as an individual, and as a Board.
- If an action would bring into question the legality of it, or if the action is ethically questionable, do not do it.
- Remember: “Adherence to the rule of law is necessary for fair decisions by the government, respect for the government, meaningful voting and public petitions to the government, and the existence of personal liberties.”
- Questions to ask before taking action:
 - Does this benefit the district at large? If so, how?
 - Will this action help to demonstrate the district’s mission and long range plan?



Financial Operations

- Each SWCD is responsible for managing their own revenue and expenses
- Some expenses are a function of adhering to state law
 - Some annual audit/independent financial review
 - published legal notices
 - liability insurance
- Some expenses are a function of the district's level of activity
 - payroll, utilities, loan payments
 - conservation projects, cost share programs

Financial Operations (cont'd)

- The SWCD must establish proper control over finances
- Separation of duties for monetary transactions
 - Expense vouchers and checks should have two supervisor signatures
 - Advisable to have a purchasing policy in place
- Supervisors receive and review a detailed financial report at or before each monthly board meeting
 - copy of the bank statement and reconciliation
 - expenditures and receipts since the last meeting
 - bills to be paid supported by invoices/receipts, purpose or project identified

Due Dates for SWCDs

- Information provided on a monthly basis in SWCD report provided to districts
- Due dates include annual budget, quarterly budget reports, Open Meetings Act and mil levy resolutions.
- For full calendar of due dates, please refer to website: <https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/saw/references-and-resources-for-swcd.html>

SWCD Audit

Office of the State Auditor: Tier Auditing & Board Certification

- Tiers 1 and 2 require annual tier certification
- No audit required

Tier 1: Less than \$10,000 in annual revenue

Tier 2: More than \$10,000 and less than \$50,000 in annual revenue

SWCD Audit

- **Office of the State Auditor: Tier Auditing & Board Certification**

- Tiers 3-7 require an annual audit and a determination form

Tier 3: Less than \$50,000 in revenue and spends 50% or remainder of capital outlay award

Tier 4: More than \$50,000, but less than \$250,000 in revenue (no capital outlay expenditures)

Tier 5: More than \$50,000, but less than \$250,000 in revenue (plus any capital outlay expenditures)

Tier 6: More than \$250,000, but less than \$500,000 in revenue

Tier 7: \$500,000 in revenue (full audit)

- **It's the district's responsibility for determining tier level and audit requirements**

Budgets and Reports

- Overseen by Department of Finance and Administration, Local Government Division (DFA/LGD)
 - Annual budget (and budget resolution) for each fiscal year is due by June 1 (fiscal year is July 1-June 30).
 - A copy of the budget and resolution must also be sent to the Soil and Water Conservation Commission by July 30.
 - SWCDs with budgets less than \$50,000 report to SWCC, not DFA, with budget requirements.
 - Quarterly budget reports are due October 30, January 31, April 30, and July 31.
 - A resolution approving the 4th Quarterly report is required.

Accounting Guidelines

Often as simple as keeping a good checkbook:

- Treat it like your personal checking account; all checkbook entries should be immediate, so nothing is forgotten, and everything is well explained.
- All payments should be made by check, credit card or bank transfer.
- Payment vouchers must be attached to billing of that specific payment. Board signatories must sign payment vouchers along with checks.
- Reconcile account monthly.

SWCD Funding

Mill Levies, State Appropriations, Grants

- State funding for general operations (point system worksheet)
- Capital outlay funds for durable goods such as buildings, vehicles, and equipment
- Products and services (chemical, grass seed, noxious weed program)
- Grants, loans, Farm & Range Improvement Fund (FRIF), contracts, cooperative agreements

Mil Levy Assessments

- Up to \$5 per \$1,000 of taxable value (five mil)
- Referendum of registered voters in the district for annual levy
- **If passed before 2018**, 10-year sunset/reauthorization clause applies
- **If passed after 2018**, sunset/reauthorization clause doesn't apply

Mil Levy Assessments (cont'd)

- A district in debt to state or federal government may extend the mill levy without a referendum
- May include entire district boundary or may exclude incorporated areas
- After initial voter approval, SWCDs may adjust the tax rate up or down annually, not to exceed the maximum rate established by referendum
 - Consider the effect of adjustments on taxpayers
 - Must be approved by Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) annually

Mil Levy Assessments (cont'd)

