



Environment Department

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, GOVERNOR

James C. Kenney, Cabinet Secretary

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Oct. 14, 2020

The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

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Five new watershed restoration projects approved

Projects around the state will improve health of watersheds

Watersheds around New Mexico will benefit from five new projects approved for funding through the New Mexico Environment Department's (NMED) nonpoint source pollution program. The majority of surface water quality problems identified in New Mexico are caused by nonpoint source water pollution, such as rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground and depositing pollutants into rivers, lakes, and wetlands. More information on these projects is available below and [here](#).

These projects are federally funded through the Clean Water Act and require at least a 40% match of the total project cost, either as cash or in-kind services, at the state or local level. Besides producing important environmental and public health results, these projects also infuse funds into local economies and boost local businesses – all significant priorities of the Lujan Grisham administration. These five projects represent an investment of \$557,538 federal dollars and \$412,018 in local matching funds.

During a public hearing on October 15, NMED will present its request for continued state funding in Fiscal Year 22 for the Department's River Stewardship Program as part of the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Planning process. Funding for the River Stewardship Program will go toward projects that improve surface water quality or river habitat statewide and provide state matching funds for up to \$2.5 million in federal grants. More information about the hearing on October 15 is available [here](#).

"The Legislature's support of these projects has a direct and positive impact on the health of our precious surface water resources," said NMED Cabinet Secretary James Kenney.

"For 32 years, Amigos Bravos' mission has been to protect and restore the waters of New Mexico," said Joseph Zupan, executive director of funding recipient Amigos Bravos. "We are pleased to once again be working with NMED to fulfill this mission by protecting the wetlands and wet meadows at the top of the watershed system that feed our streams and rivers and nourish our farms and communities."

Location	Recipient	Project outcomes
Rincon Arroyo Watershed – Dona Ana County	New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute	Reduce <i>E. coli</i> bacteria transport from the Rincon Arroyo into the Rio Grande by constructing stone lines, native grass seeding and other methods to reduce storm run-off on 180 acres in the watershed.
Mora River, Upper Canadian Plateau – Mora County	Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance	Reduce <i>E. coli</i> bacteria and excess nutrients delivered to the Mora River by implementing wetland and stream restoration, road decommissioning, creating

		near-stream buffer zones, education and outreach and other activities.
Pecos River, lower Cow Creek – San Miguel County	Upper Pecos Watershed Association	Reduce water temperatures for aquatic life by planting native vegetation along the banks of the Pecos River to increase shade, improving river-floodplain connection for enhanced recharge in the dry season and modifying the channel to create pool and riffle habitat.
Rio Quemado Riverine Wetland – Santa Fe County	Ecotone Landscape Planning	Reduce channelization of the Rio Quemado on the Los Potreros Open Space, near Chimayó, and restore and protect native riparian and wetland vegetation and its associated aquatic and wildlife habitat.
Rio Fernando de Taos – Taos County	Amigos Bravos	Reduce fecal waste and <i>E. coli</i> bacteria levels in the Rio Fernando de Taos by installing a portable toilet and pet waste disposal stations, organizing backyard waste management workshops and other activities.

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