

### MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

This Spring marks my first year as Executive Director of this wonderful organization. We are proud of our many accomplishments over the past year (we've protected nearly 50,000 acres of land in New Mexico) and believe that we are well on our way in terms of meeting our long-term strategic goals. But none of what you read about inside these

pages would have been possible without the support of our growing network of partners and donors. Conservation is difficult work that requires vision, innovation, collaboration and a lot of perseverance. But the potential rewards and benefits are great. With all that is happening around the nation and world today, in New Mexico we can take pride and solace in what we have accomplished to conserve our natural, agricultural and cultural heritage.

This year was my first opportunity to actively participate in the legislative session. Policy and legislative initiatives aren't ordinarily a big part of what we do as a land trust – we tend to be more focused and committed to on the ground conservation – but we have made exceptions in the past year to support a couple of important initiatives that we believe will have far-reaching benefits for conservation throughout the state. ... continued on page 2

### NEW MEXICO LAND CONSERVATION STATE TAX CREDIT INITIATIVE

In early April, Gov. Richardson signed HB990 – Real Property Transfer Tax Credit – into law, thereby expanding the existing state tax credit under the 2004 Land Conservation Incentives Act for New Mexico taxpayers who donate land or easements for conservation purposes. Under HB990, the tax credit will continue to be for 50% of the value of the donation, but HB990 increases the amount of the credit from \$100,000 to \$250,000 and, perhaps more importantly, makes it transferable. NMLC partnered with The Nature Conservancy and members of the Modrall-Sperling law firm to promote this innovative piece of conservation tax legislation. HB990 was passed unanimously by both the House and the Senate.

Many thanks to Rep. Peter Wirth (Santa Fe) who ably sponsored this legislation. "By increasing the tax credit and making it transferable, the conservation easement becomes a viable option for a whole new group of landowners and rewards their decisions to preserve open space," said Rep. Peter Wirth. "Farmers and ranchers can use the proceeds from the sale of their tax credits to cover the costs of their conservation projects, and to sustain and expand their operations."

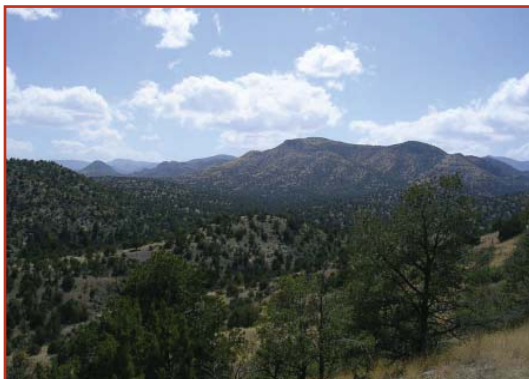


REP. PETER WIRTH

### LAND, WILDLIFE AND CLEAN ENERGY (LWCE) INITIATIVE

For over a year, leading up to the recent legislative session, NMLC has been actively participating in a coalition of conservation, agricultural and recreation organizations to promote the creation of a dedicated, recurring source of state funding for land, wildlife and clean energy projects using a portion of the proceeds from an existing tax on oil and gas revenue.

The LWCE bills (HB433 and SB309) proposed to establish a permanent program for this purpose to be administered by the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) and overseen by a 14-member Board. Although neither of the LWCE bills ultimately passed, an appropriation of approximately \$3 million was made to EMNRD for similar purposes.



FOOTHILLS OF THE BLACK RANGE

## MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONTINUED...

The first was an effort to create a dedicated, recurring source of state funding for conservation through the Land, Wildlife and Clean Energy (LWCE) initiative. While LWCE did not pass, the legislature did make a small appropriation to the state for similar conservation purposes. But the need for permanent state funding for these purposes remains. If New Mexico is going to be able to protect its most significant natural, agricultural, cultural, scenic and recreational lands, it needs dedicated state funding to cover the costs of protecting, restoring and stewarding these lands. In particular, if we are going to protect New Mexico's most important farm and ranch lands, as well as the water rights associated with them, we have to create incentives for the landowners, particularly those with low incomes, to encourage them to conserve their lands and water rights.

