CLEARING THE WATERS

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Applying for Section 319 Funds in Multi-jurisdictional Waters: New Mexico's NPS Management Program

By Abe Franklin,
Program Manager, Watershed Protection Section

This article is meant to clarify eligible uses of Clean Water Act Section 319 funds and River Stewardship Program funds awarded by the State of New Mexico for planning and implementation in other states and on tribal lands. NMED relies heavily on voluntary participation in the nonpoint source management program to address water quality problems on a watershed basis. Within a watershed, sources of pollution should be evaluated for various jurisdictions and ownership status, including various types of public and private land. Sometimes this view should extend beyond the boundaries of a single state, or across state and tribal boundaries.

Background

The Clean Water Act and associated regulations point out the need for adjacent jurisdictions to cooperate on water quality programs. For example, Section 208 of the Clean Water Act encourages states to identify "areas which, as a result of urban-industrial concentrations or other factors, have substantial water quality control problems," and prescribes a formal structure for interstate planning and regulation where such areas are in two or more states. Section 319(c)(1) of the Clean Water Act re-

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quires states to develop nonpoint source (NPS) management programs "in cooperation with local, substate regional, and interstate entities which are actively planning for the implementation of nonpoint source pollution controls." Clean Water Act regulations at 40 CFR 131.10(b) require that "in designating uses of a water body and the appropriate criteria for those uses, the State shall take into consideration the water quality standards of downstream waters and shall ensure that its water quality standards provide for the attainment and maintenance of the water quality standards of downstream waters."

Example Multi-Jurisdictional Initiatives

Several existing multi-jurisdictional NPS management initiatives serve as examples, nationally and regionally. The Chesapeake Bay Program, Great Lakes Initiative, and Colorado Basin Salinity Control Forum are among the best-known national examples. Locally, EPA has led a multi-jurisdictional water quality workgroup composed of states and tribes in the San Juan Basin since 2015 that is bearing fruit with a variety of monitoring, planning, and implementation projects to address the lingering impacts of hard rock mining in the Bonita Peak Mining District as well as a broader range of water quality challenges in the basin. Nested within the larger San Juan Basin, another cross-boundary initiative called the Animas Watershed Partnership has active participation from Colorado, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, and New Mexico. Similarly, the Paso del Norte Watershed Council provides a forum for information exchange and project development among stakeholders in New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico.

Focusing planning and implementation on a single jurisdiction or just a few jurisdictions, such as on lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, or larger private ranches is not appropriate when water quality problems span jurisdictions. The New Mexico NPS Management Plan (available at www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/watershed-protection-section) includes a few statements that recognize the need for jurisdictions to work together. In developing and supporting watershed-based planning, NMED's Watershed Protection Section staff are to "[e]ncourage participation of all stakeholders in watershed planning efforts, including those in other states, Indian nations, pueblos, and tribes when watersheds cross jurisdictional boundaries, and incorporate TMDLs or water quality standards and assessments prepared by these jurisdictions into watershed-based plans when appropriate." Statements pertaining to watershed-based plans (WBPs) extend to implementation.

New Mexico's NPS Management Program focusses on implementation of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), and on addressing impaired waters identified per Sections 303(d) and 305(b) of the Clean Water Act. The words "or water quality standards and assessments prepared by these jurisdictions" in the paragraph above are meant to promote meeting the related goals of both the State of New Mexico and other jurisdictions, and to be clear that areas on tribal land or in adjacent states need not be characterized with a TMDL or impairment per Section 303(d). Tribes are not required to, and generally do not, develop TMDLs or produce lists of impaired waters under Sections 303(d) or 305(b). Tribes do typically identify water quality problems, and New Mexico's NPS Management Program can help tribes address these problems. Other states may prioritize TMDL development differently than New Mexico, such that an impaired water may be well-characterized but lack a TMDL.

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The following table explains how Clean Water Act Section 319 funds can be used when multiple water quality jurisdictions exist in a planning area or project area.

Type of project	Basic Eligibility Requirement	Spatial relationship of other jurisdiction	Allowable uses of funding in the other jurisdiction
Planning	A priority water[1] is present in the planning area. The project is to develop a new WBP or update an existing WBP[2] for the priority water.	Other jurisdiction is upstream, downstream, or has joint jurisdiction (i.e., the water is on the boundary between two jurisdictions) of a priority water, or any combination of these.	Other jurisdiction may be included in the project area. Other jurisdiction may be a sub-recipient of Section 319 grant funds from the State of New Mexico. Project must include implementation planning for a NM TMDL and may include additional planning objectives related to the priority water.

[1] Defined in the New Mexico NPS Management Plan as a water having a water quality impairment in NM with a TMDL that describes the impairment, or in Category 4B, 4C, or 5-alt. These are all waters where the State of New Mexico has jurisdiction. Categories 4B, 4C, and 5-alt are relatively rare, and are described in the NPS Management Plan.

[2] Watershed-Based Plans (WBPs) are defined in EPA's Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories (April 2013). These guidelines specify nine elements for WBPs. EPA has a separate set of guidelines and requirements for tribal NPS programs, including a slightly different list of WBP elements. The New Mexico NPS Management Program uses the nine elements of WBPs for states, but a tribal jurisdiction does not need to have an approved NPS management program or NPS assessment to participate in the New Mexico NPS Management Program. New Mexico's completed WBPs are posted at https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/wbp.

Type of project	Basic Eligibility Requirement	Spatial relationship of other jurisdiction	Allowable uses of funding in the other jurisdiction
Implementation	The project implements a WBP or a Wetlands Action Plan (WAP)[3].	Other jurisdiction is upstream of an impaired water in New Mexico.	Other jurisdiction may be included in the project area. Other jurisdiction may be a sub-recipient of Section 319 grant funds from the State of New Mexico. Project must include implementation of a NM TMDL or WAP and may include additional water quality objectives applicable to upstream jurisdiction.
Implementation	The project implements a WBP or a WAP.	Other jurisdiction is downstream of an impaired water in New Mexico.	Other jurisdiction is **not** eligible for on-the-ground implementation. Other jurisdiction may be a sub-recipient of Section 319 grant funds from the State of New Mexico. Project must include implementation of a NM TMDL or WAP and may include additional water quality objectives applicable to downstream jurisdiction.

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Type of project	Basic Eligibility Requirement	Spatial relationship of other jurisdiction	Allowable uses of funding in the other jurisdiction
Implementation	The project implements a WBP or a WAP.	The impaired water in New Mexico has joint jurisdiction (i.e., the water is on the boundary between two jurisdictions).	Other jurisdiction may be included in the project area. Other jurisdiction may be a sub-recipient of Section 319 grant funds from the State of New Mexico. Project must include implementation of a NM TMDL or WAP and may include additional water quality objectives applicable to the other jurisdiction.

[3] Wetlands Action Plans (WAPs) are a type of WBP alternative specific to New Mexico with general elements specified in EPA's *Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories* and described further in the New Mexico Nonpoint Source Management Plan. New Mexico's completed WAPs are posted at https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/wbp.

Examples of Multi-Jurisdictional Waters in New Mexico

Animas River

The Animas River has its headwaters approximately twelve miles north of Silverton, Colorado, and flows south through Durango before entering the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT) Reservation. From there it crosses into New Mexico and flows for about 36 miles to join the San Juan River. Colorado, SUIT, and New Mexico have jurisdiction over different sections of the Animas River.

The State of Colorado does not currently recognize any impairments in the Animas River just upstream of SUIT, but placed the Animas in a category indicating there was insufficient information to assess attainment of the aquatic life use. SUIT does not have a recent assessment of water quality in the Animas; however, a nonpoint source assessment for its waters is slated to begin this year. The State of New Mexico recognizes several water quality impairments in its upper Animas River assessment unit: nutrients, temperature, turbidity, and lead. Approved TMDLs are in place for *E. coli* and total phosphorus. A watershed-based plan has been completed (with a focus on nutrients) for the 12-digit watersheds located at least partly in New Mexico that comprise the lower Animas River watershed. Significant portions of the upper 12-digit watersheds are located on the SUIT Reservation. In the 2000s, the Animas Watershed Partnership, a watershed-wide unincorporated watershed group, conducted watershed-based planning with Section 319 funding from both NMED and the Colorado Department of Health and Environment. While their work produced information used in later planning efforts, it did not result in a nine-element WBP for the whole watershed.