- SWCC certifies rate to DFA
- Assessed and collected by county officials (assessor and treasurer) via the regular tax bill to property owners
- County treasurer is entitled to a collection fee

Insurance Requirements

- Surety bond required (per statute 73-20-41 B)
 - Provides financial protection against fraud
- Liability coverage
 - Risk Management Division (RMD), General Services Department
 - commercial insurers
 - premium must be paid from district funds
- Property insurance for buildings, vehicles and equipment owned by the district can be taken out through any insurance company
- Health insurance for supervisors, at personal expense, is available through RMD

Subdivision Reviews

- Property Law (NMSA 47-6-11)
- Requires county commissioners to obtain opinions from SWCDs
- Assess development plan for terrain management sufficient to protect against flooding, inadequate drainage and erosion
- Districts can assess a fee to the developers for conducting the reviews



Procurement Policies

- **PURCHASING** [NM Procurement Code, Chapter 13, NMSA 1978]
- New Mexico's current state procurement code regulations and statewide price agreements may be obtained through the NM General Services Department (GSD) State Purchasing Division at
- <http://www.generalservices.state.nm.us/statepurchasing/>

Chief Procurement Officer

As of July 1, 2015, all soil and water conservation districts must have designated a Chief Procurement Officer (CPO). The Chief Procurement Officer is that person within the local public body's central purchasing office who is responsible for the control of procurement of items of tangible personal property, services or construction. Each Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) must take and pass a CPO Certification course and must be a current employee of the local public body. It is permissible for SWCDs to share a CPO through a mutual execution of a memorandum of agreement. For more information, click this: [CPO registration and training information link](#)

Purchasing Policy

- The **NMDA's SWCD Operations Handbook (Chapter 3)** recommends that all districts have a written purchasing policy (**see Exhibit 3.1 for a sample purchasing policy**) that conforms to the current state procurement code.
- A purchasing policy should establish a fair and equal treatment procurement process for interested vendors, provide safeguards in the procurement system to maintain quality and integrity, and maximize the purchasing value of public funds.

Purchasing Limit Guidelines

- Chapter 13 NMSA 1978 and Title 1, Chapter 4 NMAC
- SWCDs are required by state law to have a Chief Procurement Officer, SWCDs can develop stricter purchasing policy than required by procurement code

| Purchase Type & Amount | Requirement |
|--|--|
| <u>Tangible items:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than \$20,000 • \$20,001 - \$60,000 • More than \$60,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain the best price • Three written quotes • Formal sealed bids or RFP |
| <u>Professional Services:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than \$60,000 • More than \$60,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three written quotes • Formal sealed bids or RFP |
| <u>Regular Service:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than \$20,000 • More than \$20,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best price • Formal sealed bids |
| <u>Landscape or surveying services:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than \$10,000 • \$10,000 or more | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three written quotes • Formal sealed bids |

Disposition of Assets

- **Section 13-6-1 NMSA 1978 Disposition of obsolete, worn-out or unusable tangible personal property**
 - The governing authority shall dispose of the tangible personal property by negotiated sale to any governmental unit of an Indian nation, tribe or pueblo in New Mexico or by negotiated sale or donation to other state agencies, local public bodies, school districts, state educational institutions or municipalities or through the central purchasing office of the governing authority by means of competitive sealed bid or public auction or, if a state agency, through the surplus property bureau of the transportation services division of the general services department.

SWCDs Mileage and Per Diem

- Mileage and Per Diem Act (Chapter 10 Article 15, NMSA 1978)
- Travel and Per Diem Rule (Title 2, Chapter 42, NMAC)
- Mileage and Per Diem are paid from the district budget
- Mileage: Maximum rates are set by the state
 - SWCD can set a lower rate
 - IRS rate set to the **previous** January



Records Management

- In October 2015 the State consolidated all the retention schedules into one Functional Records Retention and Disposition Schedule. Refer to FRRDS 1.21.2 for SWCD schedule. For more information, visit:

<https://www.srca.nm.gov/functional-retention-disposition-schedules/>

- For more information, or if you have questions, please contact Records Management Division at (505) 476-7921, or email Tanya Vigil at Tanya.Vigil@state.nm.us.

