



San Juan Soil & Water Conservation District

Annual Work Plan FY 2017-2018

The 3 part mission of San Juan SWCD:

To protect, restore, enhance, and promote the wise use of natural resources	To promote stewardship through education	To provide financial and administrative assistance to citizens and groups in the district.
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Organization: A governmental subdivision of the state of New Mexico organized under state law (Chapter 73, Article 20).

Function: To make available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user.

We Serve: The citizens of the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District.

Critical Natural Resource Issues:

1. Noxious/Invasive Weeds
2. Water Quality and Conservation
3. Rangeland Health

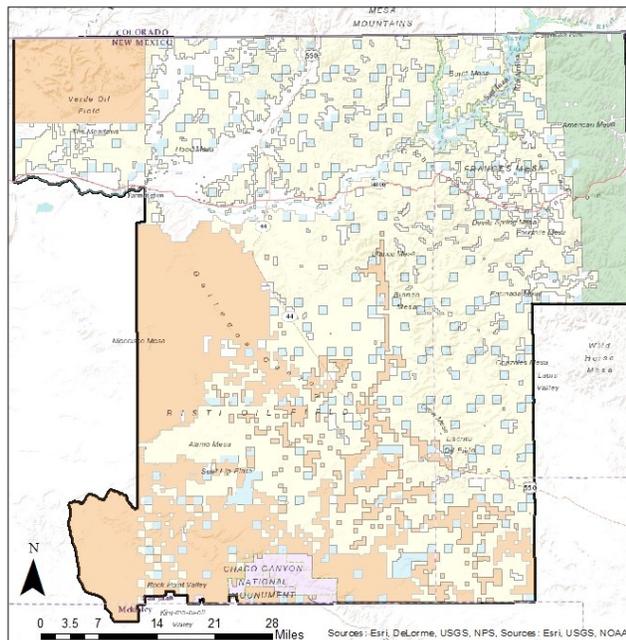
Outreach Focus Areas:

4. Community Agriculture
5. Stewardship Education

Goals guiding 2017-2018:

Deliver programs efficiently and with the maximum conservation impact.

- Strive for a higher level of coordination between District programs to meet multiple conservation goals, even when programs are targeted at a single natural resource issue (usually based on funding source).
- Incorporate soil health and erosion prevention into all District programs.
- Improve use of technology to: prioritize on-the-ground projects using the best available data; reach new audiences via outreach; streamline office operations.
- Use existing and new photography to do a better job “selling” conservation success stories.



Noxious/Invasive Weeds

Objective 1a: Continue to remove dense infestations of invasive non-native phreatophytes (Russian olive and salt cedar), treat re-sprouts and secondary weeds from past removal projects, and revegetate with native plants where possible. Sites will be prioritized based on: fire risk as identified in the San Juan County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, potential for improved access and wildlife habitat on public lands, and adjacency to other restoration projects.

- Begin work on new grants. The District has applied for three grants with unknown results at this time: 2016 WUI, state severance tax grant, and state wildfire protection program.
- Complete final phases of San Juan River Stewardship grant - planting and monitoring of native grasses along the San Juan Quality Waters.
- Use San Juan County Non-Native Phreatophyte funds to treat resprouts from previous removal projects, and target site specific needs not funded by other sources.
- Seek additional funds through Water Trust Board, NM Game and Fish, etc.

Objective 1b: Reduce existing infestations of invasive weeds in the San Juan Basin oil and gas patch, slow their spread to new areas, and eradicate newly invading species via EDRR (early detection, rapid response).

- Work to expand the CWMA Invasive Weed Project to include non- participating oil and gas producers and pipeline companies.
- Release a new RFP or ITB to build the contractors list to include local companies that would like to participate in the project. SWCD field crew continues to monitor for quality control.
- Continue working with BLM to stop the infestations of invasive weeds on BLM land by supplying personnel and equipment for inventory and treatment of noxious weeds on road right-of-ways, well pads, pipelines, and gravel pits. District employees will continue to assist other agencies to complete conservation practices and programs.
- Monitor weed infestations on gravel pits, specifically halogeton. Work towards a weed free gravel program to help stop the spread of weeds to areas with new road base.
- Improve mapping; make inventory maps available to the public and other land managers.

