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TREE FARM BULLETIN

GOVERNER PARTNERS WITH FEDS TO PROTECT NM FORESTS

By Laura McCarthy,

Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department State Forestry Division Director

Managing forests is never an easy task. In New Mexico, where that job comes with a complex land-use history, vast diversity of ecosystems, extended droughts and a rapidly changing climate, the work is even more complex. Partnerships are key to tackling this complicated issue.

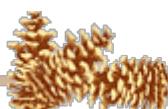
On Nov. 14, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signed a shared stewardship agreement with the USDA Forest Service to strengthen State Forestry's partnership with the federal government when it comes to forest management. New Mexico became the first state in the Southwest and the ninth in the country to sign such an agreement, and it highlights the importance of sustainable forest management and the governor's focus on collaboration.

This agreement is about making sure New Mexico has a seat at the table and early input on the federal level when it comes to forest management. Ensuring that New Mexico's unique cultural and environmental priorities are shared at the highest levels of government will go a long way to better managing our forests.

The shared stewardship agreement will give State Forestry, a Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department



(Left to Right): Vicki Christiansen, Chief, USDA Forest Service; Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor of NM; Cal Joyner, Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service; Sarah Cottrell Propst, Cabinet Secretary of EMNRD; Laura McCarthy, Division Director, NM Forestry Division; Lindsey Quam, Deputy Director of Forests, NM Forestry Division.



(EMNRD), and our partners a louder voice to set priorities for hazardous fuels reduction and ecological restoration in our state. For example, the maps in the state's Forest Action Plan identify the highest priorities for forest and watershed restoration, and under this new agreement these maps will be used by each national forest in creating its annual work program. These priorities will guide when and where money is allocated to ensure that we're getting the right project in the right place at the right time. That could mean projects with far-reaching impacts across New Mexico get fast-tracked on the federal level. These are just a few examples of how the shared stewardship agreement will improve state and federal collaboration to meet our common goals.

Given the complex history of land use, it's only appropriate that we are leading the way with a collaborative approach to the Shared Stewardship process. EMNRD was the first in the nation to consult with tribal governments early on – making sure that sovereign nations in New Mexico had a say in the final product. The New Mexico Land Grant Council passed a resolution in support of the agreement. And the statewide Forest and Watershed Health Coordinating Group provided input to the agreement in its earliest stages of development. In this way, we can honor our traditional land use heritage while finding new ways to work together.

New Mexico forests are experiencing longer and more intense fire seasons every year. The reliability of our water sources depends on healthy forests. By working together, we will identify the highest priority forested areas to mitigate the impact of unwanted wildfire more effectively. The shared stewardship agreement is a crucial step to accelerate collaborative management for our precious forests.

1) COMMITTEE MEETING

All Tree Farmers are invited and encouraged to attend our 1st New Mexico Tree Farm Committee Meeting of the year (three held annually). Please join us at 1:30 pm on Wednesday, March 11th, 2020 at the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish office located at 7816 Alamo Road. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120. Come out and hear what other tree farmers have been up to and share your tree farm accomplishments with the group. We look forward to visiting with you. If you have any questions, please contact Arnie Friedt at arnie.friedt@state.nm.us

2) E-MAIL INSTEAD OF SNAIL MAIL

Would you prefer to receive your Tree Farm Bulletin by e-mail instead of snail mail? If so, contact Arnie Friedt at arnie.friedt@state.nm.us and provide him with your contact information. By receiving your Tree Farm Bulletin by e-mail our operating costs are reduced. Thank you for considering this option.



Your New Mexico Tree Farm Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