NMED can award funds to an entity to conduct watershed-based planning in Colorado or SUIT, if the plan identifies effective strategies to implement New Mexico's TMDLs. The entity could be a unit of Colorado state government, a SUIT agency, or another organization within or not within the watershed. Because the existing WBP covers sub-watersheds that extend into SUIT, NMED

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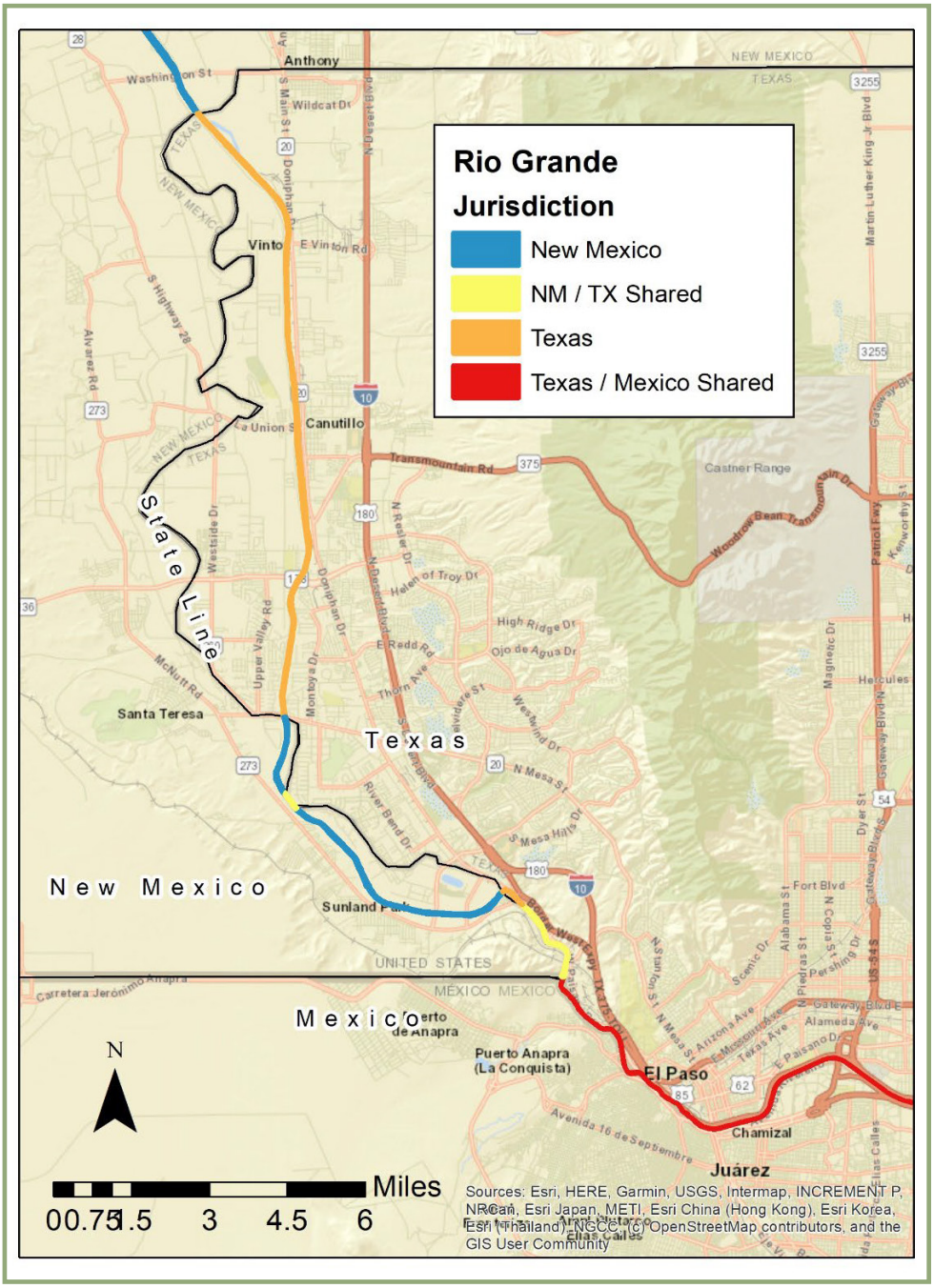
could use Section 319 funds to support implementation within that portion of SUIT lands. SUIT could be a sub-recipient of Section 319 grant funds from the State of New Mexico. While the project must include implementation of the total phosphorus or *E. coli* TMDLs, such a project could include additional water quality improvement objectives identified by SUIT.

Lower Rio Grande

The Rio Grande downstream of Las Cruces has sections where: (a) only New Mexico has jurisdiction over water quality programs, (b) Texas and New Mexico share jurisdiction, (c) only Texas has jurisdiction, and (d) Texas and Mexico share jurisdiction (Figure 1). Texas is both upstream and downstream of New Mexico. The section of the Rio Grande where Mexico has jurisdiction is entirely downstream of New Mexico, but a portion of the watershed in the Juárez metro area drains northward into New Mexico before reaching the Rio Grande where New Mexico has jurisdiction. The Rio Grande from the state highway 192 bridge west of Mesquite downstream to the Anthony Bridge is recognized as impaired by *E. coli*, and has TMDLs for *E. coli*.



New Mexico currently recognizes an impairment for boron where New Mexico has jurisdiction downstream of Anthony, and until recently recognized an impairment for *E. coli*. New Mexico also developed TMDLs for *E. coli* for this part of the Rio Grande. In 2022, this section of the Rio

Figure 1: Rio Grande water quality jurisdiction in southern Doña Ana County, El Paso County, and Ciudad Juárez.

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Grande was delisted for *E. coli*, based on twelve samples collected during NMED's 2019-2020 water quality survey from the assessment unit "Rio Grande (International Mexico bnd to Anthony Bridge)." None of these samples exceeded New Mexico's single-sample criterion, and consistent with New Mexico's listing methodology the stream was delisted for *E. coli*. Texas recognizes an impairment for "bacteria," and has not developed TMDLs for that part of the Rio Grande. *E. coli* was the indicator species Texas used to list the Rio Grande as impaired. The Paso del Norte WBP was written for the eight-digit El Paso – Las Cruces watershed located in New Mexico and Texas (but not Mexico), with a focus on reducing *E. coli* loading.

Due to New Mexico's *E. coli* delisting downstream of Anthony and the lack of a TMDL for boron, the watershed of the Rio Grande downstream of the Anthony Bridge is not eligible for Section 319 funds for planning from New Mexico. However, a planning project that includes the reach still impaired by *E. coli* upstream of Anthony could include this lower part of the watershed in its project area. In addition, areas within New Mexico, and areas within Texas that drain to the Rio Grande where New Mexico has jurisdiction, are eligible for Section 319 funds to implement the Paso del Norte WBP. This situation in which WBP implementation may no longer be solely to address an impairment was anticipated in New Mexico's NPS Management Plan, which includes the statement, "In cases where a WBP was developed to address a water quality problem, and the stream is subsequently delisted for the impairment parameter, implementation of the existing WBP may protect water quality to maintain water quality standards. Because one management measure may mitigate multiple pollutants, implementation of the existing WBP may also help address remaining impairments." Because the Paso del Norte WBP planning area does not include Mexico, implementation in the Ciudad Juárez metro area would not be eligible. Pending additional legal review, if the WBP were expanded to include Juárez, NMED could fund implementation of the WBP in the portion of the watershed that drains north from the Juárez area to the Rio Grande in New Mexico.

Projects that implement Wetlands Action Plans (WAPs) are also eligible for Section 319 implementation funding in New Mexico, and the lower Rio Grande area has a WAP completed in 2011. The WAP covers the same area as the Paso del Norte WBP, and so does not expand the area where implementation could be funded.

Rio Pueblo de Taos

Taos Pueblo has water quality jurisdiction over the upper Rio Pueblo de Taos. New Mexico's jurisdiction begins where the stream flows off Pueblo land. About five river miles downstream of the main Pueblo boundary the stream reaches the southeastern edge of the Pueblo's "Tract A," where it then forms the boundary between Pueblo lands and other lands, and the state and Pueblo share jurisdiction for the lower section of the stream. The Rio Grande forms the western boundary of Tract A, and the state and Pueblo also share jurisdiction of the Rio Grande for several miles (Figure 2).

