

NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT SURFACE WATER QUALITY BUREAU



River Stewardship Program

The **New Mexico River Stewardship Program** funds projects that enhance the health of rivers by addressing the root causes of poor water quality and stream habitat. Funding supports **river restoration design and construction**, for example:

- Addition of rock structures to develop pool habitat for trout.
- Mulching and seeding near perennial streams to reduce post-fire impacts.
- Planting native streamside vegetation.

The **New Mexico River Stewardship Program**:

- Is aligned to **provide match required for federal grants** to ensure that New Mexico continues to receive these funds.
- Considers **economic benefits** of healthy river systems, such as improved opportunities to hunt, fish, and float.
- Emphasizes **restoring or maintaining hydrology of streams and rivers** to better handle overbank flows and thus reduce flooding downstream.

COMBINED ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The **New Mexico River Stewardship Program** funds the design and construction of projects that improve and protect water quality to support propagation of fish, human recreation, irrigation and municipal water supply uses. These projects will yield combined economic and environmental impacts including:

- NMED uses River Stewardship Program funds to provide match for **\$2.25 million per year in federal funds** that are awarded to New Mexico under Clean Water Act programs.
- The majority of contractors and suppliers for the projects are **New Mexico businesses**.
- Projects **support and enhance both agricultural and tourism aspects of New Mexico's economy**. Nature-based outdoor recreation activities, including hiking, boating and fishing, contributed \$635 million to New Mexico between 2012 and 2017 (New Mexico Economic Development Department).

For information on current projects (Section 319 and River Stewardship), visit:

www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/nmed_319_and_rsp_project_list

For more information, contact:

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The Legislature has appropriated **\$21.05 million** in state funds for the New Mexico River Stewardship Program. There have been **48 projects implemented** since 2015, including 20 currently active projects. New projects will be added in early 2023 resulting from a \$10.3 million Request for Proposals issued in 2022.



Gallinas River
Restoring floodplain connection to improve water quality & quantity



Jaramillo Creek
Planting willows for habitat and shade to reduce stream temps



Silver City
Harvesting stormwater to reduce sediment in San Vicente Creek

PROJECT PRIORITIES AND SELECTION

Projects are distributed statewide. Priority projects include those that address:

- Water quality and stream habitat impacts associated with **recent wildfires**.
- **Source water protection** of public drinking water supplies that use surface water.
- **Urban water quality** and stream habitat.

Projects are selected through a **Requests for Proposals** following the state procurement process. Evaluation criteria ensure that projects are **community-based and stakeholder driven**. Eligible applicants include state and local agencies, for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, and Indian Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes.

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Visit us online at:

<https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/watershed-protection-section/>



Santa Fe River - April 2012 (during planting)



Same location – June 2016 (four years later)

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