

New Mexico Land Conservancy

Preserving New Mexico's Land Heritage

2009
Annual
Report

www.nmlandconservancy.org





Adelante – Forging Ahead Toward a Bright Future

Dear Friends,

The end of a year is a time for reflection, and it also presents an opportunity to plan for the future.

This year will go down as a particularly memorable year for us at the New Mexico Land Conservancy. It began on a high note with the tremendous gift of the Petchesky Ranch to our organization by Jane Petchesky, a long-time Santa Fe resident and concerned citizen.

In addition to her gracious manner, Jane Petchesky possesses a boundless zeal for life and the many causes she supports, including conservation, and we are honored to be able to do our work from the ranch that she and her husband Gene built. She is an inspiration for us all and her enthusiasm continues to motivate us, driving us on to pursue our important mission.

This year also defines the end of the first five years since we made a decision to become a statewide land trust, focusing our efforts on direct, on-the-ground land conservation particularly in underserved parts of the state.

It's hard to believe that it has been five years since we completed our first conservation easement on the Montosa Ranch at the north end of the Plains of San Agustin in Socorro County. At 30,000 acres, this is still the largest single easement that we have done, and the incredible generosity and confidence that the landowner bestowed on us as a new land trust still moves me today.

Just as the Petchesky Ranch has helped put us on the map in Santa Fe, the Montosa Ranch easement helped put us on the map in the state. I think our work, particularly within the agricultural community, has continued to live up to this great beginning. As of the end of 2009, we have increased the amount of land we have helped conserve around the state and region to almost 73,000 acres. As part of this process, we have been working hard to get the word out about land conservation techniques and benefits to landowners and other public and private partners, including our elected officials.

None of our successes would be possible without the dedication of our staff and Board. This year marks the end of my first five years at this organization. It has truly been a pleasure to work with such an impressive group of people and, through our collective efforts, help build the New Mexico Land Conservancy into a viable and sustainable statewide land trust.

As we usher in both a new year and a new decade, I see nothing but opportunities ahead leading to an even brighter future for land conservation in New Mexico. I invite you to join us on this amazing journey to help preserve the incredible natural, cultural and western heritage that defines our magnificent state.

With appreciation,

Scott Wilber

Executive Director



History of NMLC

The New Mexico Land Conservancy (NMLC) is a non-profit land trust founded in 2002 in recognition of important land conservation needs throughout the state. NMLC is dedicated to ensuring that New Mexico remains the ‘Land of Enchantment’ for the benefit of local communities, the public and future generations. We are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors whose primary role is policy-making, governance and strategic planning for the organization.

Our Mission

We work to preserve New Mexico’s land heritage by protecting significant wildlife habitat, productive agricultural lands, natural and cultural areas, scenic open space and recreational lands throughout the state for conservation purposes and human benefit.

Our Conservation Goals

The New Mexico Land Conservancy’s ten-year goal is to conserve, directly or in partnership with others, 250,000 acres of New Mexico’s highest conservation-value lands by 2016. We work in collaboration with private landowners, community groups, other conservation organizations and public agencies to pursue and achieve this goal.

What Makes Us Different

New Mexico has a diverse and vibrant land trust community, made up of organizations of various sizes and areas of focus. NMLC is proud to be part of this community. Because we are a state-wide organization, at times our areas of interest overlap with other land trusts but, by and large, we do most of our work in the areas around the state that do not have a local trust to turn to.

Our projects range from protecting and conserving small, urban open space and farm parcels to large working ranches, wildlife habitat and natural areas at watershed and landscape scales. With each organization in New Mexico playing a specific and important role, New Mexico is well-served by the land trust community.

Partners in a National Movement

As a member of the national Land Trust Alliance (LTA), NMLC can draw on the strength and knowledge of a network of conservation organizations across the country.

