

NMACD 2024 POSITION STATEMENTS

COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION

2003/8 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD encourages input from local SWCDs, through Region Chairs, for decisions made by NMACD board regarding projects, programs, policy, and future direction. NMACD recognizes two-way communications with local SWCDs, NMDA and NRCS to meet common needs of NM citizens for natural resource conservation management is vitally important. To foster and continue two-way communication, NMACD and the forty-seven, local soil and water conservation districts, NMDA and NRCS will convene a workgroup to develop a communication plan including more electronic exchange of information such as minutes, meeting notices, budgets, financial reports, progress reports, etc.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

92/1 Revised 2023

NMACD supports conservation / environmental education in schools, the mass media, through special meetings and other means.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

96/1 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD requests that NRCS includes in their Public Service Announcements, "This message brought to you by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and your local Soil & Water Conservation District".

DEPREDATION

ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL

93/3 Revised 2023

NMACD supports public funding of the animal damage control program in areas where there is economic damage to livestock or property or threat to public health or safety.

CCRP BIOLOGICAL RENOVATION

2006/2 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD will seek an amendment to current federal regulations to approve use of biological renovation utilizing grazing animals as an appropriate renovation/conservation practice as may be determined by the technical agency, in consultation with the landowner.

OPPOSITION TO THE MEXICAN WOLF PROGRAM

2008/3 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD oppose any rule or proposed rule related to the reintroduction of the Mexican gray wolf that does not provide adequate protective measures for our families and children or that does not provide adequate protective measures and compensation to pets and livestock that are threatened, injured or kill by depredating wolves.

SWCDs COOPERATING AGENCIES, MEXICAN WOLF PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT PROCESS

2008/5 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD encourages member districts to enter into Cooperating Agency agreements, pursuant to NEPA, to ensure that the impacts are fully disclosed to the public and to participate with the federal and state agencies in developing new rules that reduce and eliminate the negative effects to the human environment; and to foster proper coordination with conservation districts. NMACD request technical assistance and participation by New Mexico State University in the Environmental Impact Statement process, especially regarding the interdisciplinary impact analyses on human environment. NMACD requests coordination with New Mexico Association of Counties, currently assisting in facilitation of counties as cooperating agencies in EIS planning process.

GAME AND FISH DEPREDATION

2008/6 Reaffirmed 2024

The NMACD will work with the New Mexico Game and Fish Department and the New Mexico State Legislature to improve the processes afforded landowners for protecting their property such as crops, grazing pastures and livestock. NMACD will seek avenues for the state to compensate landowners for their financial losses and/or provide management alternatives of the offending game animal population to a level that diminishes the financial losses to a minimal level.

FERAL HOGS

2011/2 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD supports development of education & incentive programs to assist landowners with control or eradication of feral hogs. NMACD encourages NM Game & Fish Commissions/Agencies, Forest Service & Dept. of Interior to encourage measures to eradicate feral hogs on state, federal & private lands. NMACD urges the regulation of transportation and uncontrolled release of feral hogs.

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ASTRAY HORSES

2013/2 Revised 2023

NMACD shall provide assistance to work cooperatively with SWCDs, NMDA and the NM Livestock Board to manage these free-roaming astray horses to prevent further natural resources damage throughout the State. NMACD shall participate in the formation of any policies concerning free-roaming astray horses in NM.

ELK OVERPOPULATION

2013/3 Revised 2023

NMACD shall seek assistance from NM Dept. of Game and Fish in working with private landowners through their cost share and other programs to protect the land and natural resources, including but not limited to erecting game fences around effected properties and/or by increasing landowner permits in the elk overpopulation effected units.

OPPOSE ESTABLISHMENT OF JAGUAR CRITICAL HABITAT IN U.S.

2006/7 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD will request the US Fish & Wildlife Service to find that, according to best available science and commercial information, the need for Jaguar critical habitat does not exist in the US. and withhold any and all funding for this proposal.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

ENDANGERED SPECIES

92/1 Revised 2023

NMACD supports protection of endangered species where there is a need shown and practical plan that can be implemented. NMACD supports renewal of ESA in modified form requiring more local input and consideration of economic impact of protecting a species. Economic impact and practicability of preserving and improving critical habitat must be considered.

REQUEST PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE DESIGNATION OF THREATENED AND OR ENDANGERED SPECIES IN NM

98/1 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD requests U.S Fish and Wildlife Service hold local, public hearings in NM. NMACD supports having data provided on geographical extent and numbers for the proposed designation and providing objective and meaningful analysis of the effects of listing this species on affected economics of the communities and the human and natural environments.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

95/2 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports amendments to the Endangered Species Act that would...1) Require compensation to private property, 2) Correct the defects in listing species, 3) Require objective and meaningful (NEPA) analysis of effects of listing, establishing and designating habitats, 4) Eliminate the restrictions and prohibitions against modifications of habitats, and 5) Reform litigation process under the Act, and 6) Eliminate sub-species and allow substantive participation by the state & local governments. NMACD supports considering negative impacts on communities and the human and natural environment.

REFORM OR REPEAL ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

99/8 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD supports entering into an educational campaign for public benefit to point out inequities of the Endangered Species Act and to propose alternative methods of management of endangered species.

