



State of New Mexico
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**Governor Susana Martinez Announces Opening of River
Stewardship Program Request for Proposals**

Many state and local entities are eligible for River Steward funds, including smaller communities

Santa Fe — Governor Susana Martinez and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) announced today that the River Stewardship Program Request for Proposals (RFP) will open in early June, with submission due in mid-July. Proposals will be considered from towns, cities, counties, state agencies, soil and water conservation districts, irrigation districts, and community watershed groups, as well as Indian Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes. Additional groups that work to restore river habitats are also encouraged to apply.

“The River Stewardship program is such an integral part of our continuing efforts to protect our water, our most precious natural resource in New Mexico,” said Governor Susana Martinez. “In the face of unprecedented wildfires, flooding, and drought, it is more important than ever that we look after our rivers and watersheds to secure our water supply, protect our environment, and support local economies.”

In the recent legislative session, Governor Susana Martinez and NMED secured \$2.3 million in capital outlay funds for the River Stewardship Program. The River Stewardship Program funds projects that improve surface water quality and river habitat statewide. Examples of past projects include clearing non-native vegetation in river areas, lowering river banklines, replanting native species vegetation, revitalizing wetlands, and installing erosion control.

"Governor Martinez and the Legislature should be applauded for securing these funds that go directly to improving the environment," said NMED Secretary Ryan Flynn. "New Mexico's streams are precious public resources, and with this funding we have a significant opportunity to enhance our natural resources and support our local economies. We are strongly encouraging communities and organizations to apply."

Successful proposals submitted through the Request for Proposals will describe projects that improve surface water quality and/or stream habitat using scientifically sound and sustainable methods. They will demonstrate the need, support, and commitment of the local community and applicable stakeholders such as natural resource agencies and landowners/land managers. Last year, the River Stewardship Program led to the approval of \$288,234 in funding to go towards river bank stabilization and the enhancement of wildlife habitat along the Red River in northern New Mexico. Community leaders in the Town of Red River called the project a major step forward in critical river restoration work.

"Red River is thrilled about the completion of construction on our most current river restoration project," said Red River Mayor Linda Calhoun. "We have named the area the Red River Westside Fishing Park and the river has been stocked with trout by the NM Department of Game and Fish. It's early in the season, but people are already out there fishing and catching some big fish. Keep your eyes open and you may spot our new river otter that has moved into the area. The local community is very supportive of the project and everyone seems excited about the economic boost this will provide for Red River."

As demonstrated through the Red River project, the River Stewardship Program places a major emphasis on maintaining the hydrology of streams and rivers to better handle overbank flows to reduce flooding downstream as experienced in recently burned watersheds. The funds will also be used to provide state matching funds required by the terms of the Clean Water Act.

Successful applicants will receive notice in September of 2014 that funding for their proposed River Stewards program has been approved. Funds will be made available by November of 2014.

The River Stewardship Program is one of several clean water initiatives supported by Governor Martinez. Under Governor Martinez, a total of \$89-million in capital outlay funding was approved in the most recent legislative session that will go to local communities to improve water infrastructure, drinking water systems, watersheds and dams. The Governor also led the efforts through the New Mexico Environment Department on the recent establishment of water quality standards for 62 lakes in the Rio Grande, Pecos, Canadian, Gila, San Juan and Little Colorado Basins in New Mexico.

Additional information, including proposed timeline and answers to FAQs can be found on the following website <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/RiverStewards/index.html>. Interested persons can also join the Surface Water Quality Bureau email list to receive updates when the RFP is released: <http://nmenv-it.nmenv.state.nm.us/Listserv/RPD/?p=subscribe&id=4>.

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