Taos Pueblo completed a nonpoint source assessment for the Pueblo in 2006 which the Pueblo plans to update under a current project. The Pueblo also drafted portions of a WBP for eight streams in 2016 and plans to expand that for Pueblo lands under a current project as well. New Mexico has separately assessed three sections of the Rio Pueblo de Taos where the state has

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jurisdiction or shares jurisdiction with Taos Pueblo. All three sections are listed as impaired by temperature, and each section has its own TMDL for temperature. In addition, the upper section (Rio Grande del Rancho to Taos Pueblo boundary) is impaired by *E. coli* and has a TMDL for *E. coli*. The middle section (Arroyo del Alamo upstream to Rio Grande del Rancho) is impaired by nutrients and does not yet have nutrient TMDLs. The lower section (Rio Grande to Arroyo del Alamo) is impaired by dissolved oxygen and turbidity and does not yet have TMDLs for these parameters. All three sections have additional past impairments which have been delisted in past assessment cycles. Included among these is a past impairment for sediment in the middle

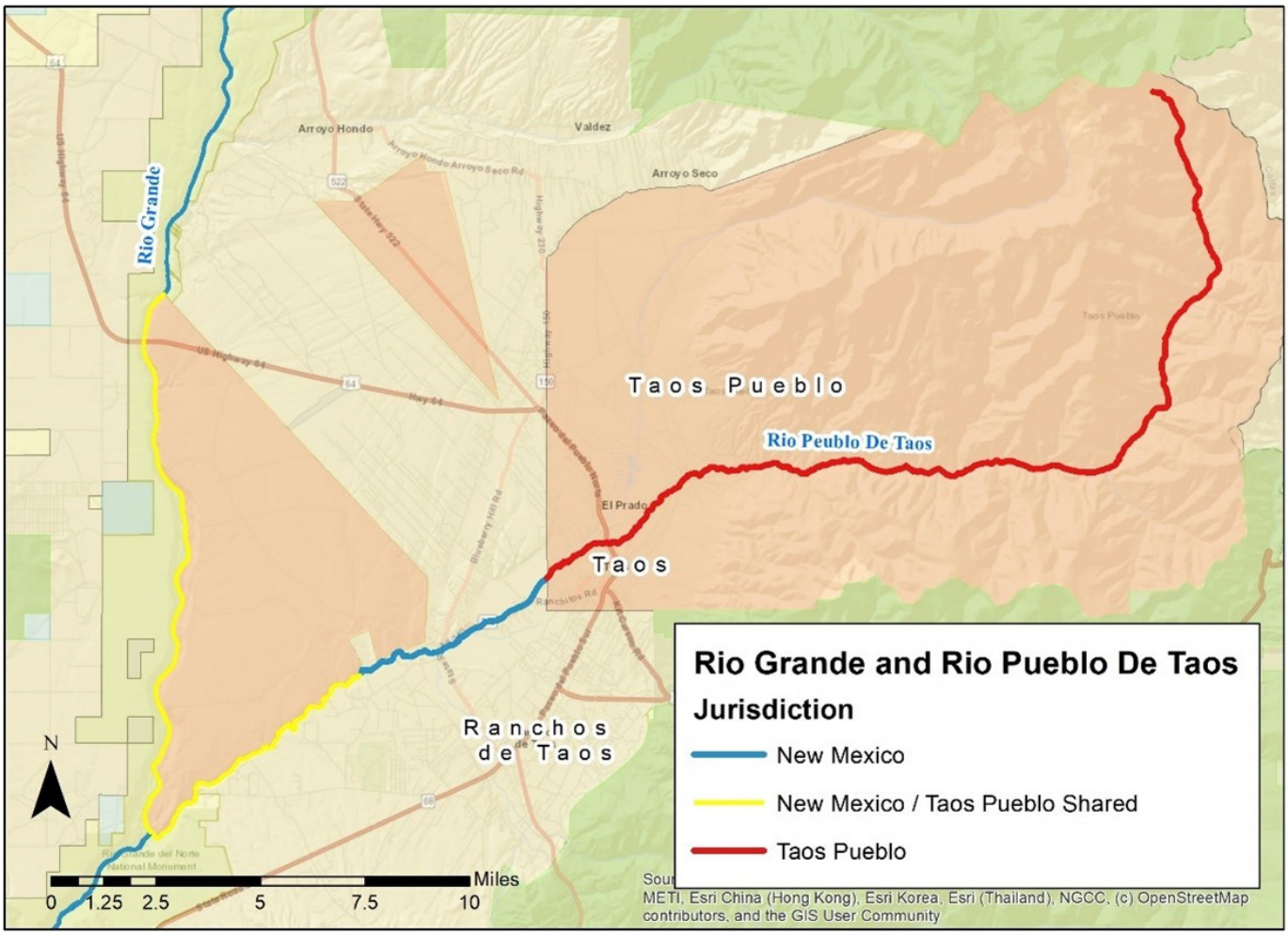

Figure 2: Rio Pueblo de Taos and Rio Grande water quality jurisdiction in the Taos area.

section, for which a TMDL was developed. A planning project completed in 2013 resulted in a draft WBP focused on temperature and sediment (available at https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/wbp) that EPA did not accept as meeting the required elements for WBPs.

The Rio Pueblo de Taos watershed is not currently eligible for 319 funds for implementation because there is neither a completed WBP nor a WAP for any portion of the watershed. NMED

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could award funds to an entity to conduct watershed-based planning in an area that includes Taos Pueblo lands, if the plan identifies effective strategies to implement New Mexico's TMDLs. The entity could be an agency or office of Taos Pueblo or another organization within or not within the watershed. As with other situations presented earlier in this article, such an entity should have authority formally or informally granted by both jurisdictions in order to gain meaningful participation from both jurisdictions and to receive later support for implementation. The WBP could include additional resource objectives related to water quality protection and improvement, in addition to implementation of New Mexico's TMDLs.

Gila River

Where the Gila River leaves New Mexico, the State of New Mexico has listed the stream as impaired by temperature. New Mexico has not yet developed a TMDL for this impairment. This section of the Gila was also previously listed as impaired by sedimentation and turbidity, but these impairments were removed and don't have TMDLs. A nine-element WBP has not been developed for this part of the Gila River. Just across the state line, the State of Arizona recognizes *E. coli* and suspended sediment. Arizona completed TMDLs for these impairments, and also completed a watershed-based plan (available at https://static.azdeq.gov/wqd/nemo/uppergila.pdf). The area covered by the WBP ends at the state line. It does not characterize sources of *E. coli* or suspended solids in New Mexico, which unfortunately means that NMED cannot support its implementation with Clean Water Act Section 319 funds. The lack of a TMDL for temperature in New Mexico also means that this section of the Gila River is not eligible for Section 319 funding for watershed-based planning.

What about the River Stewardship Program?

This article has been mainly about the uses of Section 319 funds. The River Stewardship Program, New Mexico's state-funded program to address water quality and stream habitat problems statewide, can only fund implementation projects within New Mexico (including tribal jurisdictions within New Mexico). Funding recipients do not need to be located in New Mexico to qualify; however, the project must be located in New Mexico. The River Stewardship Program requirements are broader than the Section 319 requirements in that funded projects are not required to implement TMDLs, WBPs, or WAPs. A strong project proposal will present clear water quality or stream habitat problems to be solved along with appropriate solutions to solve the problems, and state or tribal water quality program information (impairment listings, TMDLs, WBPs, WAPs, other assessments and plans) may strengthen the proposal when available.

