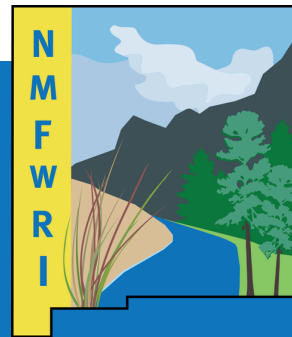


New Mexico
Forest & Watershed
Restoration Institute



2025

Annual Impact Report



NMFWR Director: Dr. Alan Barton
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New Mexico
Forest and Watershed
Restoration Institute
New Mexico Highlands University

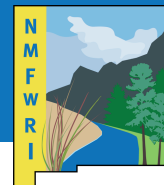
H NEW MEXICO
HIGHLANDS
UNIVERSITY
LAS VEGAS, NM

Cover Photo: Carmen Melendez, crew logistics manager for NMFWRI's ecological monitoring team, checks a plot in the Sangre de Cristo mountain range of Northern New Mexico. The monitoring program has data for thousands of plots across the state, some stretching back 15 years. Photo by Kathryn Mahan/NMFWRI

Annual report design by Dana Heusinkveld, Staci Matlock, Kathryn Mahan, Shantini Ramakrishnan, Michael Roberts, Crystal Medina, and Nathan Tomczyk.

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Introduction



The New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWR) is a federal-state partnership, with a skilled staff that supports technologies, research, and adaptive land management practices to restore healthy forests and reduce the risk of high-intensity, catastrophic wildfires in the Southwestern United States. NMFWR is based at Highlands University (HU) in Las Vegas, NM. NMFWR staff with expertise in geospatial information systems, ecological monitoring, workforce development, education, collaboration, and science communication work alongside partnering organizations and affected entities around New Mexico and the Southwest.



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Director's Note

By Dr. Alan Barton

Reflecting on 2025, it was an exceptionally dynamic year for the NMFWR. We celebrated our 20th Anniversary, and took time to mark this milestone with an event for the NMHU campus and Las Vegas community, and another event for staff and partners at which we shared stories about our accomplishments, activities, and foibles over the past two decades.

2025 also presented a number of challenges, which our staff responded to with grace, professionalism, and a dedication to our mission and values that carried us through much uncertainty and many changes. The difficulties made all that we accomplished this past year that much more satisfying. You can read about many of these accomplishments in this Annual Impact Report.

As practitioners of collaborative conservation, the staff at NMFWR share credit for all of our accomplishments with the talented people and superb organizations with which we have forged close working relationships over the years. Sadly, as we transition from 2025 into 2026, we are missing many of our partners who were saddled with staffing and budget cuts over the past year, the result of changing national priorities. It leaves a hole in our operations when we lose partners, especially under these circumstances; however, this underscores the need to increase our collaborative work so that together we can continue to reach our shared goals.

As we enter our 21st year, we have an enthusiastic, committed, and knowledgeable staff, who will continue to serve our partners, affected entities and the people of New Mexico with trainings and tools to restore the health and resilience of our beautiful forests and solid communities in the Land of Enchantment.



About Us

Wildfires in New Mexico and across the West have increased in size and severity, often followed by devastating post-fire flooding. In response, the **New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWR)** works with partners and landowners to monitor and restore forests and grasslands through adaptive management, integrate scientific and traditional knowledge, strengthen community collaboration and capacity to reduce wildfire risk, and mentor the next generation of natural resource leaders.

NMFWR is one of three **Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI)** authorized by Congress under the 2004 Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act. NMFWR is based at NM Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM.

The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI)



10

Original research projects currently underway by NMFWR staff covering wildfire, forests, and community impacts.

60+

NMFWR collaborates with more than 60 government, Tribal, business, nonprofit, education, and private land partners.

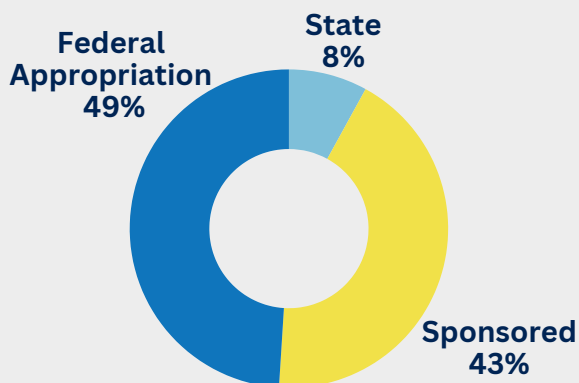
1,000+

NMFWR annually engages more than 1,000 students K-16 in STEM activities, field work, and career paths.

2,500

NMFWR has long-term, multi-year monitoring data on more than 2,500 plots around NM, providing reliable data for land-management decisions.

Return on Investment FY25



NMFWR's annual operating budget varies from \$2.5 to \$3.8 million annually, depending on individual projects and competitive grants. NMFWR delivers real results by doubling the impact of the federal appropriation through a 1:1 match from additional sources.

Our Approach

Regionally, NMFWR bridges research and decision-making to deliver practical, real world applications.

NMFWR engages **members of Congress**, federal agency leadership, and decision-makers at the highest national levels.

Statewide, NMFWR integrates field data collection, geospatial services, collaborative facilitation, and partnerships with decision-makers.



In New Mexico, NMFWR partners with agencies, Tribes, Pueblos, and communities to deliver locally relevant science that advances forest and watershed health.

Locally, NMFWR offers community post-fire restoration workshops, and K-16 natural resource education programs.

NMFWR collaborates **across the West** to reduce wildfire risk and turn restoration research into solutions.

Bridging Science, Traditional Knowledge, and Adaptive Management



Our work provides information that practitioners need to implement science-based solutions while respecting traditional land knowledge.

- Landscape monitoring and research
- Long-term ecological assessment
- Treatment and wildfire effects
- Geospatial data analysis



We help managers, policymakers, and communities with tools and collaborative capacity to address forest restoration and wildfire risk.

