



San Juan Soil & Water Conservation District

Annual Work Plan FY 2020-2021

The 3 part mission of San Juan SWCD:

Protect, restore, enhance, and promote the wise use of natural resources	Promote stewardship through education	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.

Goals guiding 2020-2021:

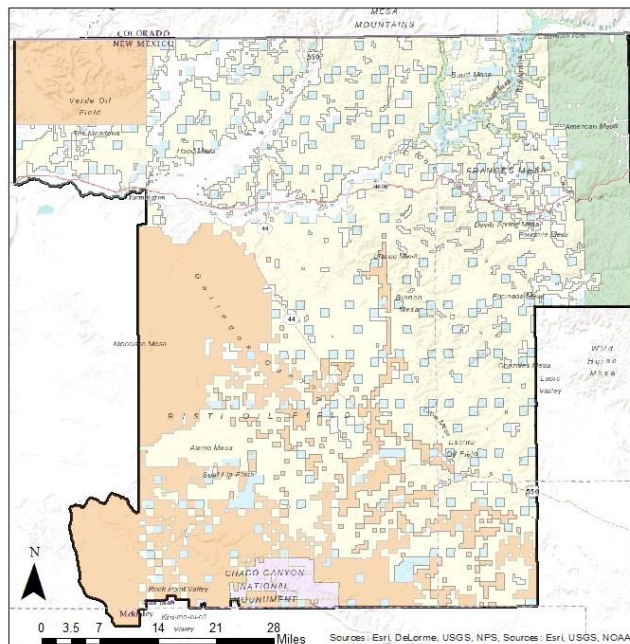
- Prepare for a potentially extended period working remotely due to COVID-19, along with two office moves (USDA office relocation and new SWCD building). Continue using technology to improve team operations, so that we can continue to fulfill our mission and serve our constituents during this transition period and into the future.
- Invest in the future of the District by building the best office building we can, while keeping all 14 of our other grant projects on schedule.

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



Staffing needs:

Full Time: District Manager, Assistant District Manager, Watershed Coordinator
Part time: 3-4 Invasive Weed Technicians, 3-4 Seasonal Range Management Technicians
Contractors: Noxious Weeds Coordinator, Road Coordinator
VISTA Volunteer: Funded in grants, but wait to move offices before hiring

District Operations

- Communication – conduct weekly or bi-weekly team meetings for staff, monthly board meetings, and additional subcommittee meetings as needed. Use combinations of technology to ensure all members of our team are included.
- Update office procedure/planning documents as needed – document management policy, accounting procedures, long range plan, digitize historic documents, administration procedures guide
- Reporting – Streamline monthly reporting so that grant and annual reports and point system write themselves
- Research long-term funding solutions, including grants/donations for activities that are currently unfunded, recruiting renters for office space, and investigating feasibility of seeking a mill levy (next opportunity is November 2021)
- **Break ground on SWCD office building:** Complete an RFP for construction of the building, with the goal of breaking ground by November 1, 2020 and completing construction as quickly and cost-effectively as possible. Continue to pursue additional funding sources for building if needed.

Code	Grant Title	Start	End	Summary
411	Capital Outlay - San Juan SWCD Office Building	Apr 2019	Jun 2023	Funding to plan, design, construct, furnish, and equip an office and warehouse facility as the new home of San Juan SWCD. New capital outlay request pending final bond sale.

State Requirements for SWCDs

Objective: 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: 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

Critical Natural Resource Issues:

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, adjacency to other restoration projects, and potential for improved access and wildlife habitat on public lands.

- Complete deliverables for the following funded grant projects:

119	LSR Restoring the Navajo Nation's San Juan River	Oct 2019	Dec 2022	Russian olive removal and restoration along San Juan River. 20 acres mechanical removal, 60 acres resprouts, 1150 cottonwood and 4120 willow plantings, 423 acres seeding.
213	Severance Tax San Juan River Restoration	May2020	Dec 2023	Russian olive removal and restoration on public lands. 337 acres mechanical removal, 500 acres resprouts, 470 cottonwood and 5782 willow plantings, 500 acres seeding.
299	Water Trust Board	Oct 2019	Sep 2021	Russian olive removal and restoration on private lands. 150 acres mechanical removal, 200 acres resprouts, 1250 cottonwood and 2000 willow plantings, 318.75 acres seeding. Application for Fall 2020 funding approved but on hold due to state budget.
	RCPP	Jul 2020	?	Final details pending negotiation. Funding via NRCS for non-native phreatophyte removal and revegetation, with technical assistance from District and NRCS
	2020 Wildland Urban Interface WUI	Sep 2020	?	Contract pending final approval. Russian olive removal and restoration on private lands.