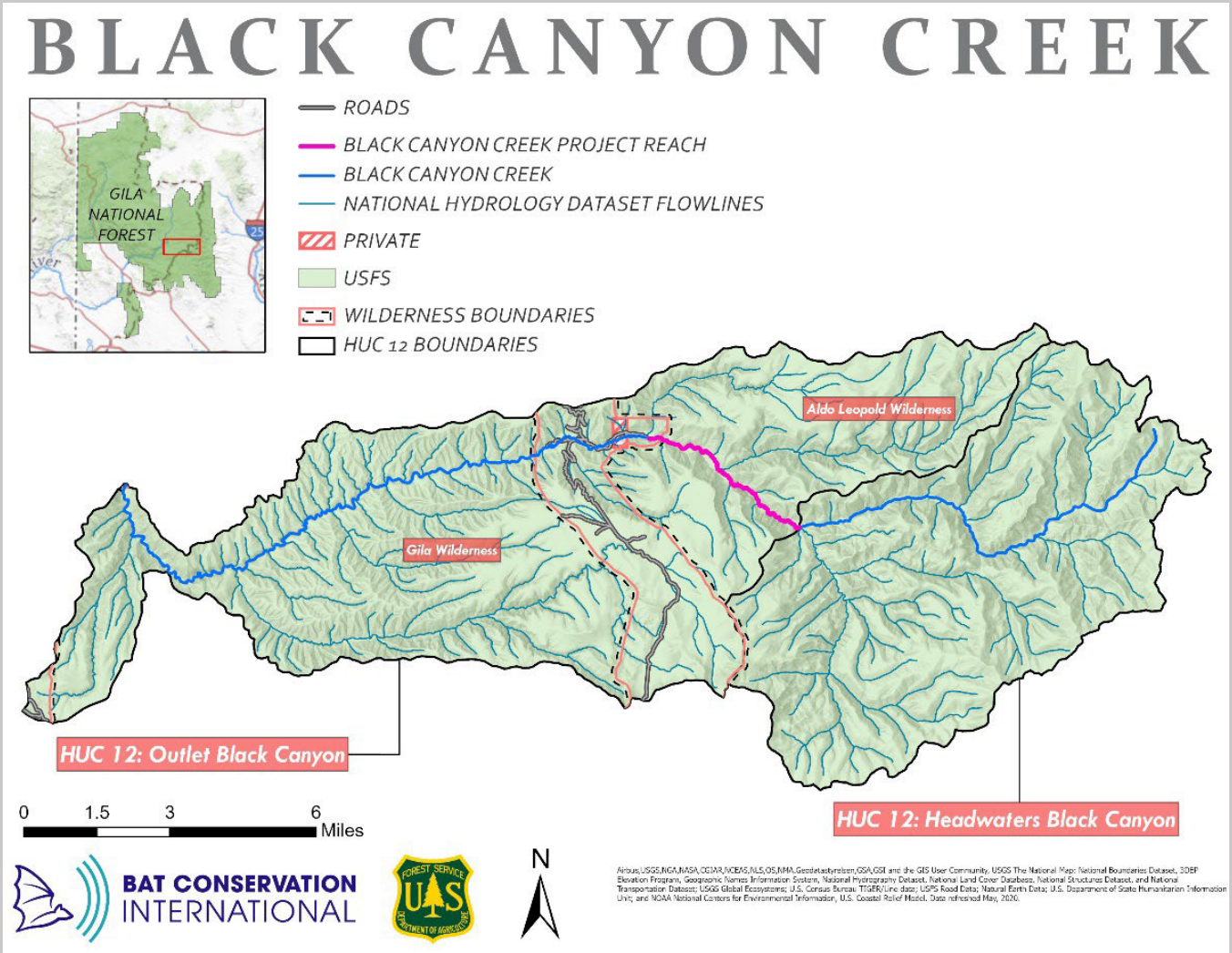
Author's Note: This was a surprisingly complex article to write. The author wishes to thank several reviewers who helped flesh out the examples provided above and offered several corrections and clarifications. These are Dustin Nelson of the New Mexico Environment Department, SUIT environmental program managers Alexandra Ratcliff and Taryn Chaya, Taos Pueblo Environmental Program Manager Miguel Vigil, Texas Nonpoint Source Program Team Leader Faith Hambleton, and Natalie Muilenberg, supervisor of Arizona's Watershed Improvement Unit.

Twelve New River Stewardship Program Projects Begin!

The River Stewardship Program (RSP) announces twelve new projects that started in March 2022. Funding for the twelve new projects comes from the New Mexico State Legislature to the River Stewardship Program which serves as state match for NMED's Clean Water Act Section 319 federal grants. These projects were selected through a Request for Proposals (RFP) released on April 30, 2021 for on-the-ground projects to improve surface water quality or river habitat statewide. Each of the twelve new projects, slated to be complete by June 30, 2024, are described below.

Restoration of Gila Trout and Riparian Habitat on Black Canyon Creek, Gila National Forest

The primary objectives of this project are to reduce stream temperatures, improve channel configuration and stream morphology, and increase aquatic habitat structure and diversity for Gila trout in a 3.5-mile reach of Black Canyon Creek in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness on the Gila National Forest. NMED awarded $207,255.24 to Bat Conservation International to complete this project. The project work plan is in review for potential changes following the 2022 Black Fire, which started after the contract was approved.



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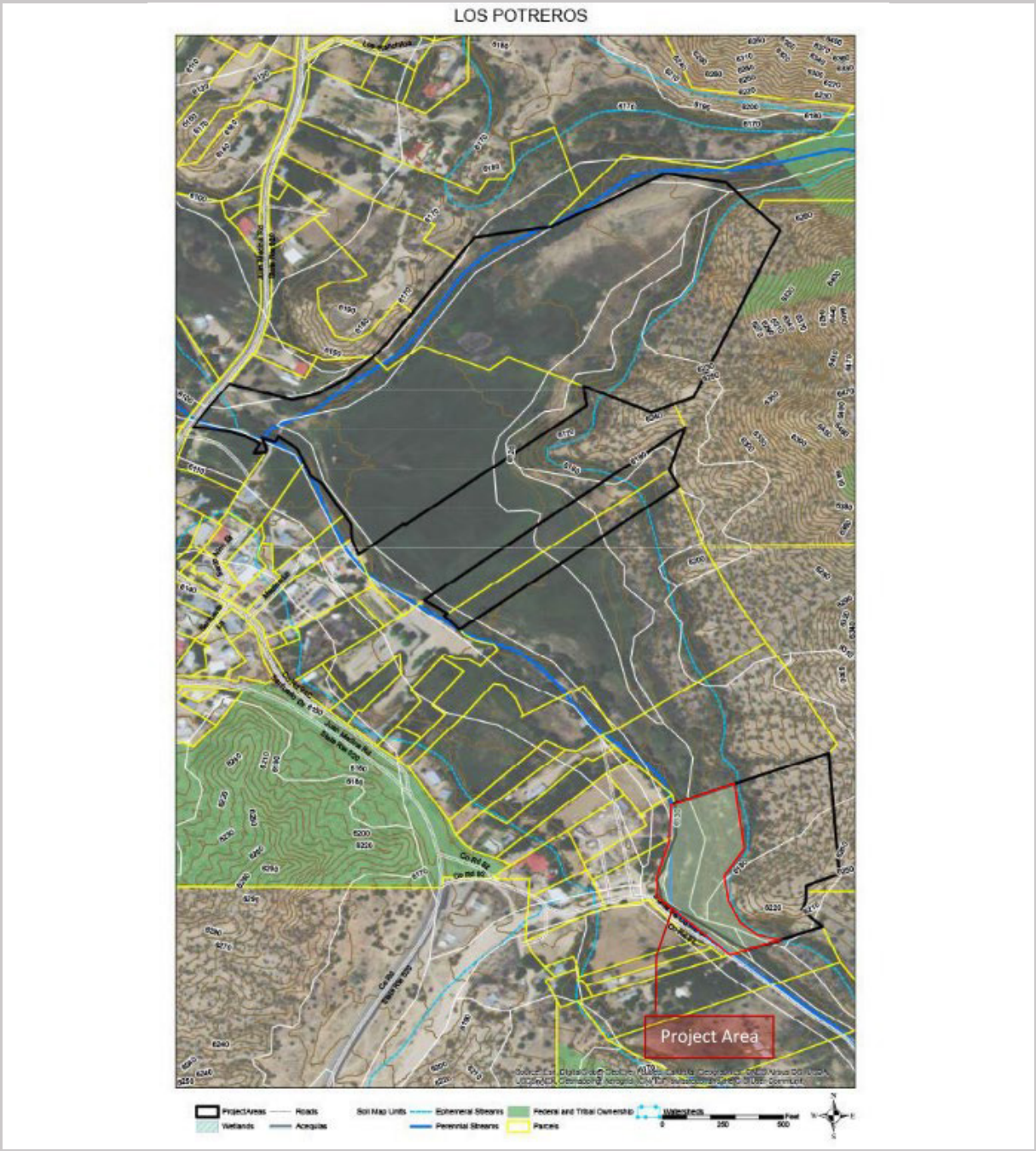
Restoring Stream and Riparian Health along the Santa Cruz River on Los Potreros Open Space

This project will address the river habitat degradation and temperature impairment on an 825-foot reach and improve 2.5-acres of riparian habitat on the Santa Cruz River in the Los Potreros Open Space of Santa Fe County. Methods to be utilized on the project include removal of invasive trees, planting of native vegetation, reconnecting the river to its floodplain, bank stabilization, and construction of rock baffles, vanes and rundowns to provide grade control and induce meandering. Ecotone Landscape Planning, LLC. was awarded $146,371.49 to complete the project.