NMLC staff members attended the LTA Rally in Portland, OR in October 2009, an annual event that draws over 2,000 people from over 1,600 land trusts, other conservation organizations and partner public agencies nationwide. This year, we also joined other LTA member land trusts in enrolling in a proposed collective conservation easement defense insurance program, which will enhance our stewardship capacity and generate more resources in case of large-scale violations. We continue to plan for professional accreditation through LTA, which will give supporters and partners assurance that we are operating according to the highest standards and practices of the land trust industry.



Putting Your Contributions to Good Use

NMLC staff are experts in bringing a variety of resources to bear to accomplish our mission and goals, and making sure that most of these resources are channeled where they need to go—toward on-the-ground land protection. We work closely with each landowner to ensure that solid and defensible conservation agreements are created that will serve current and future owners while protecting the subject land from the threats of development and other incompatible uses. We bring public and private partners together for the shared goal of preserving land.

Land Conservation & Stewardship

This year we celebrated the completion of eight new easements, bringing our total area of conserved land to 76,270 around the state.

We strive to ensure that our projects have significant conservation values as well as public benefit and support. We use a variety of voluntary land protection methods, though our primary tool is the conservation easement.

In the majority of cases, we work on donated conservation easements with private landowners, who may then be eligible for associated federal and state tax benefits. NMLC has also completed several purchased conservation easements with public and private funding, and we occasionally accept transfers of easements from other land trusts.

But completing the easement is only half the battle—the other part is defending it in perpetuity. NMLC provides stewardship, monitoring and legal defense for all of the conservation easements it holds. Each year, our staff visits or monitors all of the properties over which we have easements to make sure the terms of the easement are being honored.

To ensure that we are able to meet this responsibility, we have created a special Stewardship Fund to cover the recurring and long-term costs of monitoring and legal defense. In the event of a

violation, NMLC can draw upon this fund to legally defend the easement. These funds are managed separately from our operating expenses.

Communications & Outreach

NMLC works around the state to increase awareness among landowners, community groups and public agencies about the techniques and benefits associated with private land conservation. We also provide information at relevant conferences and public events.

This year we opened the doors of the Petchesky Conservation Center, which will not only serve as a base for our operations but a venue for promoting conservation, and for bringing together other like-kind organizations to meet and discuss issues of mutual concern.



Photo by Clay Ellis

Policy & Legislation

Although most of our landowners count conservation as their utmost goal, tax incentives often make an easement financially feasible for a particular landowner. New Mexico currently enjoys a combination of federal tax deductions and a transferable state tax credit, which represent some of the most favorable conditions for private land conservation in recent years.

This year, NMLC worked with other land conservation organizations to educate policymakers on the importance of retaining these tax incentives even at a time when the state and country are facing severe economic challenges.

NMLC Board and Staff 2009

Executive Committee

Dr. John B. (Jack) Wright, Chair
Las Cruces, NM

Jack is Chair of the Geography Department at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, where he has been a professor of Geography since 1990. In addition to his academic pursuits, Jack has consulted in the land trust field for 30 years and written numerous books and articles on land conservation, most recently *Saving the Ranch: Conservation Easement Design in the American West* (Island Press, 2004), which he co-authored with fellow NMLC Board member Anthony Anella. Jack

spends his summers in Montana and, for eight years, served on the Board of the Five Valleys Land Trust based in Missoula. He holds three degrees in Geography: B.A. from the University of Massachusetts, M.A. from University of Montana, and Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley.

Joseph R. T. Montoya, Vice Chair
Santa Fe, NM

Joseph is a native New Mexican with family roots in Mora and Santa Fe. He is currently Deputy Director of the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority. Previously, he served as Executive Director of the Albuquerque Civic Trust. Joseph’s background is in community planning and affordable housing, and he worked for many years for the City of Santa Fe in Housing & Economic Development and Community Services. Joseph was also instrumental in forming the first housing trust in the state. He is a past president of 1000 Friends of New Mexico and currently serves on the Board of the Rural

Development Corporation. He holds a B.A. in University Studies and Architecture from the University of New Mexico.