- Use San Juan County Non-Native Phreatophyte funds to target site specific project needs (resprouts, removal, planting) and provide match to federal grants.
- Seek additional funds as opportunities arise and implement if funded.

Objective 1b: Reduce existing infestations of invasive weeds on BLM lands 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). Slow the spread of noxious weed seed sources from private land and irrigation ditches.

- Begin a new cooperative agreement with BLM, if funded:

	BLM Invasive Weeds Management	Sep 2020	Oct 2023	Contract pending final approval. Invasive weed inventory and treatment for BLM Farmington Field Office, including hiring of 3-4 invasive weed technicians
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- Reconvene CWMA to get other programs back on track – EDRR, cooperative treatment plans with county, private land cost share, oil and gas producers and pipeline companies. Use creative strategies (ie: providing inventory maps, collaborate with road committee) to incentivize participation.
- Use remaining funds from CWMA/River of Lost Souls) to target EDRR species like leafy spurge.
- Promote the San Juan County Extension noxious weed cost share for private land and irrigation ditches. Partner with County Extension and others on noxious weed education events, and cross promote with Backyard Conservation workshops.

Water Quality and Conservation

Objective 2a: Improve water quality on the Animas River in NM by implementing projects identified in the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan.

- Complete funded grant projects:

113	LAWBP Implementation Phase I	Aug 2017	Dec 2020	Implement projects outlined in the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan, including hiring a San Juan Watershed Group Coordinator to direct outreach activities
116	LAWBP Implementation Phase II	Nov 2018	Dec 2021	Implement projects outlined in the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan, including riparian assessments, installation of ag BMPs, and septic/RV waste outreach.

- Use riparian health assessments and septic outreach to plan projects with Animas landowners and obligate remainder of BHP Billiton funds, with a priority on human bacteria and riparian pasture sources.
- Assist City of Aztec with implementing River Stewardship grant.
- Work with Animas Watershed Partnership to complete the Ranchmans-Terrell diversion project and Flora Vista river & riparian restoration.
- Follow up with NRCS Animas Watershed Initiative applicants for additional BMP implementation.

Objective 2c: Increase public interest in water quality issues by partnering with the San Juan Watershed Group and Animas Watershed Partnership on outreach activities.

- Complete funded grant projects:

115	San Juan Watershed Group Outreach Expansion Project	Jun 2019	Jun2021	Expand SJWG activities to include groups and stakeholders along the San Juan River, and develop a restoration project opportunity assessment.
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- Work with city, county, and local leaders to address ongoing water quality needs related to the Gold King Mine spill, Bonita Peak Superfund Citizens Advisory Group, 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.
- Cooperate on additional funding requests for above activities.

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.

- Complete current funded project, and continue if refunded:

103	BLM Roads Project	Oct 2015	Sept 2020	Manage BLM's cost share to the San Juan Basin Public Roads Committee, and employ Roads Coordinator to assist with Committee operations. New funding application submitted to continue Oct 2020 - Sept 2023
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- 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.
- Maintain committee documents in online dropbox, including organizational records, meeting minutes, and past workshop presentations.

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

- Partner with BLM/NMACD Restore NM program to complete current projects:

110	BLM NMACD Restore NM	Oct 2015	Sept 2020	Various work orders to complete rangeland management tasks in cooperation with Farmington BLM office and NMACD. Seven active work orders include range management technicians, Glade restoration, Carracus pinon juniper thinning, cheatgrass herbicide treatment, and rangeland pasture fencing and pond improvement. New funding application submitted at state level.
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- Reissue aerial treatment RFP if funding is renewed.

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.