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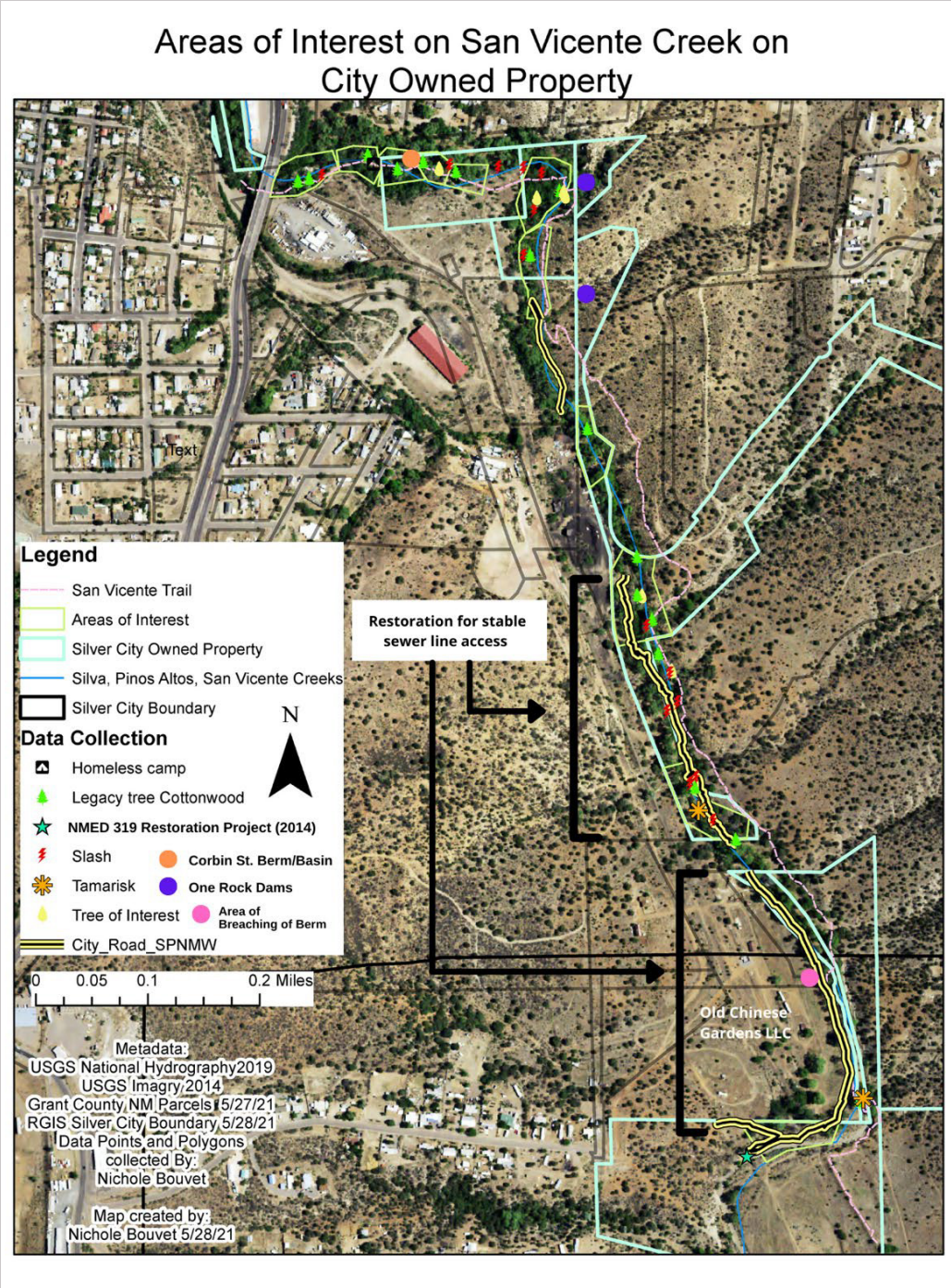
Reimagining San Vicente Creek

This project will address nutrient impairments on 1.09-miles of San Vicente Creek by constructing urban runoff catchments and one-rock dams, reconnecting the floodplain, and inducing meandering. The project will also improve riparian habitat on 25-acres of riparian corridor along San Vicente Creek, just south of downtown Silver City by removing non-native vegetation and planting native plants. NMED awarded Gila Resources Information Project $170,536.86 for the restoration.



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Rewinding the Gallinas River in the City of Las Vegas – Phase III

The third phase of the Rewinding the Gallinas River project will restore approximately 0.4-miles of river and 5-acres of riparian area in the Gallinas River Park of the City of Las Vegas. River channel and floodplain restoration will consist of building grade control structures, additional wetland and backwater areas, and stormwater infiltration structures. Riparian restoration will include removing Siberian elms and planting approximately 1,300 native shrubs and trees. Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance was awarded $370,904.92 to complete Phase III. The project work plan is in review for potential changes following the 2022 Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire, which started after the contract was approved.

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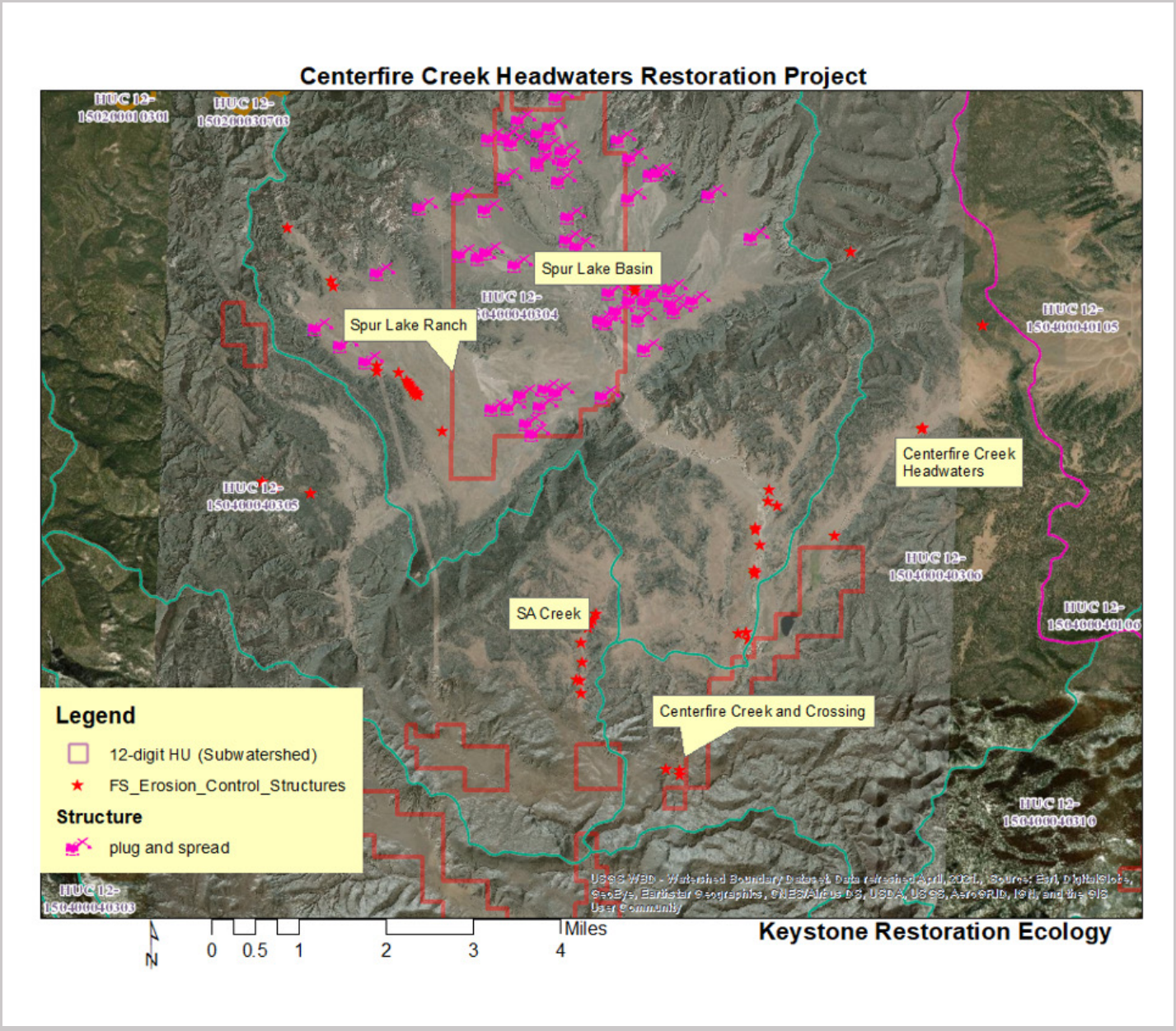
Centerfire Creek Headwaters Restoration Project

Expansive gullies and loss of riparian vegetation across the Spur Lake Basin is contributing to large amounts of sediment and water quality impairments on Centerfire Creek. This project aims to restore wet meadows, erosion control ponds, and channel geomorphology in Centerfire Creek and the surrounding landscape. Approximately 3.5-miles of stream and 19-acres of wetlands will be restored. Keystone Restoration Ecology was awarded $445,370.28 to perform the restoration.