We were more successful with the second initiative to expand the existing state tax credit for New Mexico taxpayers who donate land or easements for conservation purposes. The new law, which goes into effect on January 1, 2008, not only increases the amount of the credit, but makes it transferable, enabling landowners who donate land and easements to sell their credits and turn them into real dollars. With limited and highly competitive sources of conservation funding, we believe that such an innovative tax policy will encourage more New Mexicans to conserve their lands over the next several years.

We invite you to join us in preserving New Mexico's land heritage by supporting our efforts. Together we can make a lasting difference.

*Scott Wilber,  
Executive Director*

**OUR MISSION ...** to preserve New Mexico's land heritage by protecting significant wildlife habitat, natural and cultural resources, productive agricultural lands, scenic open space and recreational lands for conservation purposes and public benefit.

### OUR STAFF

Scott Wilber, Executive Director  
Debbie DeMarais, Development Director  
Laura Gaetjens, Administrative Assistant

### HOW TO REACH US

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Fax: 505/986-3806  
Address: PO Box 6759 Santa Fe, NM 87502  
Website: [www.nmlandconservancy.org](http://www.nmlandconservancy.org)

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER, RAY POWELL

At its first Board meeting of the year, held in Santa Fe, NMLC's Board of Directors approved Ray B. Powell as its eighth board member. Board Chair, Jack Wright, stated, "Ray's background and expertise in natural resource management and conservation issues makes him an ideal member - we're pleased to welcome him to our organization."



Ray, who is a long-time resident and veterinarian from Albuquerque, is currently the Regional Director of the Jane Goodall Institute's Roots & Shoots Four Corners States Program. Prior to his current position, he was the Executive Director of the Valles Caldera National Preserve from 2004-2005 and the New Mexico State Commissioner of Public Lands from 1993-2002. Serving as the Special Assistant to former New Mexico Governor Bruce King from 1990-1993, he was the policy advisor on environment, natural resources, health and recreation.

Upon accepting the position on the Board, Ray said, "I am honored to join such a visionary effort to protect the health of our lands and keep knowledgeable, hard working people connected to them."

Ray, we're delighted to have you join us and we look forward to working closely with you protecting New Mexico's land heritage.

## NMLC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Chair* - Dr. John B. (Jack) Wright, Las Cruces, NM  
*Vice Chair* - Joseph Montoya, Albuquerque, NM  
*Secretary* - Anthony Anella, Albuquerque, NM  
*Treasurer* - David Johnson, Farmington, NM

### MEMBERS

Tony Benson, Taos, NM  
Elizabeth Richardson, Denver, CO  
Moo Thorpe, Santa Fe, NM  
Ray Powell, Albuquerque, NM

## OUTREACH AROUND THE STATE

Conservation easements are an excellent tool by which private landowners can work with land trusts to preserve their lands and the resources on them, and often receive financial and tax benefits in exchange for doing so. Unfortunately, many landowners and the general public are still not aware of how conservation easements work, the associated tax benefits, or what land trusts do. A big part of NMLC's role as a statewide land trust is to serve as an information resource throughout New Mexico.

### QUIVIRA COALITION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

JANUARY 19TH - ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Our Board Secretary, Anthony (Tony) Anella, and Board Chair, Jack Wright, presented an informative session entitled: "Saving the Ranch: Conservation Easement Design in the American West." This workshop provided concise information about conserving ranches at a time when ranchers are making choices that will decide the fate of Western ranch country. They also discussed the expanded conservation easement tax incentives created by the 2006 Pension Protection Act, the analysis of land based on the landowner's conservation priorities, and the decision making process of ranchers.

Tony and Jack's book, by the same title, provides a range of options to agricultural landowners who are interested in conserving their land. See page 6 for more details regarding the "Saving the Ranch" book.

### NEW MEXICO ORGANIC FARMING CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 16TH - ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Scott Wilber, our Executive Director, organized a panel presentation on "Conservation Easements as a Tool for Preserving Agricultural Lands".

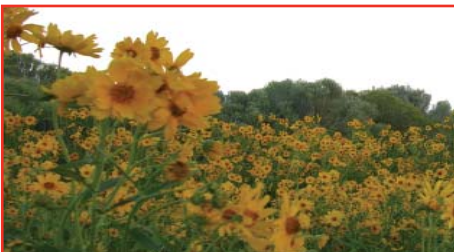
Participants at the conference learned about preserving agricultural lands with conservation easements, the role of land trusts, tax benefits, and a case study of the Village of Corrales Farmland Preservation Program.