- Decision-support tools and analysis
- Public perceptions and collaboration
- Public GIS mapping applications and HUB sites
- Resource identification



We work with land managers, policymakers, and communities to put science into practice on the ground.

- Hands-on workshops, publications, and webinars
- Usable tools and guidance
- Stakeholder engagement and collaboration
- K-16 interactive science activities and field work

Photos: Top left, NMFWR I monitoring professional takes tree measurements on a plot; Center, a group gathers to discuss forest restoration; Right, students practice gathering aquatic specimens as part of a Conservation Science Center field class.



Making a Difference

“The work of NMFWR I and the other SWERIs is critical to the ongoing efforts to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires, restore healthy forests, and build resilient, fire-adapted communities.

— Alexander “Zander” Evans,
Executive Director,
Forest Stewards Guild



Black Lake Rx Burn. Photo by Kathryn Mahan

“NMFWR I is an essential partner to the New Mexico Forestry Division, providing comprehensive support for community-based initiatives ranging from pre-wildfire mitigation to post-wildfire recovery. NMFWR I develops invaluable tools that enhance wildfire decision-making and tracking, such as the NM Vegetation Treatment Database. NMFWR I offers critical services to New Mexico communities impacted by wildfire.”

— Lindsey Quam,
Deputy Director & Tribal Liaison
NM Forestry Division



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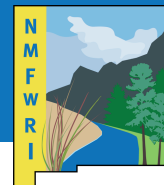
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nmfwri.org

Federal Work Plan Themes & Programs



Theme 1

Community Engagement, Science Communication, and Restoration Education

NMFWRI's Conservation Science Center staff increase awareness and understanding of ecological processes within forested ecosystems and watersheds across New Mexico and the related impacts of wildfire, including managed wildfires.



Theme 2

Geospatial Analysis and Support

The NMFWRI GIS team represents an important center of restoration-based GIS, remote sensing, and GPS expertise in northern New Mexico, offering technological solutions to restoration-based issues while strengthening connections to affected entities. Projects include GIS support to collaborative groups, geospatial technology training for land managers and natural resource professionals, and continued development and maintenance of the New Mexico Fire Viewer. NMFWRI's New Mexico Vegetation Treatment Geodatabase paved the way for a nationwide wildfire and fuels treatment database and viewer.



Theme 3

Monitoring Ecosystem Response and Reducing Barriers to Adaptive Management

NMFWRI's Ecological Monitoring team collects and analyzes data on ecosystem response to restoration, providing a scientific basis for restoration treatments and adaptive management practices. Monitoring staff train partners and affected entities in monitoring practices, and each summer the Ecological Monitoring Program prepares New Mexico's future forestry work force by employing student interns and offering them training and valuable practical experience in forest restoration. NMFWRI also maintains a growing archive of monitoring data collected in New Mexico as a valuable resource for the state.

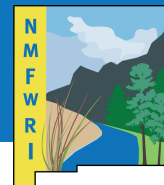


Theme 4

Collaboration and Partnerships

NMFWRI's Collaboration team advances collaborative conservation by promoting and coordinating partnerships, developing collaborative capacity in rural communities, creating and facilitating networks of collaborative organizations, improving communications among collaborative groups and the public, and supporting administrative needs of volunteer groups.





Theme 5

Research Coordination and Communication

NMFWRI's Research Associates increase the Institute's capacity at translating and communicating scientific and traditional knowledge to a wide range of affected entities. Research Associates conduct research that supports the work of all NMFWRI programs, and collaborate with staff to develop research and policy briefs, white papers, and scientific manuscripts rooted in NMFWRI's projects.



Theme 6

Cross-Program and Cross-SWERI Projects

Increasingly, the NMFWRI is developing specific projects that combine work from different programs or that involve collaboration with staff from other SWERI institutes. Some staff members take on responsibilities to work for more than one program. These cross programmatic projects are included in Theme 6.



Theme 7

Communication and Public Information

NMFWRI's Public Information staff craft and disseminate strategic and effective multimedia communication products to inform and engage the public and partners in the Institute's work. The Public Information Specialist develops videos, StoryMaps, briefing papers, slide decks, and articles that describe and highlight NMFWRI projects, and communicates regularly with media outlets, partners, and affected entities to share knowledge and information on adaptive management and forest restoration.



Theme 8

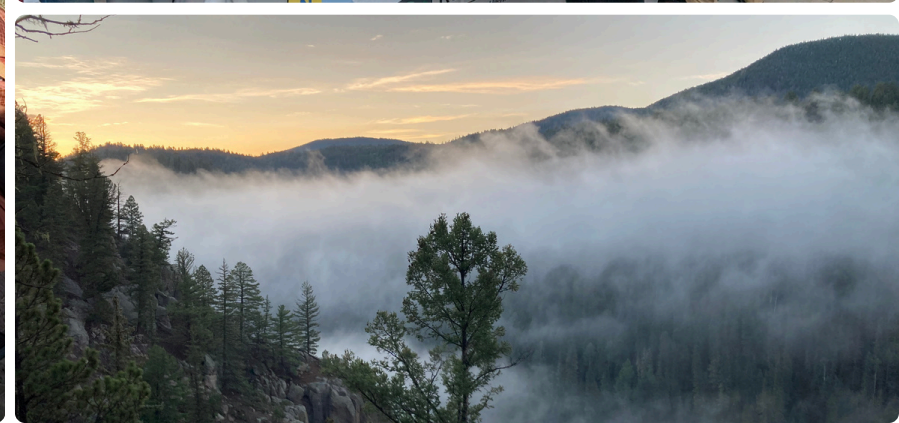
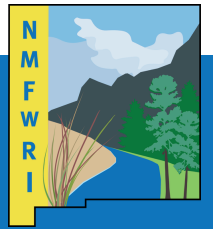
Professional Development

NMFWRI supports professional development opportunities for staff members to increase capacity and maintain a healthy and productive workplace. Organizational development includes shared leadership, regular staff meetings, occasional staff field trips and retreats, and inter-SWERI collaborations, workshops, and annual summits.