FARM BILL PROGRAMS

USDA FARM BILL

92/4 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports the purpose of the Farm Bill to require good land stewardship from persons as a condition of receiving benefits from USDA programs, support more flexibility in the implementation of the Farm Bill to allow farmers to plant a broader range of crops that will accomplish economic and conservation objectives of individual farmers, accomplishing the purposes of the Farm Bill.

NRCS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

93/4 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD urges NRCS to minimize administrative workload and place top priority on providing technical assistance in accord with the current working agreement and Memoranda of Understanding.

GRAZING MANAGEMENT OF CRP LANDS

97/5 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD requests NRCS & FSA to include livestock grazing as the tool of choice to manage CRP lands. NMACD supports NRCS supervising the CRP Grazing Management.

RETAIN LOCAL FSA COUNTY COMMITTEES

97/1 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD supports reevaluating FSA office closures. Responsibilities and concerns need to be carried out by local citizens who have similar natural resource concerns. The distance producers have to travel for service should be taken into consideration.

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CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

2003/3 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD will encourage the USDA to craft rules that will provide adequate financial incentives for owners of CRP land unsuited for sustained cropping to keep the land in CRP, and that native vegetation be utilized in accomplishing the purposes of CRP

PERMANENT VEGETATION COVER ON CRP

2000/4 Reaffirmed 2022

NM SWCDs have extensive acreages of land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the USDA policy requires the CRP contract administration be delegated to the USDA/Farm Services Agency (FSA) after three (3) years regardless of adequate permanent cover establishment. USDA/FSA does not have the technical expertise or staff to address the conservation needs of the acres that have not been established to permanent vegetative cover. In order to ensure that the CRP is carried out as intended by law, the NMACD petitions USDA to extend USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service technical responsibility until permanent vegetative cover is adequately established and to provide funding to carry out that responsibility.

INCLUSION LANGUAGE 2018 FARM BILL, ACEQUIAS EQIP FUNDING SAME AS TRIBAL 2016-3 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports the inclusion of language in the 2018 Farm Bill that will provide eligibility to acequias/irrigation canals emulating Tribal entities when it comes to seeking EQIP funding from NRCS.

CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM AMENDMENT

2006/1 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD will seek legislative and administrative action to amend current federal regulations to directly address these pertinent critical issues: 1) Modify FSA lease payment limitation imposed by arbitrary 180 ft. width limits for Zones 1, 2 & 3. 2) Increase allowable vegetative buffer width (Zone 3) from current 20 ft. limitation to area sufficient to meet demands of the site. 3) That decision must be solely determined by the professional judgment of the technical agency overseeing the project area.

CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)

2006/5 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD supports the addition of CREP as a voluntary program available to producers in New Mexico and will work with New Mexico state agencies to coordinate CREP projects with existing Riparian Restoration projects.

FSA MODIFY LIP PROGRAM ALLOW SELF CERTIFICATION OF MEXICAN WOLF LIVESTOCK LOSSES

2014-5 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD still stands in opposition to the Mexican Wolf Program. NMACD shall request that the adjusted FSA LIP wolf-caused livestock loss compensation program confirmation criteria be based on annual livestock mortality records similar to other LIP reimbursements for Adverse Weather Condition losses allowing for livestock losses reports to be self-certified by producers without confirmation by a certified biologist. NMACD shall request NM State FSA Committee petition USDA FSA remedy the problems of inadequate compensation for livestock losses due to Mexican Gray wolves; and seek advice from NMDA and NMACD for improving this important component of the FSA LIP compensation program. NMACD shall request FSA consult with and involve NMDA, affected SW SWCDs and affected livestock producers in improving the LIP wolf-related compensation program.

FOREST AND WATERSHED

RESTORATION OF NM FORESTS

96/3 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD supports education about forest densities to all NM citizens. We support reducing tree densities and fuel loads, especially in areas immediately surrounding Wildland/urban interface zones. We support salvage timber sales and thinning to maintain a healthy viable forest & reduce amount of dead wood accumulation within National Forests in NM.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

93/2 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports the use of prescribed fire as an integral part of agricultural land improvement.

WETLANDS

92/2 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports the protection of adequate acreage of wetlands needed for waterfowl and other wildlife dependent on wetlands. The definition of wetlands should include only the lands that have both hydrophytic vegetation and hydric soils. NMACD supports compensation to landowners that are restricted by federal regulations from making economic use of wetlands.

RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT

92/8 Reaffirmed 2023

New Mexico has many riparian areas that need special study and management. The NMACD is concerned that planting of Phreatophyte vegetation with high water requirements will in fact appropriate water without a water right.

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WATERSHED FUNDING

2000/1 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD encourages Congress & federal agencies to recognize that SWCDs are local delivery systems to receive and manage project funds for fire prevention and watershed enhancement programs. NMACD encourages Congress and federal agencies to direct resources to Soil and Water Conservation Districts within New Mexico to enable better watershed management and restoration programs and enable districts to take the lead in working with rural communities affected by declining watershed conditions.

FOREST HEALTH AND RESTORATION

2000/5 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD encourages Congress to pass legislation that commands the federal agencies to take aggressive action to restore the western forests without size restrictions on cut trees and promotes a policy of private enterprise.

WATERSHED RESTORATION FUNDING

2001/1 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD seeks multi-year funding for watershed and riparian restoration projects.

PL-566 PROGRAMS

94/1 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD will work at the National level for continued funding for the PL-566 program and watershed improvement.