This panel included Seth Fiedler from the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Sayre Gerhart and Taudy Smith from the Village of Corrales.

### LAS VEGAS LANDOWNER WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 21ST - LAS VEGAS, NM

Landowners in the vicinity of the Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge east of Las Vegas joined together to learn more about protecting their area with conservation easements at this half-day workshop presented by Scott Wilber.



NORTHERN NEW MEXICO WILDFLOWERS

### SILVER CITY SEMINAR

MARCH 1-2ND - SILVER CITY, NM

"Saving the Ranch: Maintaining Grant County's Culture and Your Estate" seminar presented conservation easements as a tool to help protect and preserve ranchland and open space in Grant County. This public forum and continuing education seminar was presented in-part by NMLC Board Chair, Jack Wright; Executive Director, Scott Wilber; Santa Fe attorney, Tracy Conner; and Las Cruces appraiser, Don Miller.



L TO R - CISSY McANDREWS, JACK WRIGHT, SCOTT WILBER, TRACY CONNER, & DON MILLER

Landowners joined realtors, appraisers, attorneys, and financial advisors to learn more about conservation work and how they can apply these tools in Grant County.

We would like to thank Cissy McAndrews of the Gila Regional Medical Center who assisted us in organizing this seminar. In addition, we are grateful to the underwriters: Gila Regional Medical Center Foundation, the Quivira Coalition's New Ranch Network and the U.S. Forest Service for their funding assistance. The seminars were recorded and featured on C.A.T.S. Public Access Television.

## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

### PLACITAS OPEN SPACE WORKSHOP

JUNE 16TH - PLACITAS, NM

NMLC will be presenting a session on private land conservation at this open space workshop sponsored by the Las Placitas Association.

### ANNUAL LAND TRUST RALLY

OCTOBER 3-6TH - DENVER, CO

The national Land Trust Alliance (LTA), of which NMLC is a member, will be holding its annual conference in Denver this fall. Over 2,500 land trust, conservation, government, academic and private-sector professionals attend this annual event. Because the conference is being held in Colorado this year, there should be good representation of land trusts from the Southwest region. Registration and additional information can be obtained by visiting [www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org).

## NMLC HELPS CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE ACQUIRE HAWKWATCH PROPERTY IN TIJERAS CANYON

On April 13th, the City of Albuquerque closed on the acquisition of a 63-acre parcel of land in Tijeras Canyon from Hawkwatch International (HI) for a purchase price of \$630,000. The “Hawkwatch” property is a critical piece of land within a proposed wildlife corridor across the busy I-40 transportation corridor in Tijeras Canyon. The property is adjacent to the Sandia Mountain Wilderness and the Tres Pistolas Open Space property, and will be managed by the City’s Open Space Division for open space uses consistent with the wildlife management objectives of the acquisition.

NMLC facilitated the acquisition of this property by securing a one-year option agreement with HI, working with the Albuquerque City Council to identify and earmark funding for the acquisition, and negotiating the real estate sale agreement between the City and HI. We would like to thank Mayor Marty Chavez, City Councilor Martin Heinrich, Mark Watson of the New Mexico Department of Fish & Game (NMDGF), Kurt Menke and other members of the Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Coalition (TCSPC) for their roles in making the acquisition and permanent protection of this property a reality.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TCSPC



L TO R - MARK WATSON-NMDGF, MATT SCHMADER-ALBUQUERQUE OPEN SPACE DIVISION, SCOTT WILBER-NMLC, ALBUQUERQUE MAYOR MARTY CHAVEZ, THOMAS BENEDICT-HAWKWATCH INTERNATIONAL, KURT MENKE-TCSPC, AND ALBUQUERQUE CITY COUNCILOR MARTIN HEINRICH AT THE HAWKWATCH PRESS CONFERENCE IN APRIL.



XSX RANCH EASEMENT WITHIN THE GILA WILDERNESS

## HISTORIC XSX RANCH PROTECTED

We would like to extend our thanks to Dr. Asa and Jean Barnes and Sam and Betsy Holdsworth for their respective donations of conservation easements last December over the historic XSX Ranch properties, located along the East Fork of the Gila River approximately 40 miles north of Silver City in Grant County. The properties are inholdings within the Gila Wilderness Area, administered by the Gila National Forest.