- Use funds from WIIN Act ag marketing campaign to promote local agriculture, participate in Local Foods Task Force/Buy Fresh Buy Local.

118	WIIN Act Ag Marketing	Aug 2019	July 2020	Plan and implement a marketing campaign to improve public perception of local food and agriculture in NW NM. New funding application to extend through 2022 would expand program to include VISTA volunteer and Farmers Market Coordinator
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- Continue joint newsletter with NMSU Ag Extension, Ag Science Center, and other partners; strive to increase distribution and newsletter frequency.
- 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, drought, and other topics as requested.
- Research new funding opportunities including Western SARE, private foundations, etc.

Stewardship Education

Objective 5a: Educate youth, the general public, community groups, and elected officials within the District on conservation topics and District programs/accomplishments, to promote stewardship of natural resources.

- Plan and implement Year 2 curriculum for Backyard Conservation Workshops:

117	NRCS Backyard Conservation Workshops	Sep 2019	Jun 2022	Host educational Backyard Conservation Workshops (6 per semester) via San Juan College's adult learning Continuing Education Program (in-person or virtually as needed)
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- Continue to maintain website at www.sanjuanswcd.com as a community resource for conservation programs and information.
- Continue providing Rolling Rivers Trailer presentations as an educational tool for local schools and events. Distribute 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 for Soil Stewardship week. Partner with other organizations as appropriate by topic (ie: Watershed group, Master Seed 4th grade classroom visits, etc).
- Sponsor scholarship for high school seniors majoring in agriculture.
- 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, 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, and other related events.

San Juan SWCD Annual Plan of Work Calendar - FY20-21

July

Local Food Summit
SJWG Animas River Riparian assessments
RCPP contract negotiations
Approve construction documents for building
Halogeton inventory and treatment
Backyard Conservation Workshop - Invasive Weeds & Cover Crop
Range Technicians sagebrush inventory
BLM range improvements - pasture fencing & ponds
Write RFP/ITB for Ranchmans diversion project
Russian olive/salt cedar resprout treatments & grass seeding
Quarterly reporting for all grants
End of Fiscal Year reporting, close books
Close out Ag Marketing Grant by 7/31

August

RFP/ITB for Ranchmans diversion project
RFP for building construction contractor
Approve ICIP for building
Resume Russian olive removal contracts (end of bird nesting)
SJWG continue riparian assessments and restoration planning
BLM roads targeted maintenance and special projects
BLM Restore NM - plan to expend remaining funds on range projects
Plan for renewed BLM cooperative agreements - weeds, range, roads
Backyard Conservation Workshop - Seed Saving
Prep for audit
Aerial herbicide RFP???
Move to new USDA Service Center???

September

Close out BLM grants by 9/30 - Roads, 7 Restore NM work orders
SJWG Septic Smart & RV signage outreach
Continue Russian olive removal contracts
RCPP recruiting and signup via NRCS
Prep for R-T diversion construction
Backyard Conservation Workshop - Soil Health
Review building construction proposals

October

Construction of Ranchmans diversion project
Selection of Building Contractor & Notice to Proceed
Backyard Conservation Workshop - Water smart landscaping
Continue all Russian olive removal contracts
Begin new BLM agreements, if approved
Backyard Conservation Workshop - Tree planting and care
Quarterly reporting for all grants
Quarterly financial reporting for DFA

November

Building construction (groundbreaking late Oct or early Nov)
Complete audit (target exit interview by 1st week in Nov)
Present at National Non-Point Source Conference
Backyard Conservation Workshop - Organic Gardening & Permaculture
Continue all Russian olive removal contracts
Final construction inspections on R-T ditch project
Plan annual meeting??

December

Close out SJWG Phase I LAWBP grant & AWP 112 by 12/31
Annual meeting??
Continue building construction
Continue all Russian olive removal contracts

January - June

Update once more detailed schedules are known
Continue building construction
SJWG outreach, project planning, restoration projects
Continue Russian olive removal & revegetation projects
Spring Backyard Conservation Workshops
Invasive weed inventory and treatment (if funded)
Road committee coordination (if funded)
Rangeland improvements (if funded)
Quarterly reporting deadlines - January 31, April 30
Annual Poster Contest
Carl Chamblee Scholarship