FUNDING

GRANTS FOR CONSERVATION

93/1 Revised 2023

NMACD requests each SWCD to aggressively seek grants from private and public sources to accomplish items in the District plan.

FUNDING FOR SWCDs

97/2 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD supports that state funding be based on the need of each Conservation District.

STATE FUNDING EQUALITY RECOMMENDATION FOR SWCDs

99/4 Reaffirmed 2024

State appropriations are the primary source of operating funds for many NM Soil and Water Districts. NMACD believes that no SWCD following all rules and guidelines set forth by the NM Soil & Water Conservation Commission and the Department of Ag should be excluded from state funding by the New Mexico Legislature, without just cause and due process.

FUNDING FOR EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROGRAM

98/4 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD supports funding for the Emergency Watershed Program.

BOR WATER CONSERVATION FIELD SERVICES PROGRAM

2000/3 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD encourages Congress to continue support funding for BOR Water Conservation Field Services Program as an incentive-based program of technical and financial assistance for voluntary federal-state-local partnerships to encourage water conservation.

DISTRICT PERMANENT MIL LEVY AUTHORITY

2005/3 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD will seek legislation authorizing Districts, by resolution of the Board of Directors, to allow Districts authority of permanent mil levy with sunset or indebtedness and that funds generated within the District be used to carry out conservation activities.

NMACD SUPPORTS THE NM SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2007/1 Revised 2023

NMACD supports the NM SWCC original intent to address the annual appropriation of funding to districts in promulgating rules to carry out the provisions of the SWCD Act, including management and distribution of any funding provided by the state legislature for soil and water conservation districts projects and operations.

PERMANENT FUNDING MIL LEVY AUTHORITY

2007/2 Revised 2023

The NMACD will work with the New Mexico State Legislature to create permanent authority for a mil district tax for all SWCDs.

GRANTS AND FUNDING

2009/2 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD adopted the following policies: 1) NMACD will notify SWCDs of any grants or funding opportunities in a timely manner. 2) NMACD will administer funding targeted for distribution to all SWCDs that cannot be efficiently allocated to individual SWCDs. 3) NMACD will encourage and support all individual SWCDs who are able to seek and administer funding. 4) NMACD will support direct funding between the SWCDs and the granting agency/agencies. 5) NMACD will, when necessary, act as a pass through for funds between granting agency/agencies and the SWCDs. NMACD and the SWCDs hosting the project will enter into an agreement to equitably share the administration fees.

WATERSHED FUNDING FOR WATERSHED HEALTH

2014-4 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD advocates for local SWCDs to be included as full partners in efforts to complete forest thinning projects on lands in their boundaries and shall encourage the NM Legislature and federal, state and local government agencies to support this endeavor.

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DISTRICT FINANCIAL REPORTING

2010/3 Revised 2023

NM Soil & Water Conservation Districts are required by the State of New Mexico to track their finances according to their budgets and report this information to the Department of Finance and Administration. NMACD supports the establishment of a uniform year-end financial statement format that would distinguish between administrative costs versus real “on the ground” project costs and be incorporated in each District end of year report.

NMACD NACD DUES

2010/4 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD works on behalf of the Districts statewide, the advocacy association which works on behalf of Districts nationwide is the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). Each association has different dues structures and membership criteria; and each District within New Mexico is a separate client of these respective advocacy associations. Each District may determine the extent of support for each respective advocacy association according to established dues structures and their financial means and such financial support should fall between a range containing a minimum as well as a maximum. Each individual District will be responsible for paying their respective national dues at an amount that they shall determine, and NACD dues will go directly to NACD.

ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY in the EXPENDITURE of PUBLIC FUNDS

2019-2/ Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports appropriations of New Mexico State funds that enhance the conservation and development of our natural resources and agricultural production in New Mexico and opposes by-passing local government in favor of direct funding to non-Governmental organizations and entities. NMACD encourages SWCDs to work with non-government organizations and entities.

SUPPORT FOR THE RESTORE NEW MEXICO PROGRAM

2017-3/ Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD will work with BLM NM to provide SWCDs on-going reports in implementing the Restore New Mexico Program.

LAND MANAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP

INTERMINGLED OWNERSHIP

92/2 Revised 2023

NMACD encourages public land management agencies, USFS, BLM, NM SLO, to work toward better coordination which allow lessees, permittees to implement conservation management systems with minimum bureaucracy and support multiple uses of public lands.

GRAZING ON PUBLIC LANDS

93/1 Revised 2023

NMACD supports grazing of domestic livestock on public lands by livestock producers. Grazing fees should be adjusted according to the PRIA formula that considers current economic conditions.

OWNERSHIP OF WATER RIGHTS & IMPROVEMENTS ON PUBLIC LAND

93/2 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD opposes the federal government’s proposed taking of water rights and improvements on public lands that are now owned by the grazing permittees. We support the ownership of all improvements by the permittees in order to encourage conservation practices.

COMPETING BIDS ON STATE LAND

95/2 Revised 2023

NMACD requests the State Land Commissioner (SLC) to consider all factors when evaluating bids for state land leases. The SLC should verify the validity of competing bid before the current leaseholder is required to match the competing bid.

LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND

94/5 Revised 2023

NMACD supports management of public land within the state of New Mexico by local governments.

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

95/1 Revised 2023

NMACD urges Congress in the re-authorization of environmental laws to guarantee the rights of private property.

STATE PURCHASE OF LAND AND WATER RIGHTS

2004/3 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports protection of the prior appropriation doctrine and retention of land and water rights in individual ownership.