Inspection of Public Records Act

- (Chapter 14, Article 2, NMSA 1978)
- Every person has a right to inspect public records (with exceptions) by making a written or verbal request
- SWCDs must appoint a records custodian responsible for the maintenance, care or keeping of public records
- SWCDs must adopt a public records policy and post it in the office
- Requests can be made orally or written to the SWCD
- Permit the inspection as soon as is practicable, but not later than fifteen days after a written request
- If not permitted within three business days, a letter in writing shall be sent explaining when the records will be available for inspection.



Personnel Management

The New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation District Act empowers SWCDs to employ personnel necessary to administer and carry out SWCD's programs and activities. Each SWCD therefore is responsible for its personnel program.



Personnel Policy

It is essential that each SWCD has a written personnel policy that:

Allows for open competition

Avoids nepotism and conflicts of interests in the selection process

Includes procedures for recruitment

Includes position descriptions (job duties and responsibilities)

Defines performance requirements

States work hours and schedules

Lists compensation and benefits

Provides performance reviews and evaluations,

Allows for employee development policy (training)

As applicable, coverage under Public Employees Retirement Act (PERA)

(To determine eligibility or coverage information, go to www.pera.state.nm.us)

Policy defining the SWCD's policy on Equal Employment Opportunity and dedication to non-discrimination in employment



Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Qualified applicants must have opportunity to compete for vacant positions...

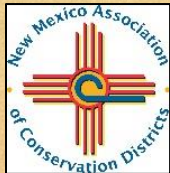
without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, age, sexual orientation, presence of mental or physical disability, or any other legally-protected status.

Qualifications based on position requirements

Prohibits discrimination factors as stated above

Nepotism should not be a factor for recruitment, promotions, or other personnel actions

Supervisors with close family relationships should not take part, participate in any way, or influence the selection or the supervision of an SWCD employee.



SWCD Transparency as Legal Entities of State Government

All SWCD operations, i.e., meetings, policies, financial, procurement, personnel, etc., must be clear and lucid to ensure public confidence and trust.



NMDA's Grant Programs for SWCDs

- Healthy Soil Program
- Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund Program
- Noxious Weeds Program
- Water Quality and Conservation Program

NMDA's Grant Programs for SWCDs (Cont'd.)

| NMDA's Healthy Soil Program | |
|---|---|
| Eligible projects (up to \$100K) | Projects that implement 1+ of the 5 soil health principles : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. keeping soil covered 2. minimizing soil disturbance on cropland and minimizing external inputs 3. maximizing biodiversity 4. maintaining a living root 5. integrating animals into land management, including grazing animals, birds, beneficial insects or keystone species, such as earthworms |
| Grant term | July 15, 2025 – September 30, 2026 |
| Period to apply | January 15, 2025 – March 19, 2025 (10 weeks) |
| Learn more | https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/healthy-soil-program.html hsp@nmda.nmsu.edu |

Popular projects

- Providing **cover crop seed** to local land managers
- Helping local land managers **test/assess their soil** and interpret the results

Sign up for a Nov. 7 pre-application webinar!

NMDA's Grant Programs for SWCDs (Cont'd.)

| NMDA's Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund | |
|--|---|
| Eligible projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape-scale restoration (up to \$250K) • Conservation planning and land use plans (up to \$25K) • Capacity building (up to \$20K) • Education and outreach (up to \$15K) |
| Grant term | July 1, 2025 – August 15, 2026 <i>(Longer if the project is landscape-scale restoration)</i> |
| Period to apply | February 3, 2025 – March 14, 2025 (~6 weeks) |
| Learn more | Ask your SWCD Specialist |

Popular projects during pilot year (FY25)

- Capacity building for additional staff
- Landscape-scale restoration for thinning initiative; post fire rehabilitation; habitat restoration

NMDA's Grant Programs for SWCDs (Cont'd.)

| Noxious Weeds Program | |
|--|---|
| Eligible projects (\$10K-\$60K per award) | Projects that improve the state economy and environment by managing noxious weeds through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveying and mapping • Early detection and rapid response (EDRR) • Integrated weed management (on-the-ground treatments) • Education/outreach • Planning, capacity building, and partnership building |
| Grant term | July 15, 2025 – October 31, 2026 |
| Period to apply | March 3, 2025 – April 11, 2025 (5.5 weeks) |
| Learn more | https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/noxious-weeds.html |

Popular projects during the program's pilot year (FY25)

- Noxious Weed Mapping/Survey
- Treatment of noxious weeds (e.g. Saltcedar, African Rue, etc.)