Programs by Theme





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Faith Purvey
Asst. Program Manager

About Us

NMFWR's Conservation Science Center builds the capacity of rural New Mexicans to actively lead the conservation of local landscapes through place-based education, immersive outdoor engagements, and the empowerment of local voices. Program components foster the next generation of land stewards and aspiring natural resource professionals through K-16 engagement and community partnerships. Accessible curriculum and workforce pathways serve to resource the management and restoration of forested ecosystems and watersheds throughout New Mexico.



Is the river healthy? Looking for aquatic invertebrates during the Summer Bridge Academy.

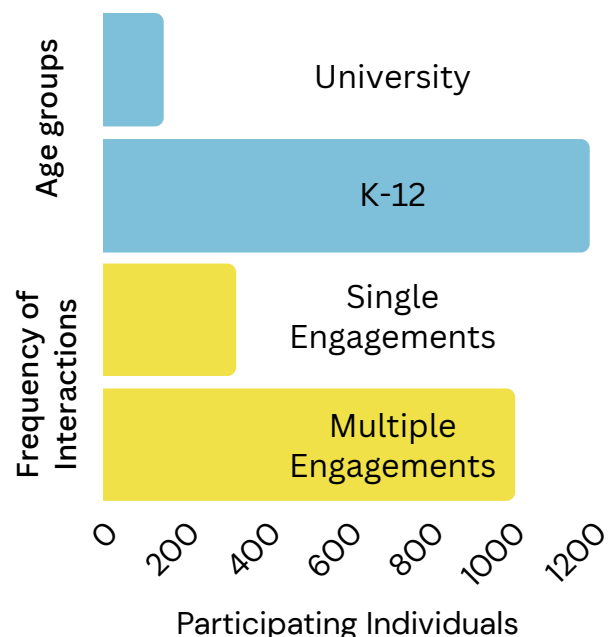


1,330+

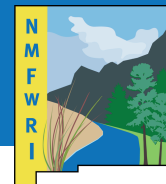
K-16 students engaged in
immersive, place-based education

Types of Engagement

- In-residence research experiences for community college students
- In-residence/dual credit careers exploration summer course for high school students
- Mentored undergraduate research experiences
- Summer graduate research
- Internships
- Conferences and professional networking
- Academic stipends that support degree completion
- Near-peer mentoring to cultivate science identities
- Applied research



Conservation Science Center



K-12 Engagement

1,194 Students served

697 Contact Hours

10 NM Counties Served

- Bernalillo
- Colfax
- Dona Ana
- Guadalupe
- Mora
- Rio Arriba
- San Miguel
- Santa Fe
- Valencia
- Taos

39

Career
Connects
issues



Supporting University Retention Rates



148

Undergraduate and
graduate students served



\$68,000+

Direct student support via
academic & research stipends

All photo credits: Shantini Ramakrishnan

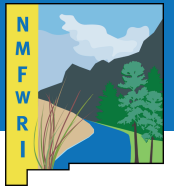


*Celebrating
culture through
homemade
remedios from
locally sourced
ingredients at
the Summer
Field Experience.*



*Estimating
population
numbers of
endangered
Gila trout
minnows at
STEM
Showdown.*

Geospatial Analysis & Support



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Elizabeth Becker
GIS Technician

About Us

NMFWR's Geospatial Information System (GIS) program plays a fundamental role in connecting partners and communities by providing innovative solutions to complex challenges. As northern New Mexico's dedicated hub for restoration-focused GIS, Remote Sensing, and GPS expertise, we provide essential support to diverse collaborative groups and deliver outreach to land managers and natural resource professionals. Our core mission remains centered on strengthening these regional ties while maintaining and refining the suite of geospatial tools highlighted below.

Outreach and presentations at 10 conferences



5 In-state

Stewards of the Southwest, Tribal GIS, NMGC, NM EMS, and NM Data



5 Out-of-state

Fed GIS, Esri UC, NASF, SAF, and AFE

33,500+

Visits to **NM Fire Viewer**



4,000+

Visits to **HPCC Hub**

Wildfire Community Support

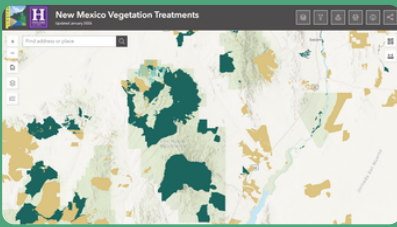
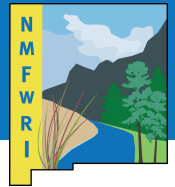
The NMFWR GIS Team empowers New Mexico's communities by delivering state-of-the-art tools for every stage of a wildfire, from pre-fire preparation to post-fire recovery. Through targeted training and outreach, the Institute empowers citizens with real-time data on fire locations, history, and essential resources. A cornerstone of this mission is the **New Mexico Fire Viewer** (nmfireviewer.org) that was launched in response to the 2022 Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon (HPCC) fire. It remains a vital source of statewide information.

The team continues to support those impacted by the HPCC fire through with the **HPCC Post-fire Hub** (hpcchub.org) and facilitates other New Mexico communities to build their wildfire resilience through free, accessible **Post-fire Hub Templates** (nmfirehubs.org).

Specialized projects like the **Enchanted Circle Wildfire Maps** and the **NM Reforestation Center Seed Zone Collection Map**, support NM groups focused on wildfire mitigation, resilience and recovery.



Geospatial Analysis & Support



NM Vegetation Treatment Geodatabase

243,000+

Geodatabase service hits

2,200+

Website visits



ReSHAPE & TWIG



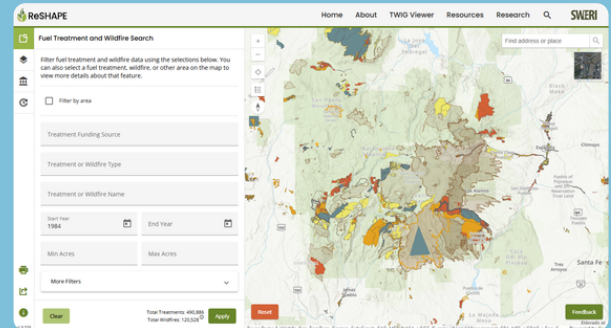
191,000

Website hits at
reshapewildfire.org



7,200

Active users



TWIG 1.0 released in 2025!