Anthony (Tony) Anella, Secretary
Albuquerque, NM

Tony is the principal of Anthony Anella Architect AIA, an award-winning practice dedicated to site-sensitive design; and a partner in Conservation Design Partners, an Albuquerque group that specializes in conservation-based design and development. Born and raised in Albuquerque, Tony spent his early summers working on farms and ranches in New Mexico. From that experience he gained an abiding respect for the land and the people who earn their living on it. He believes that good design is distinguished by the art of listening and by letting the land do most of the talking. He holds a B.A. in History from Dartmouth College and a M.A. in Architecture from the University of Colorado.

Dave Johnson, Treasurer
Farmington, NM

Dave is currently working with a private environmental consulting firm specializing in wildlife habitat, wetlands, land conservation and erosion control measures. Prior to that, he worked for over 25 years with New Mexico State Parks where he retired as Director of Design and Development. Some of his principal projects included designing the Rio Grande Nature Center, Living Desert State Park, and the Mesilla Valley Bosque Park. He holds a B.S. in Environmental Biology from the University of Colorado.

Members of the Board

Anthony L. (Tony) Benson
Past Chair & Founding Member
Taos, NM

Tony is a retired geologist and former Vice-President of Exploration for the Amoco Corporation. In his “retirement,” Tony has been in cattle ranching around Cerros de Taos for the past several years. In 1999, he granted a conservation easement to the Taos

Land Trust on part of his ranch. Tony also serves as an Adjunct Professor at the University of New Mexico-Taos, a member of the Board of Supervisors of the Taos Soil and Water Conservation District, a Board member of the Taos Land Trust. He holds B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Geology from Ohio State.

Ray Powell, Board Member
Los Ranchos, NM

Ray is currently the Regional Director of the Jane Goodall Institute’s Roots and Shoots Four Corners States Program, based in Santa Fe. Previously, he was the Executive Director for the Valles Caldera National Preserve from 2004-2005, and New Mexico State Commissioner of Public Lands from 1993-2002. He has been a practicing veterinarian for over 20 years. Ray was an avid tennis professional for twelve years with the United States Professional Tennis Association. He has a D.V.M. in Veterinary Medicine from Tufts University, a M.S. in Botany and Ecology from the University of New Mexico, and a B.S. in Anthropology and Biology from the University of New Mexico.

Elizabeth H. Richardson, Founding Member
Los Angeles, CA

Elizabeth retired from Colorado Open Lands in 2001, but continues to be actively engaged in the land trust movement. She served on the Board of the Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts for 12 years. She is a Board Overseer of Simon’s Rock College of Bard, and is also on the Boards of the Rocky Mountain Women’s Institute, the South Metro Land Conservancy and the Greenway Foundation. She holds a B.A. from Radcliffe College, a M.P.A. from University of Southern California, and an M.B.A. in Finance from University of Denver.

Moo Thorpe, Board Member
Santa Fe, NM

Moo, a native of Santa Fe, is a real estate broker with Sotheby’s International Realty. During her career, she has marketed and developed several successful communities in Santa Fe and

Northern New Mexico. She and her husband Marc built an authentic adobe home where she lives with her two children and many pets. With her family, Moo skis, camps, hikes, rides horses, and trail runs in the mountains. She holds a B.A. in Geography from Middlebury College in Vermont.

New Members of Our Board 2009

NMLC is proud to welcome new members, Dale Armstrong and Vernon Casados, to our Board of Directors.



Dale Armstrong was born and raised on a ranch in Quemado, NM. Over the past 22 years, he has grown TLC Plumbing, Heating and Cooling from a one-man shop to one of the premier service companies in the state with 275 employees. While working full-time to support a thriving business, Dale finds time to balance business and pleasure: he and his wife Gail have four children and operate a cattle ranch in Magdalena, NM. We are looking forward to putting Dale’s business and ranching expertise to work for land conservation.