The properties, which comprise 160 acres of mixed pinyon-juniper woodland, grasslands and a one-third mile segment of the East Fork of the Gila River, provide important habitat for muledeer, elk, black bear, mountain lion and a variety of federal and state threatened and endangered species, including Southwest willow flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, Mexican spotted owl, loach minnow and spikedace. The easement also protects a significant pre-Colombian cultural site located on one of the properties.



L TO R - JEAN BARNES, DR. ASA BARNES, & SAM HOLDSWORTH WITH FRIENDS, RIO & BEAR



## MOUNTAIN PROPERTY CONSERVED SOUTH OF ANGEL FIRE

NMLC thanks Shawn and Donna Agnew for their generous donation last December of a conservation easement over their 110-acre property, located near Hidden Lake, south of Angel Fire, in Colfax County.

The property is characterized by a mixed spruce-fir forest, intermingled with aspen, that provides habitat for mule deer, elk, black bear, mountain lion, bobcat and pine marten. The property affords spectacular views of the surrounding Sangre de Cristo and Cimarron mountains.



BIORESEARCH RANCH

## GOOD NEWS FOR THE BIORESEARCH RANCH

In January of this year, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) approved a \$50,000 grant for NMLC, which will be applied toward the placement of a conservation easement over this 1,700 acre ranch located approximately ten miles southeast of Rodeo in the Hidalgo County. This spectacular property, which



KATHERINE & ROBERT SCHOLES (CENTER) WITH THE BIORESEARCH GROUP

has been managed since 1973 as an ecological research and monitoring site and facility, is situated in the heart of the Peloncillo Mountains, which have been identified as one of the highest priority biodiversity conservation areas in the state. Located in the Apache Highlands, the property comprises of three priority habitat types identified in the New Mexico State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy: Chihuahuan Desert, Madrean oak canyon woodlands and Piedmont grasslands. A variety of federal and state threatened and endangered species are known to occur on the property, including Desert Bighorn Sheep, Coues whitetail deer, collared peccary, southern long-nosed bat, northern beardless tyrannulet, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, Gould's wild turkey and a variety of hummingbirds.

The property is adjacent to the Central Peloncillos Wilderness Study Area, administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Diamond A Ranch (formerly the Gray Ranch), of which, over 300,000 acres are protected by a conservation easement held by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and thus contributes to the protection of a larger landscape locally known as the Malpai Borderlands.

NMLC thanks Peter Warren (TNC), Bill McDonald (Malpai Borderlands Group), Mark Watson (NMDGF), Jim McCormick (BLM), Bill Radke (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) and Dr. Sanford Schemnitz (retired New Mexico State University) for their respective roles as reviewers of the NFWF application. We anticipate completing this project before year-end.

## SAVING MESILLA'S HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

JACK WRIGHT

Mesilla, located on the outskirts of Las Cruces, is southern New Mexico's most historic land grant village. It was settled by Mexican colonists in the 1840's, occupied by the Confederacy, had been a stop on the Butterfield Overland Mail, and was the site for the signing of the Gadsden Purchase.

In recent years, Mesilla's beautiful landscape of pecan groves and chili fields along the Rio Grande River is increasingly being converted to residential development. Less than half the village's agricultural land remains.



PHOTO BY FED BONETTI

NMLC is preparing a Farmland Conservation Plan to help save this historic landscape, which is being spearheaded by Board Chair, Jack Wright.

Key lands are being identified through public meetings and the use of Geographic Information Systems analysis. Implementation techniques detailed in the plan include cluster development, conservation easements, and the purchase of development rights.

Funding for this project came through a grant from the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration-Local Government Division. The draft plan will be completed by the end of May.

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### WISH LIST

IF YOU CAN HELP US WITH A GIFT FROM OUR WISH LIST, PLEASE CONTACT US TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS OR TO FIND OUT MORE DETAILS. ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.

- ▶ **GPS SYSTEM** - for use in conservation projects and conservation easement monitoring.
- ▶ **DIGITAL CAMERA (dSLR)** - for documenting land conservation projects and conservation easement monitoring.
- ▶ **OFFICE FURNITURE** - desks and chairs.