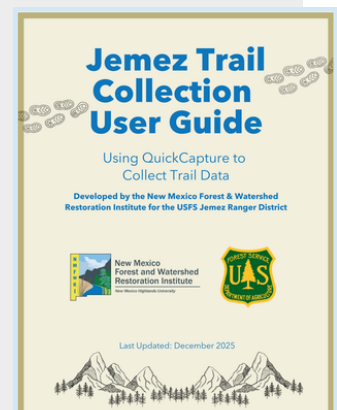
Land Management Applications

The New Mexico Vegetation Treatment Database (vegetationtreatments.org) provides data on vegetation treatments covering over 8 million acres across New Mexico, as well as cross-boundary projects in Colorado, Texas, and Oklahoma. The database is compiled from State, Tribal, and Pueblo data, as well as federal data from the Department of Interior and US Forest Service. Treatments are displayed by status (ongoing, completed, or historical) and data attributes include name, type, landowner, agency, and funding source.

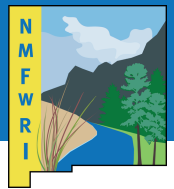
The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI), that includes NMFWR, continued work on the **ReSHAPE Project** (reshapewildfire.org), which was funded by Congress to develop a nation-wide database and interactive map showing all federal vegetation treatments and wildfires. The GIS team collaborated with the other SWERI institutes to develop the **Treatment and Wildfire Interagency Geodatabase (TWIG)** and host multiple workshops to facilitate the use of the data and tool.

The team published a **Forest Visualization StoryMap** (forestvisualization.org) about the **Midnight Fire** burn scar near El Rito, NM, showcasing how effective forest management helped to control wildfire behavior and avoid catastrophe. The StoryMap includes 360° photos, drone imagery, videos, and background about this success story.

The GIS team continued supporting the USFS with a trail mapping project in the Jemez mountains. A **Jemez Trail Collection App** and detailed user guide was created in ArcGIS QuickCapture to enable USFS staff and volunteers to collect trail data in the field.



Ecological Monitoring



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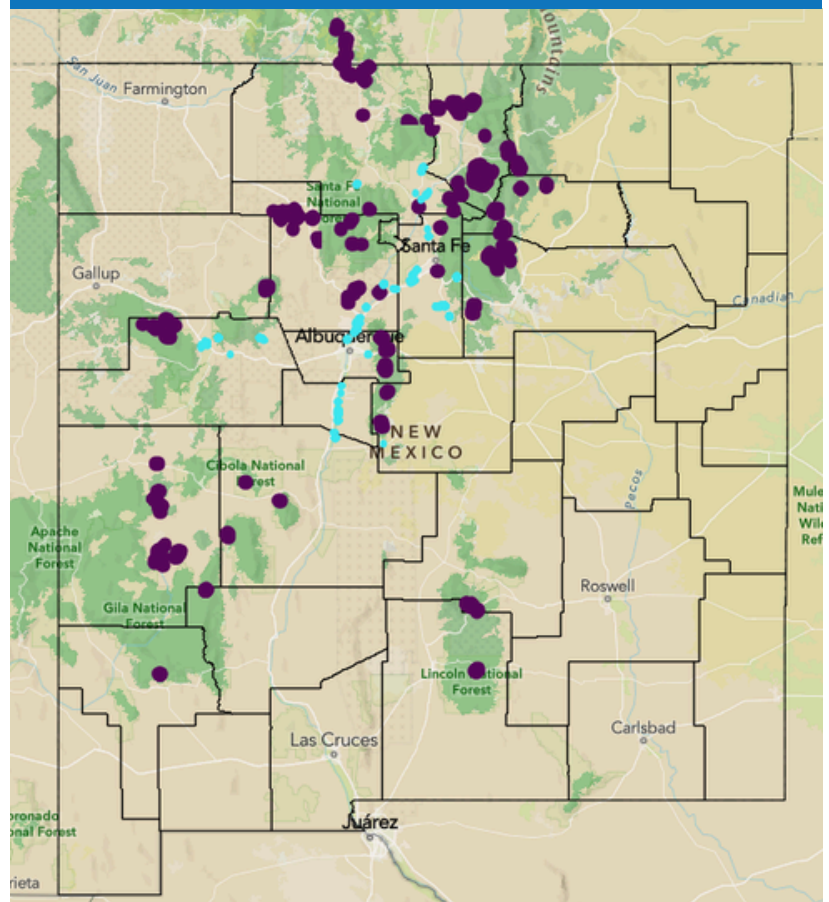


Joan Kuyo
Student Worker

About Us

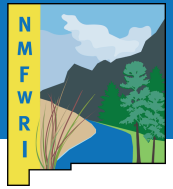
NMFWR's Ecological Monitoring Program maintains a professionally managed field crew to collect and analyze data on short- and long-term ecosystem responses to restoration treatments and wildfire, providing a critical scientific basis for adaptive management decisions and improved forest treatment effectiveness. As of 2025, the program has collected data on over 2,500 plots across more than 89,000 acres in upland, range, riparian and wetland areas (including over 500 plots in the Hermit Peak/Calf Canyon and Cooke's Peak burn scars). The program collaborates with more than 40 partners and is responsive to partner needs related to monitoring and adaptive management, and works to build state-wide capacity for ecological monitoring and restoration.