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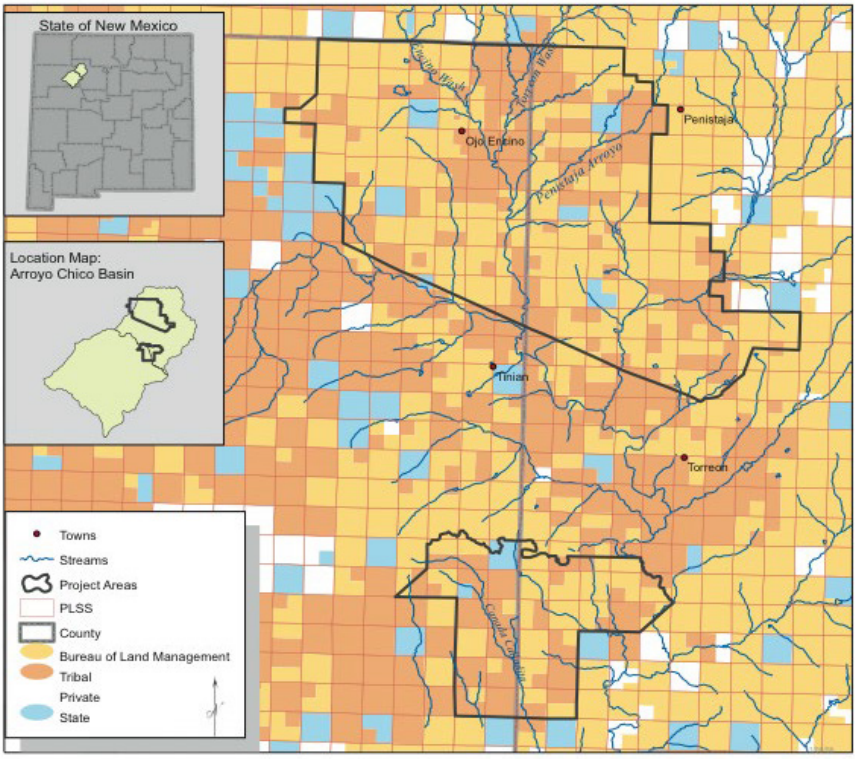
Los Alamos Canyon Creek Watershed Restoration and Sediment Reduction Project

This project will restore approximately 3-miles of stream channel and 150-acres of riparian area in the Los Alamos Creek Canyon. The area was decimated by the Cerro Grande Fire (2000) and Los Conchas Fire (2011) and has since had issues with sedimentation and erosion resulting from post-fire debris flows from the upper watershed that is nearly completely depleted of forest cover. This project will provide stream bank and headcut repairs, restore form and function to aggrading alluvial fans, enhance naturally aggrading segments of channel to reduce sediment transport downstream, improve stream channel and floodplain geometry, and planting of native vegetation in the riparian area. NMED awarded Los Alamos Department of Public Utilities $291,709.00 to complete this project.

Riparian Restoration in Torreon Wash Watershed – Phase 2



The second phase of this project will continue to address long-standing erosion and sedimentation issues resulting from overgrazing and poor road conditions. Up to 3,000 cottonwoods, 300 riparian shrubs, and 2,000 willows will be planted in riparian areas, relocation of road segments impacting riparian areas, and construction of erosion control structures such as Zuni bowls and one-rock dams will help restore parts of a 40-square mile area with mixed land ownership of the Torreon Wash and Arroyo Chico watersheds. Rio Puerco Alliance was awarded $208,897.00 to complete Phase 2.

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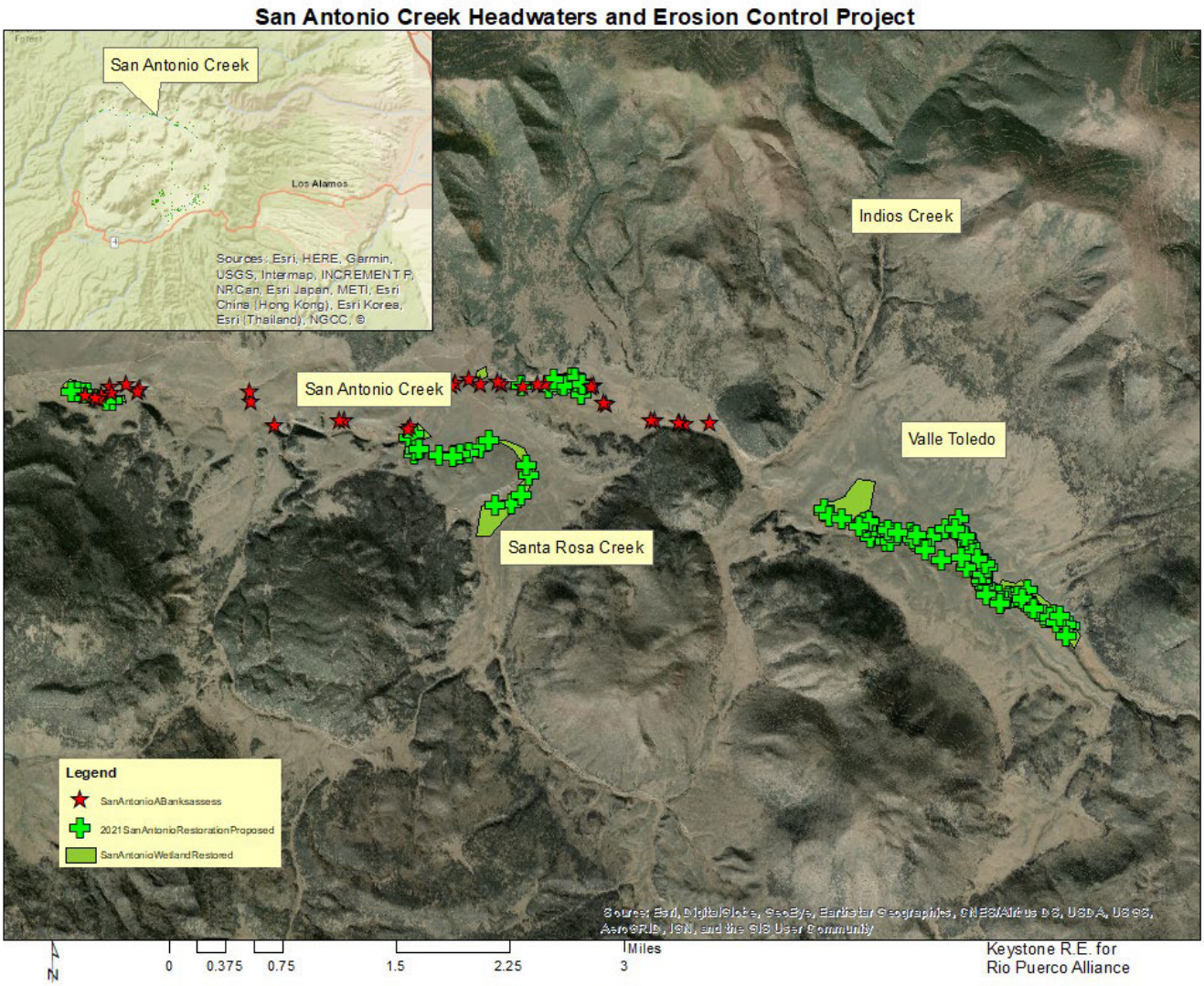
San Antonio Creek Headwaters and Erosion Control Project

The goals of this project are to restore San Antonio Creek, Santa Rosa Creek, and the surrounding wetlands in the Valles Caldera National Preserve to improve fisheries and wildlife habitat and to reduce erosion and sedimentation that lead to turbidity and nutrient impairments in San Antonio Creek. Approximately 15-miles of San Antonio Creek and Santa Rosa Creek and an estimated 165-acres of wetland area will be treated and restored. Rio Puerco Alliance was awarded $259,214.00 to complete this project.