Vernon Casados has been farming and ranching all his life. In 2008 he worked with NMLC to put an easement on his ranch along the Chama River near the Village of Los Ojos in Rio Arriba County. He then paid NMLC the highest possible compliment by agreeing to serve on our Board of Directors. Following the sale of his ranch, Vernon, along with Dora, his wife of 30 years, bought a small farm in the Radium Springs area in southern New Mexico. There he will grow corn, chile, tomatoes, and maybe some alfalfa, while enjoying the warmer temperatures. In addition to farming and ranching, Vernon loves training and showing horses.



Staff

J. Scott Wilber
Executive Director

Scott has over 20 years of experience working in natural resource management, land conservation and community development throughout the Rocky Mountain West and Latin America. Scott joined NMLC in 2004 as its Conservation Director and was named Executive Director in 2006. Previously, he worked for The Trust for Public Land, Colorado Open Lands, The Nature Conservancy’s Latin American Division, the Tropical Forest Foundation and the U.S. Forest Service. He also served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras and is fluent in Spanish. Scott grew up in Wyoming where he gained his love for the land and the great outdoors. He holds a B.S. in Forest Management from Northern Arizona University, and a M.A. in Geography and Latin American Studies from University of New Mexico.

Michael Scisco
Conservation Specialist

Michael has ten years of experience working in the natural resource conservation field. He joined NMLC in January 2008

and supports the organization’s conservation, stewardship and outreach efforts. Previously, Michael worked for the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust, Ecotrust, and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. Michael has extensive conservation planning and GIS experience related to open space preservation, water quality enhancement, habitat protection and farmland preservation. Michael holds a B.S. in Environmental Science from Western Washington University and a Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) from Portland State University.

Kris Murphey
Office Manager

Kris has worked for many years in non-profit management and journalism. She joined NMLC in 2007 as a part-time office manager. In addition to her work with NMLC, Kris’ volunteer activities include work in hunger relief, early childhood education/ abuse prevention, and historic preservation organizations. She currently serves on the Board of The Food Depot and of Dragonfly Nature and Science School, both in Santa Fe. She holds a B.A. in Linguistics from the University of California at Berkeley.

Members of the NMLC board and staff from left to right: Tony Benson, Tony Anella, Joseph Montoya, Jack Wright, Dave Johnson, Elizabeth Richardson, Jennifer Kilbourn (former NMLC Communications and Development Coordinator), Moo Thorpe, Michael Scisco, Kris Murphey, Scott Wilber. Not pictured: Ray Powell.



Building a Sustainable Base for the Future

Petchesky Conservation Center

The New Mexico Land Conservancy was honored to receive a gift of land and a house from Jane Petchesky, a long-time Santa Fe resident, in early 2009. After some minor remodeling, we moved our offices to the newly renamed Petchesky Conservation Center in April, and subsequently held a grand opening event in June.



Located in the heart of the Community College District on the south side of Santa Fe, the Petchesky Conservation Center will house NMLC’s offices, and serve as a space for meetings and special events. It includes 240 acres of land that are permanently protected by a conservation easement which

Jane Petchesky granted to the Forest Trust prior to donating the property to the New Mexico Land Conservancy. In addition, Mrs. Petchesky donated several trail easements through her property that the public will be able to use for walking, running, biking and horseback riding once these trails are constructed by Santa Fe County. These easements will provide connectivity to a larger network of trails planned for the district.

Jane Petchesky and her late husband, Gene, were probably best known as the co-owners and operators of the Guarantee store located on the Santa Fe Plaza for many years. Moving south to escape the ever-expanding city limits in the late 1960s, the Petcheskys completed their dream “adobe hacienda” in 1970 with conservation in mind. Some of the design features were quite progressive for the times, including passive solar energy, water catchment from the roof and a grey-water system to irrigate fruit trees.