CREATION OF STATE, LOCAL GOV. REVERSAL US SUPREME COURT DECISION *KELO V. CITY OF NEW LONDON* (Taking of Private Property)

2005/4 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD supports Fed., State legislation, city & county ordinances prohibiting taking personal property for private interest benefit.

RELEASE OF WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS (WSAs) IN NEW MEXICO POLICY STATEMENT 2014-1 Reaffirmed 2024

Many WSAs in NM did not fit the wilderness definition nor contain wilderness characteristics according to wilderness criteria as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964. These areas were not recommended to US Congress as suitable for Wilderness Areas (WSAs). NMACD shall petition their NM Delegation to act on this resolution by releasing areas that did not fit wilderness definition from their status as

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WSAs and be removed from National Preservation System and National Landscape Conservation System to benefit citizens of NM. NMACD shall have this Resolution transmitted to the Governor of NM and US Congressional Delegation.

OPPOSE DESIGNATING GILA AND SAN FRANCISCO RIVERS AS NATIONAL WILD & SCENIC RIVERS 2019-3/2023

NMACD opposes designation of the Gila & San Francisco rivers, or portions thereof, as wild or scenic rivers. NMACD will call upon its Congressional delegation to oppose any such designation and to work to find more effective and less restrictive means to protect our natural resources while also protecting rights of the people. NMACD opposes third special interest groups drafting legislation for presentation by or Congressional Delegation without input from the San Francisco SWCD or the public at large and calls upon the Delegation to provide the public with any such proposed legislation.

RESOLUTION OPPOSING DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL MONUMENTS AND WITHDRAWAL OF LANDS RESTRICTING PUBLIC ACCESS AND USE 2024

NMACD opposes the designation of lands, whether private lands or government lands, in New Mexico as national monuments, wilderness, wilderness study areas, wildlife preserves, open space, or other conservation land, thereby restricting public access to such lands and preventing the development and productive use of the resources on or within such lands. NMACD opposes any federal rulemaking, by the Bureau of Land Management, or any federal agency, which promotes any non-tangible status goals on public lands as a valid multiple use for those lands. NMACD supports the continued private ownership of land in New Mexico, recognizing the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, energy, timber, food, and fiber.

NOXIOUS WEEDS

MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY / Noxious Weeds

92/6 Revised 2023

NMACD supports NMDA, NM Highway Department and other agencies protecting public rights-of-way to be maintained free of invasive vegetation that is considered noxious to the local area. Local SWCDs should work with agencies responsible for maintenance of public rights-of-way and request control of invasive vegetation that is being controlled on adjacent land. Mulch and seed used by public agencies should be certified weed free.

RANGELAND (privately owned)

92/1 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports and encourages the management of rangeland ecosystems for maintenance and improvement of vegetation, which is valuable to wildlife and domestic livestock. We support the control of aggressive plant species, which are of less economic value, through grazing management, chemical control, and mechanical methods or prescribed fire.

USE OF PESTICIDES

92/3 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports continued use of pesticides according to registered labeling for environmentally safe agricultural production.

CONTROL OF NOXIOUS WEEDS ON STATE LAND

99/1 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD requests that State Land Commissioner (SLO) establish a permitting process for noxious weed control that will meet the control methods and timing of application and urge SLO to encourage lessees and permittees to control noxious weeds on leases or permits on a voluntary basis, using financial and technical assistance available, including that through the State Land Office. NMACD shall pursue funding from the state and encourage the control of noxious weeds.

PLANS, PERMITS & MORE

CONTROL OF NOXIOUS WEEDS

97/9 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD shall pursue funding from the state and encourage the control of noxious weeds.

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL OPPONENTS MUST PROVIDE SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE

99/6 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD strongly supports noxious weed control and believes groups or individuals, state or federal agencies, opposing integrated noxious weed management programs, should be required to provide practical, economically feasible, effective alternatives.

INCENTIVES FOR LANDOWNERS REMOVAL OF SALT CEDAR ON PRIVATE LANDS

2001/4 Revised 2023

NMACD requests the State Engineer's Office, the Legislative and Executive branches of New Mexico State Government to enact legislation to create incentives or compensations for the removal of salt cedar.

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INCENTIVES FOR LANDOWNERS FOR REMOVAL OF SALT CEDAR ON PRIVATE LANDS 2003/2 Reaffirmed 2022
NMACD will strongly urge State Engineer's office and legislative & executive branches of NM State government to investigate possibility of enacting legislation to create incentives or compensations at a rate proportional and in direct correlation to amount of water expected to be recovered from removal of salt cedar from respective land to that land, and respective landowner be required to maintain the land in a state that is devoid of salt cedar or other noxious weeds to continue receiving the incentive or compensation.

OIL AND GAS

MANDATORY OIL AND GAS SITE RECLAMATION 2006/9 Reaffirmed 2022
NMACD will seek legislation instituting a policy of mandatory reclamation of pipelines, roads & abandoned oil & gas well pads and oil and gas companies set aside monies prior to exploration drilling for proper reclamation of pipeline, roads and abandoned oil and gas well pads or be fined for non-compliance.

MANDATORY CAPPING OF ABANDONED OIL AND GAS WELLS 2006/10 Reaffirmed 2022
NMACD will seek legislation instituting a policy of mandatory well-capping of abandoned oil and gas wells and that oil and gas companies set aside monies for proper capping and/or plugging fees.