## SAVING THE RANCH: CONSERVATION EASEMENT DESIGN IN THE AMERICAN WEST

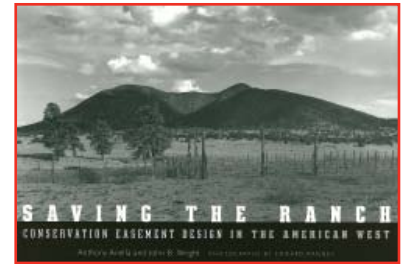
ISLAND PRESS

With the rapidly changing economics of life in the American West, ranchers from Montana to New Mexico are finding the development land value of their land is now worth more than the cattle it produces. "Cashing In" has become an increasingly chosen solution and often the integrity of the land becomes an afterthought to economic survival. In **SAVING THE RANCH: CONSERVATION EASEMENT DESIGN IN THE AMERICAN WEST**, authors and NMLC Board Members, Anthony Anella and John B. (Jack) Wright, offer an alternative solution-the conservation easement-a voluntary legal agreement that puts the market to work for the land and allows ranchers to capitalize on a lifetime of stewardship.

**SAVING THE RANCH** is a concise and readable guide to conservation easements for ranchers, conservationists and developers concerned with protecting the natural and scenic values of ranch lands in the western United States. The book shows how ranchers can reduce estate taxes, generate and shelter income, and combine land conservation with estate planning. Case studies explore how conservation easements have been used, helping readers to understand the variety of circumstances under which easements can be effective. Throughout the book, maps and illustrations easily interpret the issues, while Santa Fe photographer Edward Ranney brings those issues to life with his rich and captivating photographs.

**SAVING THE RANCH** gives ranchers the information they need to continue their stewardship of natural resources while identifying and capturing the conservation value of their land. The first book of its kind to describe in plain and elegant language the steps to save a ranch from development, it is the essential new work for anyone concerned with conserving ranching as a way of life in the American West.

**SAVING THE RANCH** is available from our office, your local bookseller, or the publisher, Island Press.

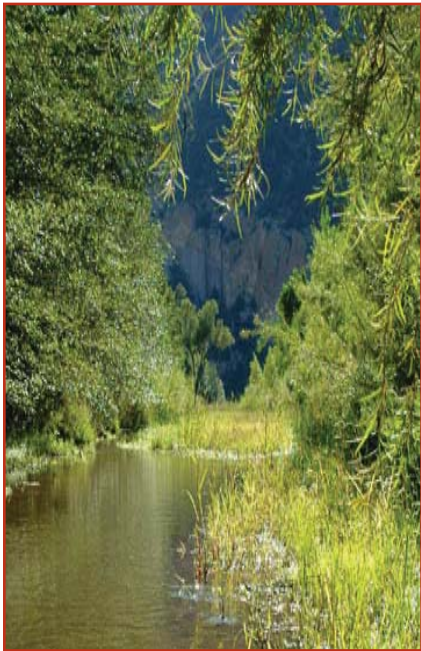


## CREATING A LEGACY OF PRESERVED LAND

When you live in a state like New Mexico, it is often easy to take for granted the incredible natural and cultural diversity that we enjoy here. The Land of Enchantment means different things to different people. But what would New Mexico be without its wide open spaces, its Native American sites and historical heritage, and its farm, ranch and forest lands which provide a source of food and fiber as well as valuable habitat for an abundance of wildlife? It's hard to imagine New Mexico without these features and attributes. They define who we are and enrich the quality of our lives.

The daily work we do as a land trust in preserving and protecting New Mexico ensures the best of New Mexico's land heritage is protected for future generations to enjoy. We can't do this alone.

Like any non-profit organization, we depend on your support for our day-to-day operations and for our long-term sustainability. We are asking you to help invest in our future by supporting the work NMLC does everyday.



NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

Whether you help by donating a conservation easement, making an annual contribution, or fulfilling our wish list needs, your contribution is appreciated.

You may consider assisting with the long-term sustainability of NMLC by designating us as a beneficiary in your will or establishing a planned giving program.