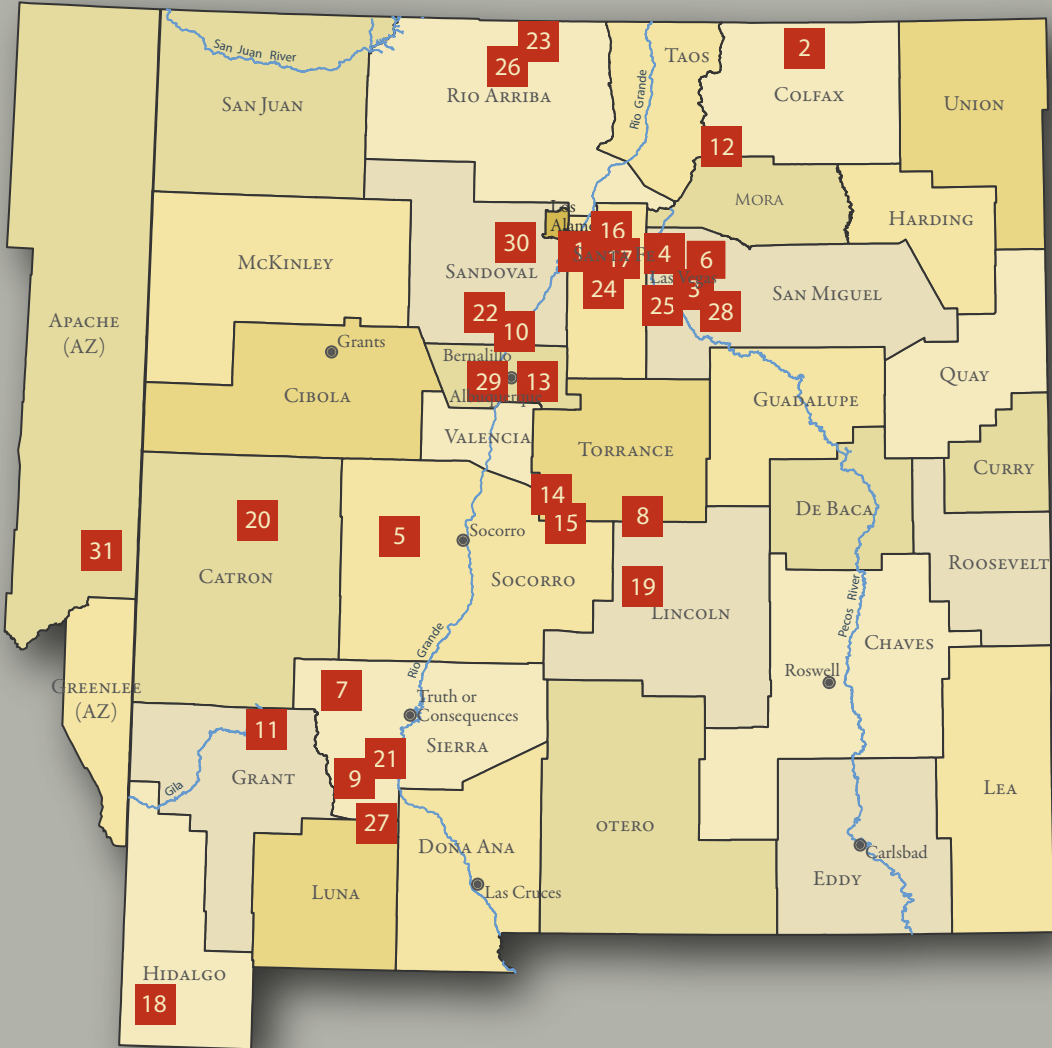
Over the years, they bred and raised a number of champion quarter horses on the property. Gene, a co-founder of the Santa Fe Rodeo, remained involved in rodeo and horse racing events for a number of years while Jane pursued her interests in water conservation and open space preservation. Jane was also involved in the creation of the Community College District — now the fastest growing district within Santa Fe County — and was an early advocate for smart growth and sustainable development throughout the county.

From her new home at the El Castillo Retirement Community, Jane said, “It gives me great satisfaction to know that the land that Gene and I lived on and maintained for so many years will be permanently protected for the public to enjoy and learn from through the ongoing conservation work of the New Mexico Land Conservancy.” We are very proud to be carrying on Jane Petchesky’s conservation legacy from her beautiful ranch.