OIL & GAS DEVELOPMENT & USE OF SITES LESS ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE 97/5 Reaffirmed 2022
NMACD requests that federal & state agencies & development companies utilize less productive and less sensitive sites where possible to decrease ecological and production losses.

LOCATING, CAPPING OR SEALING ABANDONED WELLS IN NEW MEXICO 99/3 Revised 2024
NMACD requests that the New Mexico State Engineer, in conjunction with NMACD, the New Mexico Environment Department, and the Energy Minerals Resources and Natural Resources Department develop a program to locate, cap and/or seal; as applicable, abandoned wells in New Mexico.

PERMITS AND CLEARANCES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CLEARANCES 96/1 Reaffirmed 2024
NMACD shall request the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies provide archaeological surveys when they require them or that they accept surveys provided by other agencies such as NRCS.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS REQUIRING 404 PERMITS 97/4 Reaffirmed 2022
NMACD will urge federal & state agencies to work with Conservation Districts to expedite and minimize consultation requirements to facilitate timely implementation of conservation projects and to work with Conservation Districts to carry out these projects expeditiously and reduce invasion of noxious and other undesirable plant species on lands in watershed projects.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS 95/2 Revised 2023
NMACD requests issuance of 404 permits and other consultation requirements by federal and state agencies be timely secured.

EFFICIENCY IN CONSERVATION PRACTICE PERMITS 99/2 Reaffirmed 2024
NMACD requests that the State Land Commissioner establish procedure and policy for acceptance of environmental evaluations or clearance completed by other qualified personnel to enable the most efficient permitting process.

SUPPORT TRAINED NRCS PERSONNEL COMPLETE CULTURAL RESOURCES CLEARANCES ON STATE LAND 2001/2 Reaffirmed 2023
NMACD petitions Cultural Properties Review Committee to reconsider their decision stating NRCS trained personnel would no longer be authorized to complete cultural resource clearances on land of the State of New Mexico and that planned improvements to those State lands would have to be cleared by a private consultant /archaeologist firm.

OPPOSITION TO LEGISLATION REQUIRING PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL MINING 2001/3 Revised 2023
NMACD opposes legislation requiring permits for construction material mining.

RESOURCE PLANNING 98/1 Revised 2023
NMACD supports all entities involved with comprehensive planning of natural resources adhering to existing law and participating in the SWCDs from the plan's inception.

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CHIEF PROCUREMENT OFFICER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

2017-2/ Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD shall request that the NM Dept. of Finance Authority allow SWCDs with an operating budget less than \$20,000 be exempt from the New Mexico DFA Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) Certification requirement.

CONTRACTOR DEFINITION (60-13-3) FARM AND SWCD EXEMPTIONS

2019-1/ Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD requests that an exclusion be added to NMSA, to excuse custom farm leveling, concrete ditch lining, irrigation pipelines, livestock pipelines, livestock water storages, noxious tree removal, native plant restoration work, etc. and provide for an exclusion for SWCDs doing the above-mentioned work.

NMACD / NEPA

2012/3 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD shall encourage SWCDs to become cooperating agencies to initiate coordination efforts with appropriate federal agencies. NMACD shall assist SWCDs in preparing local land use plans to provide a basis to evaluate federal NEPA decisions. NMACD shall consider a process for “consistency review” to allow a response to federal NEPA based decisions.

REQUEST FOR COORDINATING STATUS

2011/3 Reaffirmed 2024

The NM SWCDs request the Secretary of Interior and BLM recognize and accept them as entities of local government duly elected by NM citizens with mandated responsibilities to its constituents; keep apprised of local needs, land use plans and invite NM SWCDs as Coordinating Agents in deliberating designation changes to all lands within the administrative boundaries of the district and that Congress act on the matter of executive authority in all actions pertaining to federal land designations and define and place limits on sweeping, administratively-driven actions that materially affect rural communities without adequate representation.

STATE LAND OFFICE

DROUGHT LIVESTOCK GRAZING PERMIT COST ADJUSTMENT STATE-OWNED LAND

2001/6 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD requests the NM State Land Office create consultation between lessees and the SLO when resource management must be adjusted due to drought conditions.

WEATHER INDUCED GRAZING ADJUSTMENTS ON STATE OWNED LANDS

2002/1 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD will request that the New Mexico State Land Office create a voluntary program that will reduce fees when lessees reduce grazing due to drought or compliance with federal requirements.

TAX ISSUES

GLOBAL TREATIES

96/3 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD opposes Congress considering any further treaties until Economic Analysis by County has determined the impacts of such treaties on the rights of the States and the People by County, State by State. If it is determined that the impacts are adverse, the treaty in question be dropped from consideration.

OPPOSE NEW SPECIAL METHOD OF NON-AG LAND VALUATION

2018-2 Reaffirmed 2022

Property tax based mil levy revenues are determined by land valuation, a reduction in valuation would decrease tax revenues received by entities including soil & water conservation districts and local school districts. New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts OPPOSE the creation of any additional state-wide special use land valuation, unless there is a maximum cap of no more than 160 acres and taxed at a value of no less than 40% of current and correct value.