Objective 1c: Slow the spread of noxious weed seed sources from private land and irrigation ditches.

- Promote the San Juan County Extension noxious weed cost share for private land and irrigation ditches.
- Use remaining funds from CWMA (River of Lost Souls) cost share to develop a cost-share for native grass or cover crop seed, and/or target funds at specific heavily infested private properties.
- Partner with County Extension and others on noxious weed education events.

Water Quality and Conservation

Objective 2a: Assist local irrigation ditch associations and acequias in building capacity for irrigation infrastructure improvements (as outlined in the VISTA Volunteer Assignment Description) that will increase water delivery efficiency.

- Follow up on the planned report release from Bureau of Reclamation and the Interstate Stream Commission, prioritizing infrastructure project needs and providing cost estimates. Re-apply for Water Trust Board grant for engineering funds.
- Continue assisting NRCS staff with updating maps of the District acequias and ditches.
- Research additional funding opportunities for water users to get paid for water conservation.

Objective 2b: Improve water quality on the Animas River in NM by implementing projects identified in the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan (see plan for additional actions).

- Work with San Juan Watershed Group to implement projects in 319 grant application.
- Work with Animas Watershed Partnership to implement a BOR WaterSmart Cooperative Watershed Management Project; specifically Flora Vista river & riparian restoration.
- Use remaining funds from 2012 BHP grant to match and extend the scope of work that can be done to reduce bacteria pollution in the rivers, with a priority on human bacteria and riparian pasture sources.
- Follow up with NRCS Animas Watershed Initiative applicants for additional BMP implementation.

Objective 2c: Increase public interest in water quality issues by expanding the scope of the San Juan Watershed Group and improving group organization.

- Convene the steering committee to draft new mission statement, vision statement, bylaws
- Work with city, county, and local leaders to address ongoing water quality needs related to the Gold King Mine spill, MS4 permitting and monitoring, Source Water Protection Planning, and other efforts as they arise. Provide formal written comments as needed.
- Complete work on an interactive water quality database, displaying all water quality data collected by the San Juan Watershed Group in the Colorado Data Sharing Network and all associated reports on the District website.
- Publish a final report on the Microbial Source Tracking study.

Rangeland Health

Objective 3a: Improve maintenance of dirt roads in the oil field such that travel is more efficient, erosion is reduced, drainage is improved, and range hydrology is not impacted.

- Continue managing the San Juan Basin Public Roads Committee Coordinator position; seek funding for future years of position.
- Continue to act as the fiscal agent for the BLM portion of the San Juan Basin Public Roads Committee funds.
- Remain an active member of the Roads Committee; look for opportunities to improve committee efficiency, save money, incorporate weed control, meet rancher needs, and identify opportunities for targeted erosion control projects.
- Review documents from road committee erosion control workshop held in 2008 and look into hosting another.

Objective 3b: Restore grasslands and water storage in areas where brush encroachment is negatively impacting water infiltration and forage availability for livestock and wildlife.

- Continue working with US Forest Service to hire contractors for archaeological clearances and dirt pond installation on the Carson National Forest Jicarilla Ranger District. Work with NMACD-USFS agreement funds to complete sagebrush mowing on arch-cleared areas.
- Complete a pinyon-juniper thinning project and reseeding project in coordination with BLM, NMACD Restore NM program, and NM State Land Office
- Implement an aerial spraying treatment of sage brush and cheat grass in cooperation with BLM and NMACD. The contractor list for that project and the accompanying RFP were completed May of 2016, and specific work orders will be developed to get best and final offers from the contractors.
- Hire and manage two seasonal interns to assist BLM with rangeland monitoring.

Community Agriculture

Objective 4a: Improve communications between agricultural organizations in the District, to support each other's missions and get the most out of limited resources.

