

State water restoration projects approved

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Watersheds around New Mexico will benefit from five new projects approved for funding through the New Mexico Environment Department's 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 at env.nm.gov.

These projects are federally funded through the Clean Water Act and require at least a 40 percent 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 in federal dollars and \$412,018 in local matching funds.

During a public hearing on Oct. 15, NMED presented 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 Oct. 15 is available at nmdfa.state.nm.us.

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

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“For 32 years, Amigos Bravos’ mission has been to protect and restore the waters of New Mexico,” Joseph Zupan, executive director of funding recipient Amigos Bravos, said. “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.”