TAX INCENTIVES FOR PRIVATE LANDOWNERS MANAGING NOXIOUS WEED INFESTATIONS

2003/6 Reaffirmed 2022

Noxious weed infestations increasingly invade public and private lands within NM and pose a real threat to economic and cultural fabric of local communities within NM. NMACD provides local SWCDs with a unified voice regarding natural resource issues. NMACD pursues legislation providing tax deductions for private landowners participating in noxious weed management programs on their property and those qualifying for tax deductions must participate in local SWCD noxious weed management program.

REVISION OF NM NRCS EQIP POLICY LAND ELIGIBILITY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

2003/7 Reaffirmed 2022

With the water adjudication process looming in the future and consideration for state and regional water planning and the Texas/New Mexico water compact issue, protection of water rights needs to be a top priority for SWCDs within their district and EQIP funding should be able to assist, the NMACD will seek and request a revision to the New Mexico NRCS EQIP policy in regards to surface

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water irrigation by removing restrictive and prohibitive language from the policy and aligning the New Mexico NRCS EQIP policy with national regulation for protecting natural resource concerns.

AGRICULTURE PROPERTY TAX DEFINITIONS

Reaffirmed 2022

Some NM counties have experienced Ag lands being removed from Ag classification due to lack of recent production, regulations require this type of review statewide. NM Right to Farm Act, Sections 47-9-1 through 47-9-4 (NMSA 1978), declares the purpose “to conserve, protect, encourage, develop and improve agricultural land...and reduce the loss to the state of its agricultural resources”. NM Property Tax Code, Section 7-36-20 (NMSA 1978), provides for tax relief for ag properties through a special method of valuation of land used primarily for ag purposes. NMACD shall work with NMDA, NM Tax and Revenue and NM Legislature to update and clarify the data and regulations for agricultural tax definitions.

DISABLED VETERANS EXEMPTION

2012/4 Reaffirmed 2022

The state legislature has enacted the *"disabled veteran exemption," as part of the Property Tax Code -NMSA 1978, 7-37-5.1 (2004)*. The exemption from property taxation for veterans with disabilities, like all constitutional limitations on and exemptions from taxation, applies only to "taxes" as that term is used in the constitution. NMACD shall strive to amend the Property Tax code to clarify confusion within NM asking for a waiver for 100% service-connected disability be granted re: SWCDs Mill Levy collected by County Assessors.

AGRICULTURE LANDS VALUATION

2014-3 Reaffirmed 2024

Agricultural land assessment is one of the single most important public policies in keeping agriculture, and all its positive environmental, economic and aesthetic attributes, alive and well in New Mexico. NMACD shall support accurate and fair appraisal of land for agricultural usage.

TRAINING

SUPERVISOR CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

2010/1 Revised 2023

NMACD supports supervisor training, certification in partnership with NMDA, in line with NACD NASCA collaborative program.

NMACD STRATEGIC PLANNING

2010/2 Revised 2023

The NMACD supports revision of the strategic planning process by involving the Soil and Water Conservation Districts at the beginning of the planning process by NMACD sending out a questionnaire to each NM Soil and Water Conservation District to assess their common needs; involving all agency partners and the NM Soil and Water Conservation Commission in the planning process. The “draft” strategic plan should be sent to the NM Soil and Water Conservation Districts for their review.

URBAN CONSERVATION

URBAN CONSERVATION

93/1 Revised 2023

NMACD supports programs promoting wise land use and conservation in non-agricultural areas, use of noninvasive native plants, xeriscaping, synthetic turf in landscaping, storm water management and erosion controls in developing areas.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

2003/4 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD, (in cooperation with & with the support of NM Soil & Water Conservation Commission & New Mexico Department of Agriculture), update & develop new policy and guidelines for Conservation Districts in carrying out their duties in conservation, development and management of soil & water resources, & work with the State Engineer to develop policies, statutes and regulation that will include Urban Development as to its impact on agriculture waters and their historical, cultural and beneficial use.

WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

WATER QUALITY

92/1 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports the protection and improvement of water quality. We encourage wise land use and management that will protect quality of the surface and ground waters. We strongly discourage practices that would risk pollution of ground or surface waters. We support voluntary incentive programs that will encourage farmers, ranchers and others to properly dispose of unused chemicals.

WATER CONSERVATION

92/2 Revised 2023

NMACD requests water conservation by agricultural and non-agricultural users recognize brush control as a water conservation practice.

NMACD 2024 POSITION STATEMENTS

REGIONAL WATER PLANNING

92/3 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports the present regional planning process and believes that water planning should be driven by equal consideration of local water interests and incorporated in the state water plan framework

REGIONAL WATER PLANNING FUNDING

96/4 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD will work with the NM Interstate Streams Commission to monitor methods for distribution of Region Water Planning funds.

NON-POINT POLLUTION CONTROL

94/2 Revised 2023

NMACD requests more funding for non-point pollution control under Clean Water Act under USDA-NRCS. NACD should work with local conservation districts to have them be the local lead for all non-point pollution control activities.

NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION

96/5 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD encourages the New Mexico Environment Department to work with local Conservation Districts as a co-operating agency for all non-point pollution control activities.

WATER QUALITY & QUANTITY IMPROVEMENT

97/1 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD encourages New Mexico NRCS to continue and expand efforts in improving the water quality & quantity improvement projects through continual emphasis of all applications of water conservation measures.