Where We Work: Long Term Sites



Purple are upland monitoring locations, Blue are riparian monitoring locations (Short-term monitoring locations not pictured)

Ecological Monitoring



Field Data Collection

30,560+

Total Acres Monitored

Data collection in pre- and post-treatment riparian and wetland areas, post-fire forests, and rangelands

Post-fire Upland Fieldwork

51,460

stems counted

1,545

trees tagged

216

unique understory species recorded

79

plots sampled



Post-fire work provides opportunities for in-depth comparison of untreated sites and treated sites, and improved understanding of ecosystem recovery, treatment effectiveness, and treatment longevity to inform adaptive management.

"We here at UNM's Natural Heritage New Mexico truly appreciate the monitoring work done by the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute. We see monitoring as perhaps the highest priority for understanding the success of the State's restoration activities, and **NMFWR's Ecological Monitoring Program has been exemplary in its approach and dedication to tracking ecosystem restoration outcomes.**"

– Dr. Esteban Muldavin

Director, Natural Heritage New Mexico
Museum of Southwestern Biology,
University of New Mexico



Riparian Fieldwork

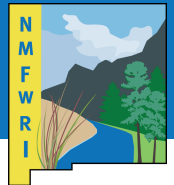
Our work on these projects not only assisted partners with regulatory compliance, it also informed management decisions.



106 plots + photopoints

21 projects

Ecological Monitoring



Capacity-Building & Technical Support



49 professional partners attended our monitoring & botany workshops



10 guest lectures given on Monitoring, Forestry and Ecology



29 new & revised Monitoring publications shared out via *nmfwri.org*



40 new herbarium specimens



"NMFWR's monitoring on our projects have been very helpful in many ways helping us understand and learn about our forests and how we can best protect them."

— Christopher Martinez
Fire and Rescue Chief,
Picuris Pueblo

3

professional conference presentations delivered by Monitoring staff

564



plots shared in data requests from both management and research partners

3,826

lines of data management code written, ensuring data is secure and efficiently accessible for use in analysis, decision-making, and more

Range Utilization

750 points measured

Wetlands

3+ miles of stream across 4 reaches

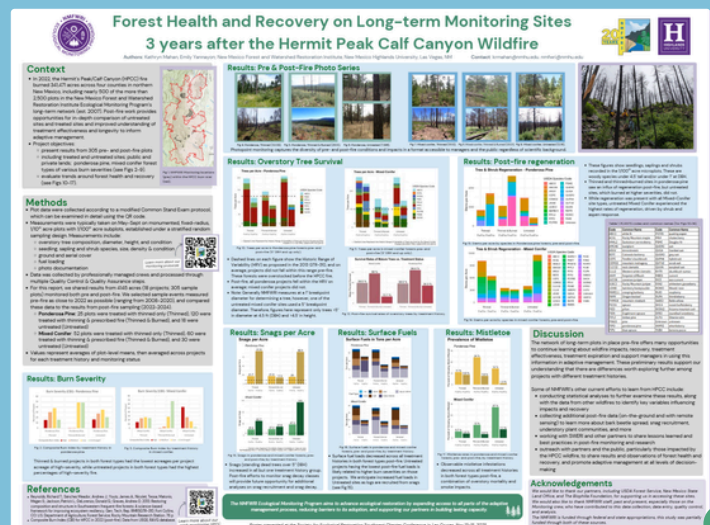
36

participants in our study on data quality among volunteers, students & professional crews

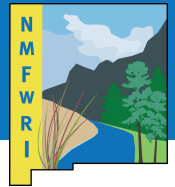
14

hours of interviews collected in the study "Adaptive Management of Ecological Monitoring at the NMFWR"

More works-in-progress coming soon!



Collaboration



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John Jennings

VISTA Collaboration Specialist

About Us



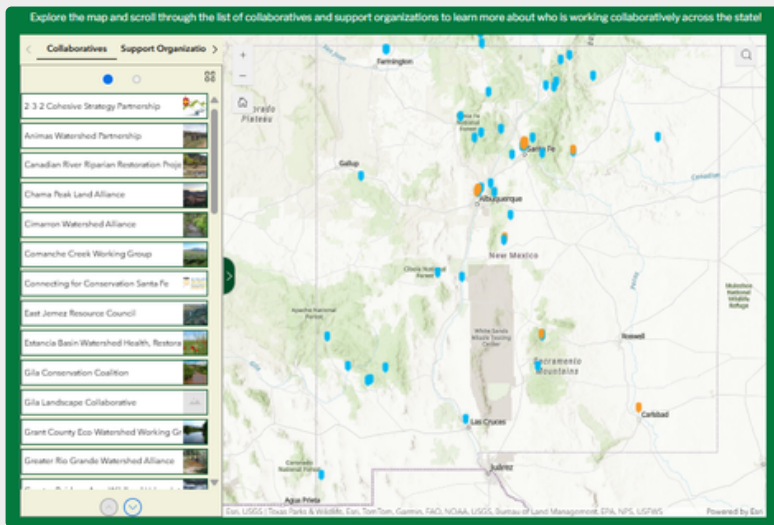
The Collaboration Program works to expand and strengthen the capacity of its network of partners across local communities, agencies, organizations, and place-based collaborative groups throughout New Mexico and the Southwest. In 2025, program staff participated in meetings, conferences, trainings, and regional initiatives while providing facilitation, coordination, and technical assistance to collaboratives, watershed groups, and conservation partners, strengthening cross-boundary relationships and supporting forest, watershed, and wildfire resilience efforts statewide. The program supported operational needs for groups such as the Estancia Basin Watershed Health Core Steering Committee and NM Prescribed Fire Council, while advancing regional networking through the Southwest Collaboratives Support Network, Western Collaborative Conservation Network, and Connecting for Conservation Santa Fe. Capacity building

efforts also included the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District Continuity Project, supporting institutional knowledge transfer within the district while informing similar efforts statewide. Staff developed and shared resources, maintained the New Mexico Collaborative Map, and connected partners to funding, economic, and workforce opportunities. The program also supported workshops, trainings, and community events, including co-founding a statewide planning committee to build collaborative capacity in New Mexico, which led to facilitation mini-trainings and a broader ongoing assessment of statewide capacity needs. Insights from this work informed program strategies and the development of the NM Collaboration Hub which was launched in early 2025.