Completed Conservation Projects

Total Land Conserved as of January, 2010
76,270 acres



1	Jacona Farm Trust - 2 acres	10	Corrales Gateway - 18 acres	16	Anonymous - 65 acres	25	Forked Lightning Ranch - 710 acres
2	La Tier - 20 acres	10	Kendall - 2 acres	17	Las Acequias Farm - 96 acres	26	Rutheron Land & Cattle - 53 acres
3	Tyson - 58 acres	10	Minge - 2 acres	18	Bioresearch Ranch - 1,760 acres	27	Diamond Cross Ranch - 3,220 acres
4	Zaplin - 103 acres	10	Ventana Grande - 6 acres	19	Ancho Cattle Company - 9,871 acres	28	Sierra y Llanos Land & Cattle 225 acres
5	Montosa Ranch - 30,828 acres	11	XSX Ranch - 160 acres	20	Alegres Mountain Ranch - 3,240 acres	29	Sparks - West - 5 acres
6	Melton - 1,105 acres	12	Agnew - 110 acres	21	North and South Lake Valley Ranch 1,845 acres	30	Eagle Heights - 63 acres
7	Dethlefsen - 380 acres	13	Hawkwatch - 63 acres	22	Gonzales Farmland - 5 acres	31	EC Bar Ranch (AZ) - 94 acres
8	Cougar Mountain Ranch - 6,160 acres	14	Goat Canyon - 1,786 acres	23	Ancones Ranch - 197 acres		
9	Berrenda Creek Ranch - 7,447 acres	15	Cain Ranch - 6,400 acres	24	Petchesky Ranch - 262 acres		

Forked Lightning Ranch – Pecos River

Size: 710 acres

Location: North of the Village of Rowe in San Miguel County

Eco-Region: Southern Rocky Mountains

Conservation Values: Wildlife Habitat & Scenic Open Space

Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: December 2009



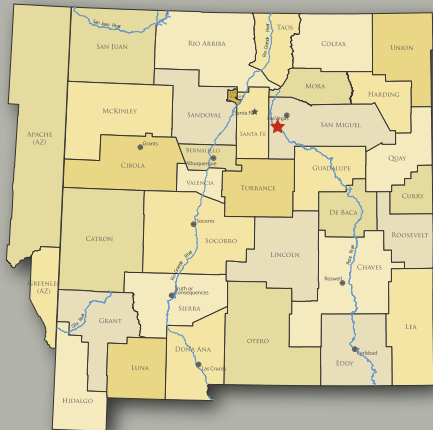
Many longtime residents of the Santa Fe and Las Vegas area will be familiar with the famous Forked Lightning Ranch located in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains between the villages of Pecos and Rowe. Texas oilman Buddy Fogelson purchased the ranch in 1941 and ran a small cattle operation for several years. In 1949 Mr. Fogelson married the actress Greer Garson, and the ranch house soon became a center for gracious entertaining.

After Mr. Fogelson’s death in 1987, Ms. Garson inherited the “old” portion of the Forked Lightning Ranch and subsequently donated a portion to the National Park Service to form part of what is now the Pecos National Historical Park. In 2000, actress Jane Fonda purchased what was left of the original ranch after a series of subdivisions and sales over the years. Since then, Ms. Fonda has been working diligently to conserve and improve the unique natural communities on the ranch.

Today, the Forked Lightning Ranch comprises 3,200 acres south of the Pecos National Historic Park and east of the Santa Fe National Forest, and includes over three miles of the Pecos River. The setting of the ranch is spectacular. The Pecos River meanders through the center of the property and, over millenia, has exposed large rock outcroppings. While piñon-juniper woodlands predominate throughout most of the ranch, patches of cottonwood and willows define the riparian corridor along the river. These vegetative communities and the river provide excellent natural habitat for a host of native species of fish and wildlife.

In early 2009, Ms. Fonda approached NMLC with the intent of conserving the ranch. The Pecos River Easement is the first phase of a two-phase project through which Ms. Fonda has committed to place more than three-quarters of the ranch under permanent protection.