PROTEST TRANSFER OF WATER FROM AGRICULTURE TO INDUSTRY

97/2 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD supports all SWCDs that are or may resist water transfers that may not be in the public interest or the public welfare of the region. NMACD supports legislation to require the OSE & ISC to use regional and local plans to define the term public welfare in the transfer of water rights. NMACD support legislation enacting the statutory area of origin and limits the distance between point of origin and point of use to protect and/ or reduce the adverse effects of water transfers from rural areas.

ENSURE WATER RIGHT TRANSFERS ARE FILED AND LOGGED IN A TIMELY MANNER 2018-3 Reaffirmed 2022

In an effort to ensure more efficient management and greater understanding of current water resources in New Mexico, the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts shall work with the New Mexico Real Estate Association, New Mexico Acequia Association, and New Mexico Office of the State Engineer to ensure that water right transfers are filed and logged in a timely manner.

INCLUSION OF ACEQUIAS AS AN ADEQUATE WATER SUPPLY OR SOURCE FOR IRRIGATION 2018-1/2022

NMACD shall request inclusion of acequias as an adequate water supply or source for irrigation in the guidelines listed in FSA's Handbook and shall send a copy of this resolution to State FSA Officials, National FSA Officials and the NM Congressional Delegation

SUPPORT EFFORTS OF WATER RECLAMATION COMMITTEE

2003/1 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD supports Water Reclamation Committee and encourages its endeavor to find answers to multitude of questions that must be answered for proper implementation of countywide water conversion & implementation project to benefit agricultural industry in Lea County and beyond. NMACD appeals to the New Mexico State Legislature and /or the proper departments within State of New Mexico for direction and implementation of said directives, in the continuance of efforts to convert oil & gas produced water to usable water.

WATER WELL METER RESOLUTION

2011/4 Reaffirmed 2024

The Office of the State Engineer (OSE) developed Basin Guidelines for the Review of Water Rights Applications ("Guidelines") which are used in evaluating well applications affecting New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation Districts (NM SWCDs). The Guidelines state that "water supply wells permitted after the adoption of these guidelines shall be metered" and "all new permits issued for supplemental wells, or other points of diversion, shall be conditioned to require metering of each point of diversion (existing and new) covered under the permit.". This requirement is for the purpose of measuring actual water use. This requirement is overly burdensome on well-owners as many supplemental wells feed water to the same end point. Having a single meter at the end point of use or pivot will accomplish the same measurement of actual water pumped for a water right and should be allowed by the OSE.

TAKING BACK OF WATER RIGHTS

2011/5 Reaffirmed 2024

Domestic, agricultural and commercial development of land requires advanced planning and investment of time and finances. Development for personal, agricultural or commercial use is of great interest for the economies of the state of New Mexico and the USA. Agreements regarding allocation of surface water along said lands are imperative for economic development. NMACD supports the inviolability of all established water rights and will view any take back of water rights as hostile. We support existing settlements allocating surface water and are opposed to the hostile and/or litigious taking of water rights explicitly stated in existing settlements.

SUPPORT OF WEATHER MODIFICATION OF METHODS

97/8 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD supports efforts to educate the public about benefits of weather modification and efforts in seeking funding for expansion of weather modification as a means of developing an untapped, renewable source of water.

NMACD 2024 POSITION STATEMENTS

PROPOSED CHANGES TO NM WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

98/1 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD requests that the NM Water Quality Control Commission develop a different and more realistic set of standards for standing or impounded runoff water in stock ponds, playas, sediment ponds and other catchments.

SECTION 319, CLEAN WATER ACT FUNDING

98/3 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD supports funding for all non-point source control projects be administered through the local Soil & Water Conservation District, with allowance for a percentage of the grant to be used for administrative costs.

INCENTIVES FOR CONSERVATION OF WATER

2004/4 Revised 2023

NMACD requests the Office of the State Engineer, NM State Legislative and Executive branches to enact legislation creating incentives or compensation for conservation of use and source of waters that result in additional water being made available for other uses.

WATER RIGHTS RESOLUTION

2010/7 Revised 2023

NMACD opposes active water resource management policy and adjudication of all existing water rights.

FLOODWATER AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING

2011/1 Reaffirmed 2024

The SWCDs are dependent on the NRCS for most floodwater and watershed planning and management programs. The NMACD will request the NRCS prepare a request to the USDA for a new budget line item to be added within Title VI of the Farm Bill, "Rural Development; Infrastructure and Development" in support of New Mexico's state NRCS budget specifically for floodwater and watershed planning and management programs at district level.

SUPPORT FOR GROUNDWATER STUDIES AND ACTIONS

Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD and local SWCDs shall encourage funding for 1) Studies of groundwater resources including mapping, monitoring, recharge sources and to identify future development for Ag and Municipal uses and 2) Projects that reduce evapotranspiration and that increase recharge of groundwater including forest thinning, Acequia recharge, storm water runoff and infiltration galleries.

OPPOSITION TO RE-INJECTION OF GEOTHERMAL WATER INTO ANY SHALLOW AQUIFER

Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD is opposed to the re-injection of geothermal water into any shallow aquifer which could cause contamination to that shallow aquifer. NMACD requests the appropriate state agency become actively involved in physical monitoring and assurance that the shallow aquifer water level and quality be unaffected by re-injection of geothermal water into any shallow aquifer.

ARIZONA WATER SETTLEMENTS ACT (AWSA) SUPPORT

2013/4 Revised 2023

NMACD supports the revised application for the SW NM Regional Water Supply Project and intergovernmental cooperation in development and protection of water supply for benefit of the region. NMACD shall request that technical work provided by the Bureau of Reclamation be consistent with conceptual framework presented by applicants for funding under the AWSA and approved by ISC. NMACD opposes exportation or conveyance of AWSA water outside the 4-county region.