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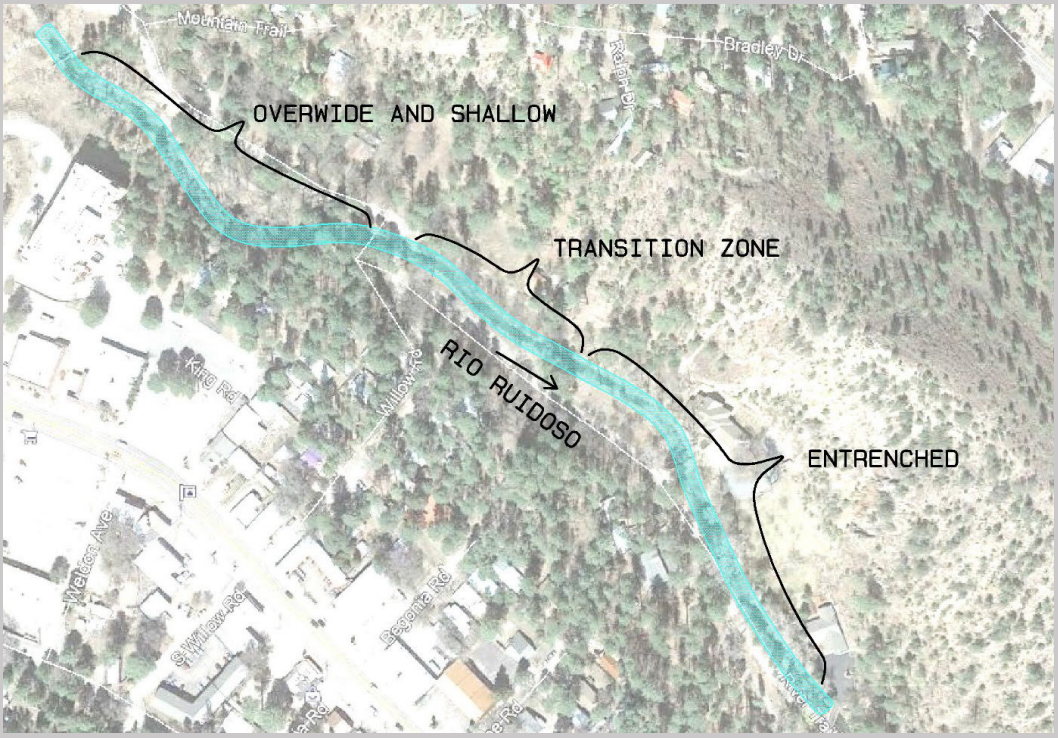
Dalton Fishing Area Restoration Project

This project will address a lack of fish habitat by improving stream geomorphology and improve the riparian area by planting willows to address a lack of shade and limit recreational access to the stream channel. Work is planned for 0.3-miles of river habitat and 0.25-acres of riparian area around the Pecos River at the Dalton Fishing Area recreation site. The Upper Pecos Watershed Association was awarded $243,244.89 to complete the work on the Pecos River in the Santa Fe National Forest.

Two Rivers Park River Restoration Project



The primary objective of this project is to improve fish and riparian habitat by installing in-stream structures to create channel complexity and planting riparian shrubs and willows to reinforce the stream banks and meanders. The project will improve approximately 0.3-miles of stream channel and adjacent riparian area in the upstream part of Two Rivers Park in Ruidoso, NM. The Village of Ruidoso was awarded $215,730.00 to complete this project.

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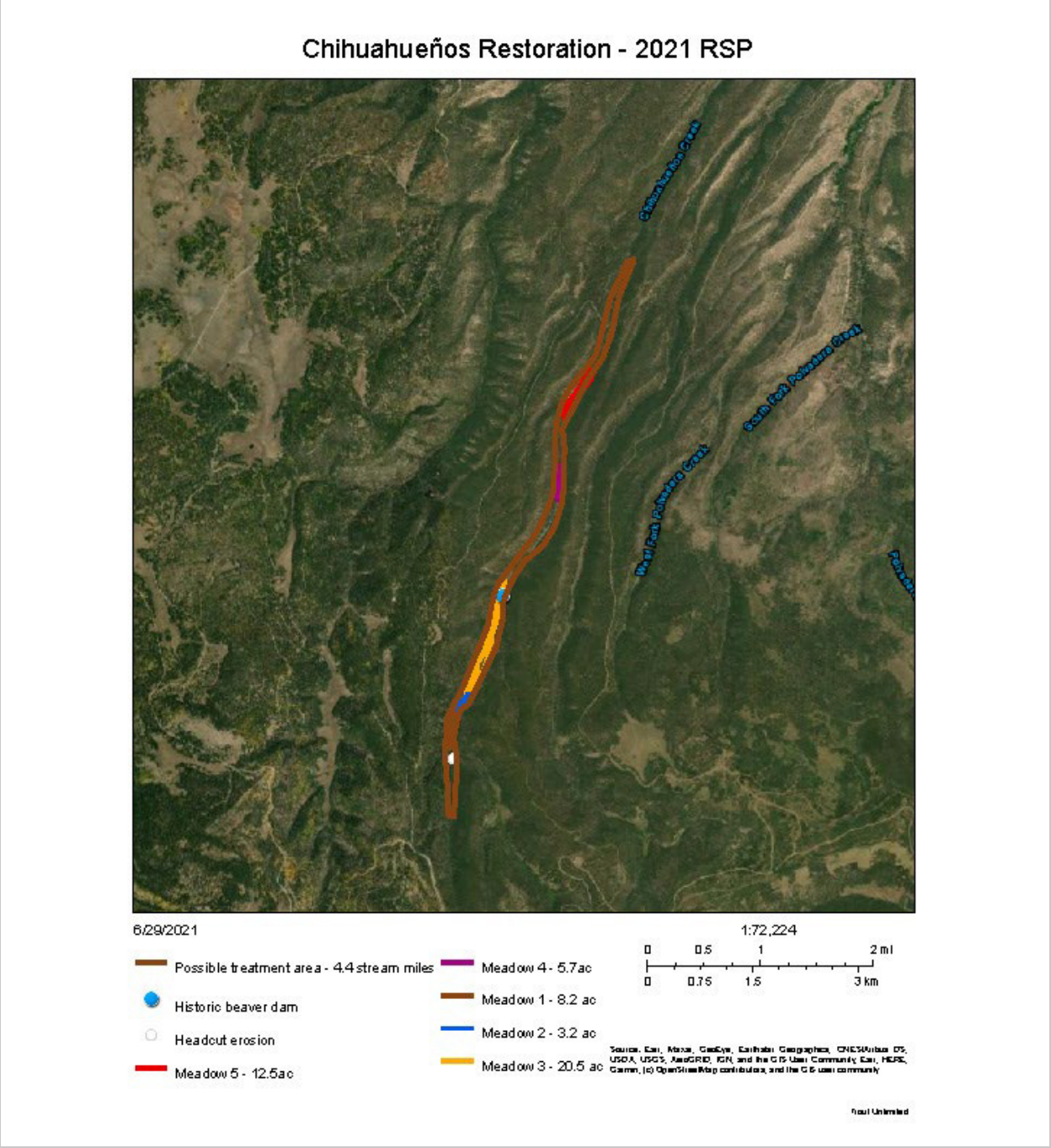
Chihuahueños Creek Headwaters Restoration Project

Chihuahueños Creek on the Santa Fe National Forest is listed as not supporting it's high-quality cold water designated use. Restoration work on Chihuahueños Creek will reduce active erosion by repairing headcuts contributing to sedimentation and increase riparian vegetation to reduce stream temperatures to better support a Rio Grande cutthroat trout population. Trout Unlimited, Inc. was awarded $209,989.53 to complete this project.