Magdalena Collaborative Field Tour
Photo by Crystal Medina

NM Collaboration Hub and Map of Collaboratives



Launched in February 2025, the New Mexico Collaboration Hub marks a major step forward in NMFWR's work to support collaborative conservation across the state. Developed by the Collaboration Program, the Hub was created to make it easier for partners to find and share information in one place. It functions as a "resource of resources" for collaboratives, land managers, and community organizations working on forest and watershed restoration.

Through the Hub, users can access tools and materials related to wildfire mitigation, post-fire recovery, landscape restoration, monitoring, funding/job opportunities, and community engagement. The platform also hosts dedicated pages where collaborative groups can share documents, RFPs, post updates, and coordinate activities, helping reduce the burden on local coordinators while improving communication across partners. The site has also supported statewide efforts, including the Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) program. The Collaboration Program partnered with Abigail Plecki, former CWDG Coordinator with the New Mexico Forestry Division, during Cycle 3 of the CWDG to create a page that centralized beneficial resources for CWDG applicants. Plecki had this to say about the page:

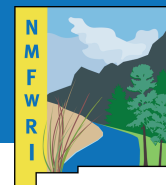
"The NM Collaboration Hub has advanced the Forestry Division's landscape restoration and outreach efforts by clearly communicating the CWDG's purpose and process. The dedicated page gave partners centralized access to key resources, supporting stronger and more numerous applications this last cycle."

From launch through the end of 2025, the Hub recorded nearly **17,000 item views**, averaging 55 views per day, with increased engagement in the latter half of the year. This growth suggests expanding awareness and use among partners and communities. The Collaboration Program will continue refining the platform and tracking its impact as participation grows.



Alejandro Collins, Collaboration Specialist, presenting the Collaboration Hub. Courtesy photo.

Collaboration



Strengthening Collaboration Statewide

Leading **6** Collaborative Groups and Networks
Supporting **20** Collaborative Groups and Networks



113 Resources shared on
NM Collaboration Hub

 **43** Economic
Development
Resources

 **70** Adaptive
Management
Resources



Photo by Shantini Ramakrishnan

*Staff sharing the value of collaboration
work with local students.*

New Mexico Collaboration Hub

 **~17,000**

Website hits for the NM Collaboration Hub

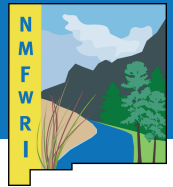


6 Program-
Supported
Trainings



63 Collaboratives and
Support Organizations
on NM Collaborative Map

Research Coordination & Communication



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About Us

The research coordination program has three primary purposes: **to synthesize and share information** generated by NMFWR programs; **to conduct research** that furthers understanding of the fire-vulnerable human and ecological systems of the Southwest; and **to develop collaborative relationships** with land managers and landowners, water systems managers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic researchers at Highlands University and other universities, and colleagues at the other Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERIs).

The Research Coordination Theme is divided into two primary focuses: technical and applied science, and civic and community action.



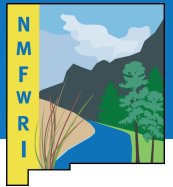
Dr. Nathan Tomczyk at a research site

Research Projects



- Quantifying the ecological impacts of forest, watershed, and riparian restoration. Deployed data loggers to monitor watershed restoration projects. Submitted manuscript that improves methodology for measuring the effectiveness of forest restoration treatments that have burned in wildfire.
- Refining management of mixed conifer forests. This project has used statistical clustering to identify ecologically distinct forest types within the mixed conifer ecosystem, which should help refine management of these ecosystems.
- Exploring the challenges and opportunities of participation and engagement in the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program – an ongoing SWERI collaboration. Completed 30 interviews and conducted five site visits in three CFLRP landscapes.
- Promoting community-engaged source water protection planning in frequent fire landscapes – an ongoing collaboration with the New Mexico Rural Water Association (NMRWA). Research-informed revisions to source water protection plan in the Jemez Mountains, NM.





Conferences and Public Engagement



Participated in **8** conferences, Workshops, and Summits

Gave **3** presentations to academic and practitioner audiences



Check out the data paper describing the treatment and wildfire interagency geodatabase.



Learn about research priorities on post-wildfire restoration and recovery in the Western US.



View the poster presented at the Association for Fire Ecology Fire Congress.

Publications



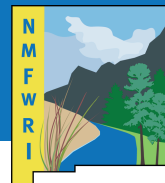
6 in press



5 under review

“Collaborating with NMFWR has been invaluable to the New Mexico Rural Water Association, and the public water systems they serve. **NMFWR brings complementary expertise that broadens NMRWA's reach in rural communities and strengthens the impact of our work**, particularly that of source water protection.”

– **Martha Graham**
Source Water Protection Specialist,
NM Rural Water Association



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About Us

Fire Informed Restoration Education for New Mexico (FIRENM) increases access to fire-adapted restoration knowledge, practices, and experiences to promote resiliency in firesheds across New Mexico.

In 2022, NMFWR launched the Querencia in Action: Living with Fire workshops to implement on-the-ground restoration practices on private working lands across the HPCC burn scar. Along with community convenings, youth educational programming, and curriculum development, NMFWR has piloted numerous approaches to becoming a community resource working to address and mitigate socioeconomic and knowledge barriers.

FIRENM represents an expansion of these collective efforts, and NMFWR's commitment towards community-engaged trainings, restoration practices, and implementation across communities in New Mexico that exist in the wildfire continuum, i.e., pre-fire mitigation, wildfire response and post-fire recovery.