NMDA's Grant Programs for SWCDs (Cont'd.)

Water Quality and Conservation Program (often shorthanded as WQ&C)

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Eligible projects (up to \$100K) | The goal of the grant program is to promote the health of New Mexico's watersheds and conserve the water resources they produce. |
| Grant term | July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026; |
| Period to apply | Early February to early April |
| Learn more | Ask your SWCD Specialist |

Popular projects

- Groundwater studies
- Establishing rainwater harvesting cost-share programs



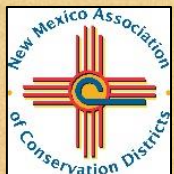
Strategic Planning

Strategic planning provides the foundation for administering conservation district programs. Planning broadly defines the vision of the future and then focuses on the steps that are needed to address specific goals. The following are guidelines that districts may be able to use in their planning process.

STRATEGIC PLANNING OVERVIEW [[Chapter 1, NMDA's SWCD Operations Handbook](#)]

Strategic planning (may be referred to as Action Planning) encompasses the processes of the Soil and Water Conservation District in determining how it plans to meet the conservation and resource needs of its district. The development of a strategic plan should include the following elements:

- An assessment of the district's resource conditions and needs;
- Define the mission and long-range objectives of the SWCD;

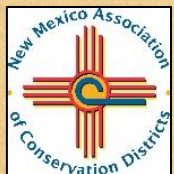


Strategic Planning (Cont'd.)

- Develop a long-range plan (normally five to ten years) to meet the mission and objectives;
- Prepare annual plans or action plans as increments in the long-range plan;
- Make monthly periodic assessments of the effectiveness of action plans;
- Revise plans when needed to meet objectives and goals and/or to adapt to changing conditions, needs, etc.

Long Range Plans

Long range plans should be focused on the objectives and goals; detailed and clear as to *what* is to be done, *who* is involved, *when* and *where* each action item is to be performed, and *how* the plan will be evaluated.



ANNUAL PLAN OR ACTION PLAN

(Develop for fiscal year in June)

Review tasks and progress monthly.

The annual plan of work includes:

- **A list of key issues, objectives, and goals**
- **Actions taken to accomplish specific goals**
- **Timelines and people who are responsible to complete the work (be specific)**
- **Resources needed to accomplish the work**
- **Periodic reviews and evaluations of progress**



Deming SWCD Board of Supervisors Meeting

Land Use Plan

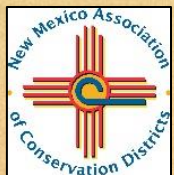
Provides an overall vision of the resource needs of the district

Provides direction for the district-related natural resources and land utilization

The plan is provided to all potential local, state and federal partners

Critical tool for engaging as a Cooperating Agency

Cooperating Agency status provides an avenue for SWCD's to have a role in shaping plans for federal environmental analysis and decisions. Coordination for SWCD's provides a process for locally-elected officials to interact with federal agencies regarding natural resources. State land use planning is allowed on federal lands as long as such land use planning does not include zoning.



Supervisor Training Evaluation

Name _____

October 30, 2024

Did this training meet the needs for you and your district? Yes _____ No _____

If no, please enter comments explaining what we could do differently at the end of the evaluation. Please be specific with your suggestions.

Please evaluate each training topic by circling the most appropriate with ***1 meaning needs improvement*** and ***5 meaning meets expectations***.

1. History: Soil & Water Conservation Districts

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

2. Soil and Water Conservation Districts Act

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

3. Local Election Act

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

4. Organizations and Partners

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

5. Board Meetings and Supervisor Ethics

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

6. Financial Operations

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

7. Procurement Policies

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

8. Records Management

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____



9. Personnel Management

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

10. NMDA's Grant Programs for SWCDs

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

11. Strategic Planning

1 2 3 4 5 Comments _____

Additional Comments _____

Thank you for your interest in taking this training! It is our hope that you and your District will benefit from it.



Closing Remarks

- Thank you for being here today and for your attention to your important role as SWCD board supervisor/staff.
- If you have any questions after today, please use your NMDA SWCD Specialist as a resource. That's what we're here for, to serve the SWCDs.
- These slides will be available on our website within the next few weeks.

Questions?

<https://nmdeptag.nmsu.edu/apr/soil-and-water-districts.html>

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