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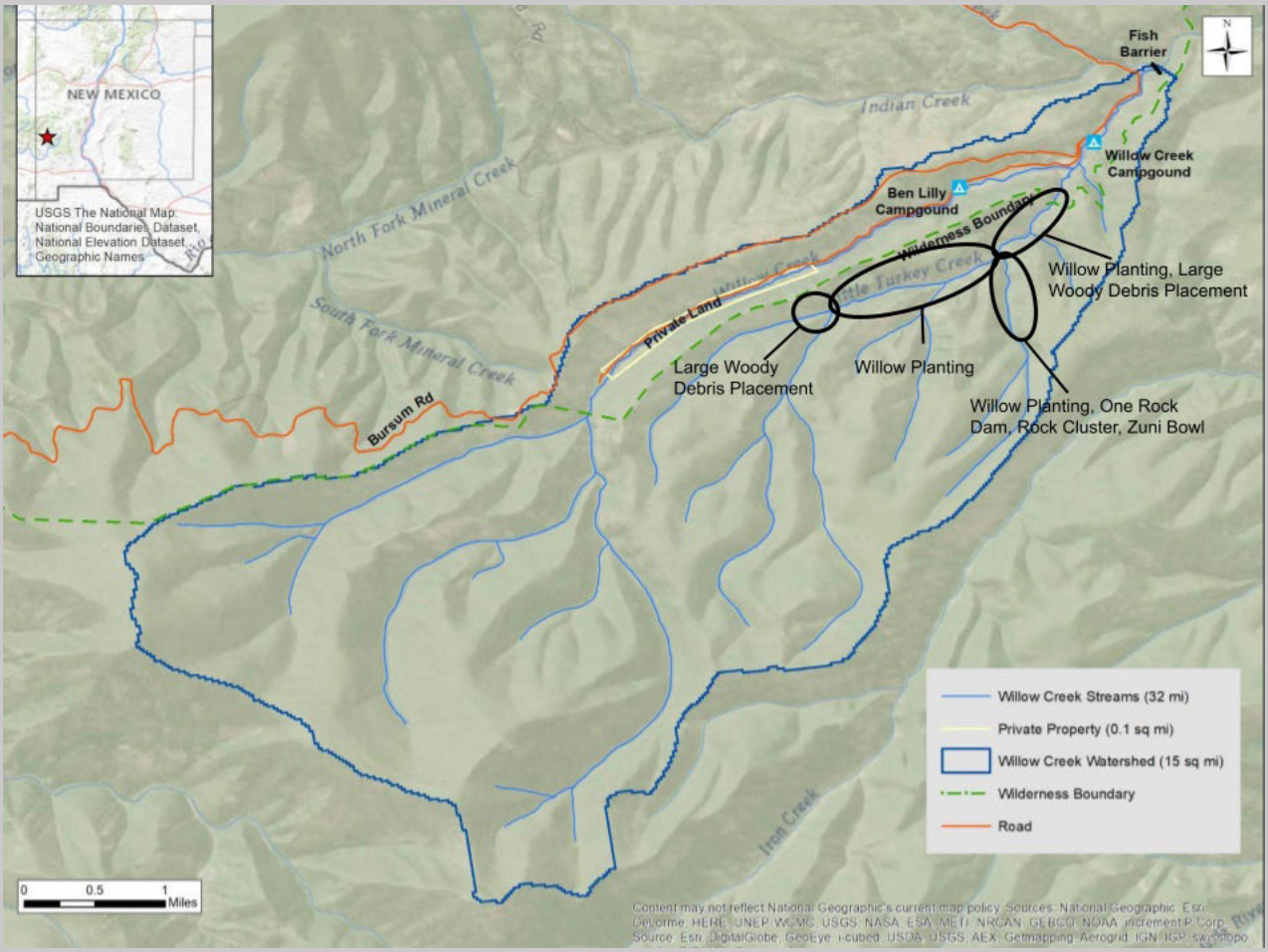
Post-Wildfire Restoration of Little Turkey Creek, Willow Creek Watershed, Southwestern New Mexico

Little Turkey Creek is heavily scoured from debris flows following several fires, including the Whitewater Baldy Complex Fire, in the watershed and provides minimal pool habitats for adult Gila trout. The goal of the project is to reduce stream instability, improve water quality, and aquatic habitats to support Gila trout for species conservation and recreational angling on approximately 2-miles of stream channel and 64-acres of riparian habitat within the wilderness of the Gila National Forest. Trout Unlimited was awarded $133,060.67 to complete this project.



For a complete list of current and recent River Stewardship projects and Section 319, with links to download project work plans (and final reports for completed projects), please visit: www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/nmed_319_and_rsp_project_list.

UPDATE FROM THE MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND STANDARDS SECTION

Monitoring Team News

The monitoring team is carrying out the second year of surveys in the Little Colorado/Rio Puerco, Jemez and Lower Pecos watersheds.

Water Quality Standards Team News

In the first half of 2022, SWQB has updated our Standard Operating Procedures for Stream Flow Measurements (SOP 7.0), Chemical Sampling in Lotic Environments (SOP 8.2), Fish Consumption Advisory Data Collection and Reporting (SOP 11.5), Probabilistic Monitoring (SOP 13.1), and Technical System Audits (SOP 16.1).

A hearing was held at the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) on June 14 to consider a petition to nominate segments of Rio Grande, Rio Hondo, Lake Fork, East Fork Jemez River, San Antonio Creek, and Redondo Creek as Outstanding National Resource Waters. ONRWs are streams, lakes and wetlands that receive special protection against degradation under the State of New Mexico's Water Quality Standards and the federal Clean Water Act. Waters eligible for ONRW designation include waters that are part of a national or state park, wildlife refuge or wilderness areas, special trout waters, waters with exceptional recreational or ecological significance, and high-quality waters that have not been significantly modified by human activities.

TMDL/Assessment Team News

The Clean Water Act §303(d)/§305(b) 2022-2024 Integrated Report and List was approved by EPA Region 6 on April 26. The 2022-2024 Integrated Report focuses on water quality assessments in the Gila/Mimbres/San Francisco, Lower Rio Grande and Upper Pecos watersheds. It also details the listing status of all water bodies monitored by SWQB.

Public meetings took place for Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) in the Upper Rio Grande watershed on June 15. A public comment period was open from June 13 to July 13. TMDLs describe water quality impairments and pollution reduction targets needed to meet water quality standards. TMDLs can lead to new or revised National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit limits and inform stakeholder watershed planning and restoration efforts. SWQB plans to request approval of these TMDLs by the WQCC at their meeting in September or October.

MASS is preparing TMDLs for several lakes in northern NM. The project will include Eagle Nest Lake, Goose Lake, Lake Maloya, Santa Cruz Lake and Shuree Pond North. A public comment period and meeting will be announced in the fall.

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

August

Now - Saturdays throughout the summer. Gallinas Canyon - Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance Post-Fire Recovery Work Days - Volunteers Needed! EVERY SATURDAY, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Join Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance's staff in the Gallinas Canyon each Saturday throughout the summer to help private landowners with flood mitigation, soil stabilization and erosion control and seeding to restore plant cover. Volunteers should wear heavy boots, a hat and sunscreen. Bring your water bottle and work gloves and a lunch, if you'd like. All tools, materials and seed will be provided. Youth must be 16 years old and be accompanied by a parent or guardian. To sign up to volunteer: https://hermitspeakwatersheds.org/3233-2.

August 12th. Santa Fe - Celebrating the Caja Del Rio's Culture, Land, Water and Wildlife FRIDAY, AUGUST 12, from 2:00 p.m. Join the Caja del Rio Coalition in celebrating the Caja del Rio's remarkable culture, history, land, water and wildlife! There will be free food, drinks and music. Free event open to the public. For more info: https://www.nmwild.org/event/celebrating-the-caja-del-rios-culture-land-water-and-wildlife/

August 12th - 14th. Midnight Meadows in the Carson National Forest - Midnight Meadows is one of the "wetland jewels" that Albuquerque Wildlife Federation's (AWF) partner group Amigos Bravos has identified as needing special protections and restoration priority in the Carson National Forest. During this year's project, AWF will be building log structures to help hold water on the landscape and grow wetland vegetation. Volunteers do not need to be present for the entire weekend to participate. You are welcome to join them just for the work day Saturday, or camp for just one of the two nights. GEAR: Bring everything you need for a weekend of camping and restoration work, including work gloves, hat, long sleeves, long pants, sturdy boots, and sunscreen. Camping is at an altitude of over 10,000 feet, so bring layers and warm clothes. It's been an active monsoon season, so be prepared for rain and wet weather (bringing a change of shoes, and waterproof boots or boots you don't mind getting wet). Plenty of water is always essential. FOOD: AWF will provide coffee and breakfast burritos on Saturday morning and bison or veggie burgers on Saturday evening. Please bring a dish to share for the Saturday potluck dinner, along with your own lunches, Friday dinner, Sunday breakfast, plate, cup, and eating utensils and lots of water! TO SIGN UP: Email Kristina at abqwildlifefederation@gmail.com Directions and further details will be sent to you once you sign up.

August 16th - Deadline to submit - Request for Proposals (RFP) for the NMED SWQB River Stewardship Program (RSP). For any questions about the RSP or the RFP, please feel free to contact Kate Lacey at (505) 946-8863 or kathryn.lacey@state.nm.us. The RSP page can be found on the NMED SWQB website at the link below; https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/river-stewardship-program/.

September

September 2nd - 5th. Limestone Canyon, San Mateo Mountains. Albuquerque Wildlife Federation's next scheduled restoration project. Check for more details on their website abq.nmwildlife.org/projects.html.

Now - October 2022 - Solitude Monitoring in the in the Sabinoso, Cerro Del Yuta, and Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas. Do you like hiking and want to volunteer to help our Public Lands? NM Wild is seeking volunteers to collect data on visitor use in these BLM Wilderness areas. This data informs us on the level of use in each of these areas, which is key to better management. Volunteers must complete a 30-minute phone training with NM Wild's Wilderness Rangers. Email will@nmwild.org to sign up or visit https://www.nmwild.org/event/solitude-monitoring-in-the-sabinoso-cerro-del-yuta-and-rio-san-antonio-wilderness-areas/.