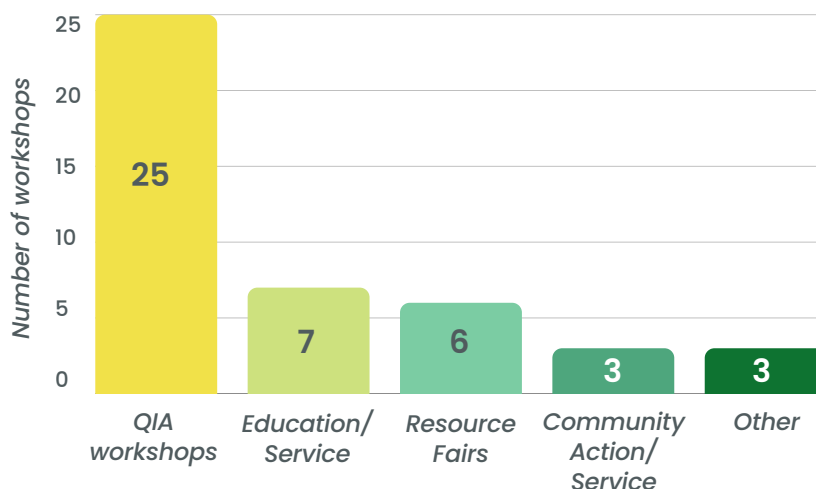
Natural materials are used to capture sediment and reduce the force of post-fire flooding



Community-Responsive Approaches

- Create spaces for community-building, co-learning and co-healing.
- Spend time in charred landscapes to normalize and create new memories in altered terrain.
- Pilot activities more than once and imbed feedback loops for iterative and incremental improvements.
- Reach the WHOLE community from elders to youth.
- Meet people where they are.
- Reduce barriers for physical access (timing, location, etc.).
- Use various modalities to honor different ways of knowing.
- Build trust over time.

FIRENM Activities 2022-2025





44 in person activities



800+ community members served



Practicing Place-based Engagement in **22** communities across **3** counties*

San Miguel

- Bernal
- Las Dispensas
- Las Vegas
- Maestas Canyon
- Mineral Hill
- Ojito Frios
- Pendaries
- Rociada
- San Geronimo
- San Ignacio
- San Pablo
- Sapello

Mora

- Buena Vista
- Cleveland
- Encinal
- Guadalupita
- Ledoux
- Monte Aplanado

Colfax

- Black Lake

- Mora
- Ocate
- Watrous

**These counties were impacted by the 2022 Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon wildfire.*



Landowner Workshops

Reaching Community



Community Action Days



Youth Engagement

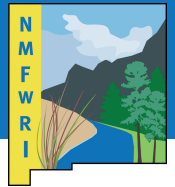


Forest Thinning



Building a Culture of Fire

Photos by: Kathryn Mahan, Staci Matlock, Shantini Ramakrishnan, and Cody Dems



Staci Matlock

Public Information Specialist
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Hayden Lammons

HU Student Intern

About Us

NMFWRI's Communication and Public Information staff work across NMFWRI programs to promote the institute's work and to share knowledge and information on adaptive management and forest restoration with partner agencies, landowners, and forest-dependent communities. Public information staff create multimedia digital and print products to share through traditional print and broadcast media, social media, and in-person events.

Engagement

- Part of wildfire communications team that coordinates annual statewide NM Wildland Urban Fire Summit and produces monthly newsletter "The Spark".
- Coordinated Wildfire Lessons Learned panel for Taos County.
- Co-coordinated Earth Day: Seed to Tree event at Highlands University with Raymundo Melendez of NMFWRI, and Christina Muniz and Dylín Montoya of the NMHU Forestry Department.
- Facilitated panel on post-fire water contamination for the Congreso de las Acequias.
- Modified a digital All Hazards SimTable map for a Rio Chama fire mitigation training.
- Managed \$465,000 FEMA grant for HPCC Post-fire Recovery Resource Hub.
- Tabled state Contractor Connects events in Ruidoso, Mora, and Las Vegas with assistance from Raymundo Melendez.
- Worked with NMHU Media Arts and Technology interns to complete beta version of a Home Wildfire Risk video game app.
- Coordinated digital outreach for other NMFWRI programs.

Digital Engagement

70,458

Facebook views
in 2025



12,273

LinkedIn impressions
in 2025



1,156

Instagram views
Oct-Dec, 2025



Outreach



12

newsletters produced



281

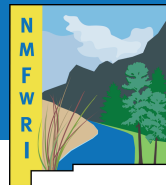
subscribers



381

news briefs, reports,
stories, and photos
posted to nmfwri
website

Partners



NMFWRI collaborates with more than 60 partners around the state and region, including tribes, community groups, NGOs, landowners, businesses, schools and universities, and local, state, and federal agencies. NMFWRI strives to meet partners' needs through research, technical trainings and services, data analysis, decision support tools, workforce development, learning opportunities, and sharing information on adaptive forest and watershed management.

GOVERNMENT

- AmeriCorps
- Bureau of Land Management
- Claunh Pinto SWCD*
- Coronado SWCD*
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- City of Las Vegas Tree Board
- Mora County
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- National Park Service
- NM Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- NM Environment Department
- NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department
 - NM Forestry Division
 - NM State Parks Division
- NM Department of Wildlife
- NM State Land Office
- North Central NM Economic Development District
- Santa Fe-Pojoaque SWCD*
- Taos County
- Taos SWCD*
- Tierra y Montes SWCD*
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Geological Survey
- USDA Forest Service
 - Rocky Mountain Research Station
- Valencia SWCD*
- Village of Ruidoso
- Western Mora SWCD*



*SWCD = Soil and Water Conservation District

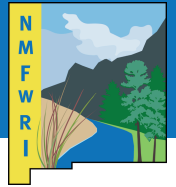
PUEBLOS/TRIBES

- Pueblo of Acoma
- Pueblo of Jemez - Walatowa
- Pueblo of Picuris
- Pueblo of Pojoaque
- Pueblo of Sandia
- Pueblo of Santa Ana