WATERSHED DISTRICTS

SMALL WATERSHED DISTRICTS AND THE NEW ELECTION LAW

2019-5/ Reaffirmed 2023

The elections of officers for a small watershed district shall be governed by the Watershed District Act which states "No person shall be eligible to be a director of a watershed district who is not a landowner in the district in which he seeks election". Any person owning property in the watershed district and living within the Conservation District is eligible to be a director and to vote.

PROTECT WATERSHED DISTRICTS FROM LOSS OF MONETARY & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

2012/2 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD will carry a bill in the next legislative session which will change the Small Watershed Act (73-20-1 through 73-20-24) in such a way that property cannot be deleted from a watershed district and a watershed district cannot be discontinued.

MISCELLANEOUS

APPOINTMENT TO NM SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2010/5 Reaffirmed 2023

NMACD and the NM SWCC have collaborated, established partnerships and working relationships to support all NM SWCDs. NMACD submitted names from all SWCDs for commission appointments 40 years fairly, honestly and successfully. Current statute designates the NMACD president submit 3 names from each region to newly-elected Governors; and current law process fairly allows all districts participation in nomination process. NMACD members support current language in statute relating to appointment of the NM SWCC.

NMACD 2024 POSITION STATEMENTS

NMACD LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2010/6 Revised 2023

The members of the New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts supports the NMACD Board of Directors and the Executive Director in working with the NM State Legislature to pass laws that will benefit the entire membership of NMACD.

NOTIFICATION REGARDING FEDERAL LAND LEASE

2012/5 Reaffirmed 2022

NMACD supports evaluation of allotments to be based on sound science and proven conservation practices, and acceptance of an agreement between lessee and lessor with regard to time frame for grazing reduction or fee increases. NMACD shall call upon the government to coordinate a workable time-frame in which lessee is required to reduce animal numbers or increase grazing fees. The NMACD endorses that the reduction in grazing numbers are mandated to occur in a time period of not less than twelve months.

STATE AUDITS

2013/1 Reaffirmed 2023

SWCDs are required to abide by the State of New Mexico Audit Rule. The tiered system reporting implemented by the Office of the State Auditor (OSA) still makes it necessary for many SWCDs to have annual, every other year or every two-year audit. Many rural districts have difficulty finding auditors to bid on the work required by the OSA and some audits cost almost 50% of SWCD's funding allotment from NMDA and a significant percentage of their total budget. NMACD will work with the OSA to improve the tiered system requirements for SWCDs. If changes are not a possibility, NMACD will work with the OSA to develop some potential cost-saving methods for SWCDs regarding the audit requirements. If the audit requirements and cost-saving methods do not improve to help the SWCDs, NMACD will pursue funding assistance or statute changes through the legislative process.

BORDER FENCE ISSUE

2016-1 Revised 2023

NMACD requests the US Dept. of Homeland Security immediately address the border fence issue by developing and implementing a plan to maintain existing fence, replace ineffective fences and fence the remaining miles of border between New Mexico and Mexico; and request these actions be made in order to protect the United States economy from foreign animal disease exposure.

OBJECT ESTABLISHMENT OF PESTICIDE FREE ZONES WITHOUT LOCAL INPUT

2016-2 Reaffirmed 2023

The disclosure that the Department of Interior (DOI) is contemplating a massive pesticide free zone for enhancing the Monarch Butterfly population has been announced. NMACD opposes these zones until further study, discussion, and review has been accomplished including input from local communities involved. NMACD shall cause a copy of the resolution to be transmitted to the Governor of NM, US Department of Interior, the NM Congressional Delegation, and New Mexico Department of Ag (NMDA).

SOIL HEALTH

2017-1 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD will join NACD in working with SWCDs to encourage and support a Champions for Soil Health Initiative to further advance soil health in New Mexico.

AMENDMENT TO NMACD BY-LAWS

2019-4/ Reaffirmed 2023

Amend NMACD BY-LAWS, SECTION 8, OFFICERS, Selection Procedures (second paragraph, P.4) change the word, biannually to biennially. Amend Section 10, MEETINGS. The annual conference of NMACD shall be held in a New Mexico central location following the statewide general elections of District Supervisors. Consideration shall be taken to avoid schedule conflicts with major partners & their annual conferences. Exact dates and venues will be organized through the state office with approval of the NMACD Board of Directors. In order to address local issues of concern and educational needs, the annual conference content planning shall be the responsibility of the regions. Regions will rotate this privilege on a numerical basis. After consultation with a region's districts, the regional chair may elect to pass on the privilege. The NMACD President with approval of the Board of Directors shall select a program chair for the annual conference.

DISTRICT LIABILITY

92/1 Reaffirmed 2023

The NMACD believes that the State of New Mexico should provide liability coverage for authorized activities of SWCDs. Also, the State of New Mexico should provide liability coverage for individual supervisors while performing official duties.

FEDERAL AGENCIES USE OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS - TECHNICAL DATA

2005/2 Reaffirmed 2024

NMACD requests federal land managing agencies use organizations with a neutral*(*unbiased) view of the program objective when out-sourcing data gathering & preparation of technical data, & all data be scientifically based with adequate supporting documentation.