Your support helps us in two ways: to protect vital lands today for tomorrow and to ensure our long-term viability

as an organization so that we can continue protecting and stewarding land well into the future.

Won't you join us by supporting our efforts? To make a donation or for more information, contact our Development Director, Debbie DeMarais.

*When landowners, Dr. Asa & Jean Barnes, were asked why they decided to protect their property (XSX Ranch), they replied... "from the first time we saw the ranch, we felt an obligation of good stewardship to assure its preservation in as natural a state as possible."*

## IN GRATITUDE TO OUR SUPPORTERS -

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUPPORT!

- ▶ Shawn Agnew
- ▶ Charmay Allred
- ▶ Chilton Anderson
- ▶ Anthony Anella
- ▶ Anonymous (6)
- ▶ Mary Arnold
- ▶ Jeremy Aslaksen
- ▶ Reid Bandeen
- ▶ Dr. Asa & Jean Barnes
- ▶ Tony Benson
- ▶ Robert & Lucinda Berglund
- ▶ Dr. Hamilton Brown
- ▶ David Buchholtz
- ▶ Clifford Burke & Virginia Mudd
- ▶ Century Bank
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- ▶ Community Bank
- ▶ William & Virginia Cowles
- ▶ B.W. & Billie Cox
- ▶ Anale Cummings
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- ▶ Werner & Helen Muller
- ▶ Ann Mumford
- ▶ Maureen Murphy
- ▶ Judith Naumburg
- ▶ John L. Nelson
- ▶ Steve Northup
- ▶ Jane Petchesky
- ▶ Quivira Coalition/New Ranch Network
- ▶ Rancho Viejo Ltd. Partnership
- ▶ Edward & Melanie Ranney
- ▶ Wolfgang Rempen
- ▶ Cecilia Richardson
- ▶ Elizabeth Richardson
- ▶ Margaret & Harry Ritchie
- ▶ Pamela Roy
- ▶ E.W. Schisler
- ▶ Sotheby's International Realty
- ▶ Spears Architects
- ▶ Randall & Mary Anne Stenson, M.D.
- ▶ Taos Land Trust
- ▶ J. Paul & Mary Taylor
- ▶ Ann Taylor
- ▶ Lois Taylor
- ▶ Thaw Charitable Trust
- ▶ Moo Thorpe
- ▶ Donald Van Soelen
- ▶ Verde Heritage Realty
- ▶ Robert & Michal Von Buelow
- ▶ Drs. Phyllis & Barry Weiner
- ▶ Dr. Steven Weiss
- ▶ John & Susan Whitney
- ▶ Jim Winder
- ▶ Patricia Witcher
- ▶ John B. (Jack) Wright
- ▶ Cathy Wright

CONTRIBUTIONS AS OF JULY 2006.  
IF YOUR NAME WAS MISPELLED OR  
INADVERTENTLY OMITTED, PLEASE  
ACCEPT OUR APOLOGIES AND ADVISE  
US OF OUR ERROR. THANK YOU.

# NEW MEXICO LAND CONSERVANCY

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Address Label

## KEEPING YOU INFORMED

Did you know NMLC's **WEBSITE** has a vast collection of information including descriptions and beautiful photographs of many of the properties we have helped to protect?

At [WWW.NMLANDCONSERVANCY.ORG](http://WWW.NMLANDCONSERVANCY.ORG) you can find comprehensive information about conservation easements, tax benefits, how you can help us continue to protect our land heritage and much more. We invite you to take a quick tour.

What you'll find inside the Conservation Resources section:

- ▶ The **SERVICES WE PROVIDE** section features detailed information on Land Conservation, Stewardship and Workshops.
- ▶ Our **REFERENCES** section presents our Conservation Easement Model Deed, Conservation Easement Process Overview, Frequently Asked Questions, and Federal and State Tax Information.
- ▶ Get up-to-date information on land conservation and related tax issues in the **POLICY AND LEGISLATION NEWS** section.
- ▶ Learn about Federal and New Mexico State tax incentives in the **TAX BENEFITS** section.

Many of these reference materials can be downloaded in a PDF format from our website or you may give us a call at 505/986-3801 and we'll be happy to send you the materials you request.

**NOW AVAILABLE** - our Landowner's Guide to Conservation Easements. For your free copy, contact our office.