UNIVERSITIES / CENTERS

- Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, CSU
- Community College of Denver
- Ecological Restoration Institute, NAU
- Luna Community College
 - Wildfire Resiliency Training Center
- New Mexico Highlands University
 - ARMAS in Education
 - Department of Forestry
 - FORT-CREST
 - Somos STEM
- NM Reforestation Center
- New Mexico State University
 - John T. Harrington Forestry Research Center
- Northern NM College - El Rito Campus
- Santa Fe Community College
- University of New Mexico (UNM)
 - UNM - ARID Institute
 - UNM - BEMP (Bosque Ecosystem Mgmt)
 - UNM - CHANGES Center
 - UNM - EDAC (Earth Data Analysis Ctr)
 - UNM - Taos
- Western New Mexico University



NGOS

- Albuquerque Wildlife Federation
- American Rivers
- Biophilia Foundation
- Coalitions & Collaboratives (COCO)
- Collaborative Visions
- Environmental Education NM
- Friends of the Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge
- Fire Adapted Communities - NM
- Forest Stewards Guild
- Hermit's Peak Watershed Alliance
- National Audubon Society
- The Nature Conservancy
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors
- NM Acequia Association
- NM Association of Counties
- NM Assoc of Emergency Management Professionals
- NM MESA
- NM Rural Water Association
- Quivira Coalition
- NM Prescribed Burn Council
- SIG-NAL Spatial Informatics Group
- Natural Assets Laboratory
- Conservation Legacy, Stewards Individual Placements
- 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy

PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

- Collins Lake Ranch
- Fort Union Ranch
- Lone Carrot Ranch
- Pritzlaff Ranch
- TR Ranch



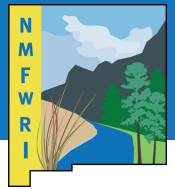
SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- Albuquerque Public Schools
- East Mountain Public Schools
- Española Public Schools
- Gadsen Independent School District
- Las Vegas City Schools
- Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools
- Mora Independent School District
- Peñasco Independent School District
- Raton Public Schools
- Rio Rancho Public Schools
- Santa Fe Public Schools
- Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools
- Taos Municipal Schools
- United World College - USA
- West Las Vegas School District

COMPANIES

- Ecotone Landscape Planning
- Lucy Moore Associates
- River Source
- Southwest Decision Resources
- Ziegler Geologic Consulting





COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS

- Southwest Collaboratives Support Network (SWCSN)
- Connecting for Conservation Santa Fe (C4C Santa Fe)
- Western Collaborative Conservation Network (WCCN) based at the Center for Collaborative Conservation (CCC) at Colorado State University (CSU)
 - WCCN Confluence Planning Committee
 - WCCN Emerging Leaders Working Group
- New Mexico Collaborative Conservation Circle (NMC3)
- Rio Grande Aquatic Navigator Network



Collaboration helps conservation groups plan and carry out wildfire mitigation and recovery activities. NMFWR file photo

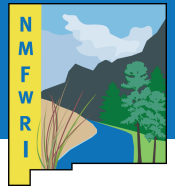


COLLABORATIVE GROUPS

- Estancia Basin Watershed Health, Restoration and Monitoring (EBWHRM) Committee
- NM Prescribed Fire Council
- Magdalena Collaborative
- Forest and Watershed Health Coordinating Group
- Otero Working Group
- Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition
- Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance (GRGWA)
- Northern New Mexico Fuelwood Working Group
- Zuni Mountains Collaborative
 - Zuni Mountains Wood Utilization and Community Fuelwood Working Group
- Biomass Utilization Working Group
- Jemez Alliance of Water Systems (JAWS)
- Taos Valley Coalition
- 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership
- Collaborative Visions
- Cimarron Watershed Association (CWA)
- High Plains Grasslands Alliance (HPGA)
- Tribal Forest and Fire Working Group



Testimonials from Partners



"The monitoring work **provided NMHU Forestry students with essential and meaningful, hands-on experience** linking fuels' data collection and analysis to real-world prescribed fire planning and evaluation. This collaboration strengthened students' technical skills, ecological understanding, and preparedness for careers in forest and fire management."

– **Dr. Blanca Cespedes**
Associate Professor
NMHU Department of Forestry

"The Department of Game and Fish partnered with the Ecological Monitoring Program at the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute to conduct monitoring on the Edward Sargent Wildlife Management Area in support of ongoing watershed restoration and big game conservation. **This partnership expanded the Department's capacity for monitoring and adaptive management**, strengthening its ability to conserve New Mexico's wildlife resources while promoting healthier, more resilient ecosystems."



– **Carrie Parris**
Assistant Chief of Fisheries, Aquatic Habitat
and Compliance, NM Department of Wildlife

"The High Plains Grassland Alliance (HPGA) represents over 300,000 acres of private rangeland in Northeastern New Mexico. This community of landowners and ranch managers is dedicated to passing on a healthier, more productive landscape to future generations. The Alliance works toward these goals through active land and wildlife stewardship, creative pursuit of economic viability without depletion of resources, shared learning, and collaboration. **NMFWRI and SWERI have provided invaluable professional and technical service and assistance that is not otherwise available to HPGA** in the following ways:

- Pre-fire monitoring and treatment prioritization add value and work in alignment with HPGA programs and goals.
- Decision support for firefighters during active wildfires help reduce wildfire impact and improve public safety.
- Supplements and support efforts to mitigate wildfire and enhance community communication through products such as landowner workshops and the NM Fire Viewer.
- Helps HPGA convene and shape partnerships where there is momentum, such as long-term, post-fire recovery and ongoing rancher, land manager, and community education.
- Post-fire forest restoration and recovery help mitigate wildfire impacts.

The work of NMFWRI and SWERI is critical to the ongoing efforts to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires, restore healthy forests, and build resilient, fire-adapted communities."

– **Michael Bain**, President High Plains Grassland Alliance



Staff from NMFWR help
with a prescribed burn
coordinated by Forest
Stewards Guild on NM
State Trust Land.
Photo by Kathryn
Mahan/NMFWR

2025 Annual Impact Report
New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute
Director: Dr. Alan Barton
nmfwri.org / nmfwri@nmhu.edu