- Start a joint newsletter with NMSU Ag Extension, Ag Science Center, and other partners
- Reach out to past SWCD cost-share participants, WUI recipients, workshop attendees, NRCS clients, and BLM range permittees for future projects; improve communication with NRCS and BLM range staff, especially re: producer visits.
- Collaborate with other organizations to co-host and promote workshops on soil, weeds
- Research joint funding opportunities including Western SARE, etc.

Objective 4b: Support urban agriculture through education, technical assistance, and capacity building.

- Implement NACD grant to support community gardens and urban agriculture (if funded; if not funded, seek additional funding sources)
- Connect producers with NRCS, focusing on new or low-income producers, and those identified in the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan.

Stewardship Education

Objective 5a: Educate young people of the District on conservation topics, to promote stewardship of natural resources.

- Continue to maintain website at www.sanjuanswcd.com as a community resource for conservation programs and information. Expand use of other media including Facebook, Talon articles, press releases. Improve use of photography and before/after photos.
- Set up a booth at San Juan County Fair to teach lessons on soil health (Soil Your Undies, Healthy Soil is Full of Life posters)
- Continue providing Rolling Rivers Trailer presentations as an educational tool for local schools and events. Develop curriculum for teachers to use before and after to integrate lessons with their educational standards.
- Continue to support the Navajo Prep Envirothon team, including curriculum development, recruitment of speakers, and providing financial sponsorship for travel.
- Hold annual Poster Contest in partnership with Master Seed 4th grade classroom visits for Soil Stewardship week.
- Sponsor scholarship for high school seniors majoring in agriculture.

Objective 5b: Educate the general public, community groups, and elected officials about conservation issues, and District programs/accomplishments.

- Produce a professional grade CD/Power Point to use for presentations to multiple civic groups that will increase awareness of the goals of the District.
- Continue outreach about the services we provide to the citizens of the District, with the goal to eventually pursue a mill levy to cover basic operations.
- Host the District annual meeting in December, highlighting successes of the year, a focal conservation issue, and annual District awards program honorees.
- Set up booth at annual legislative days in Santa Fe.

District Operations

Objective 6a: Staff and board members attend annual trainings and regional meetings/conferences to stay current on conservation issues and government operations.

- At least one board member and one staff member attend regional, state, or national meeting of Conservation Districts
- Staff members attend training related to District operations
- All new board members certified via the NMACD/NMDA training program

Objective 6b: Meet all state and federal requirements for SWCDs, including financial reporting, audit, open meetings act, elections, etc.

- Publish annual Open Meetings Act notice and comply with state advertising requirements
- Complete full federal audit, assuming receiving/spending over \$750,000 in federal funds
- Submit annual budget documents and quarterly reports to DFA
- Submit point system document to NMDA

Objective 6c: Build a new office building & shop with fenced yard.

- Continue to pursue funding sources for building, including ICIP, capital outlay
- Follow up on USDA agency lease bid process
- Building committee researches new/ creative funding solutions, including feasibility of seeking a mill levy

Objective 6d: Improve office organization for long-term sustainability

- Update/write a District Operations Manual
- Create a comprehensive electronic database of District contacts
- Research and pursue new funding avenues to sustain District operations

Staffing needs:

1 Full Time District Coordinator
 1 Full Time Business Manager
 3-4 Part time Invasive Weed Technicians
 2 Summer Range Management Interns
 1 VISTA Volunteer
 Contractors –
 1 Invasive Weed Coordinator
 1 Roads Coordinator
 1 Watershed Coordinator

Annual Budget Needs:

Administrative Payroll & Payroll Expenses:	\$111,137
Administrative Costs:	\$62,000
Grant Payroll/Expenses:	\$109,720
Grant Programs & Cost Share:	\$1,317,230
Rental Equipment/ Other Costs:	\$25,000
Total FY17-18 Budgeted Expenses:	\$1,625,087*

*budget does not include grants which have been applied for and not yet received