We are extremely honored to have the opportunity to work with Ms. Fonda to protect this unique property, not only for its high conservation value but due to its historical significance for the area as well. We will complete the second portion of this important conservation effort in 2010.



Alegres Mountain Ranch - North

Size: 1,760 acres

Location: South of Pie Town in Catron County

Eco-Region: AZ/NM Mountains

Conservation Values: Agriculture, Wildlife Habitat & Scenic Open Space

Type of Project: Purchased Conservation Easement

Date Completed: August 2009

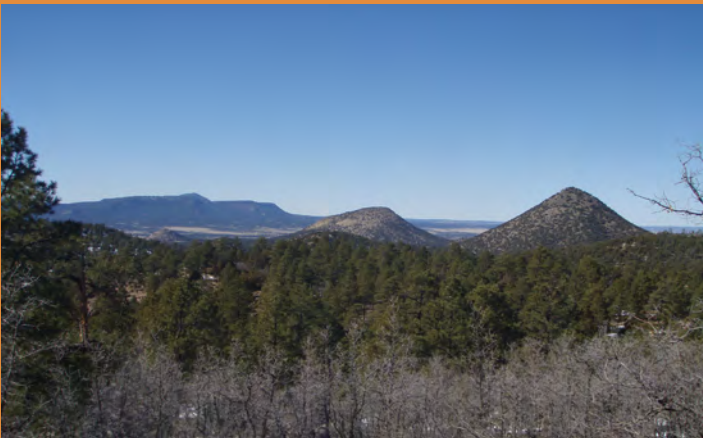


The generosity of the landowners with whom NMLC works never ceases to amaze us. As a long-time landowner in Catron County, Blake Tollett has seen the impending development of the land surrounding Alegres Mountain. Because of this concern, and his interest in land conservation and stewardship, Mr. Tollett donated a 1,480-acre conservation easement to NMLC in 2008. In 2009, Mr. Tollett sold an additional 1,760-acre conservation easement for a fraction of its appraised value, thereby protecting 3,420 acres of the western and southern flanks of Alegres Mountain.

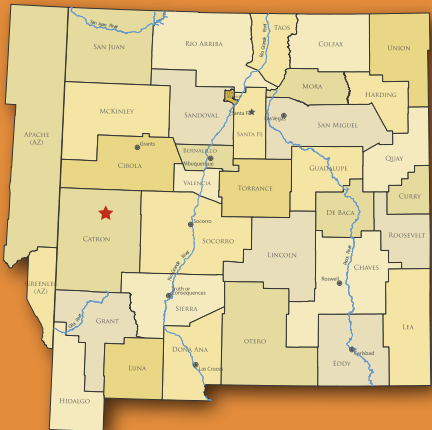
Straddling the Continental Divide, between the Apache and Cibola national forests, the Alegres Mountain North easement is located in a strategic area for NMLC’s conservation efforts. The protection of this property will help bridge the gap between these public lands and serve as a wildlife corridor for a wide variety of native species.

NMLC is co-holding this easement with the New Mexico State Forestry Division (NMSFD). NMLC has partnered with NMSFD in the past on a number of purchased conservation easements, using state funding provided through the New Mexico Energy, Mineral and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD). NMSFC and EMNRD have proven to be excellent partners in land conservation and we look forward to more opportunities for collaboration in the future.

NMLC is currently working with Mr. Tollett’s neighbors to protect nearly 5,000 acres on the eastern flanks of Alegres



Mountain. It is our hope that the examples set by Mr. Tollett and his neighbors will help spur more conservation in this unique part of Catron County.



Diamond Cross Ranch

Size: 3,220 acres

Location: Northeast of Deming along Highway 27 in Sierra and Luna Counties

Eco-Region: Chihuahuah Desert Grasslands

Conservation Values: Agriculture, Scenic Open Space, & Wildlife Habitat

Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: December 2009

Often, land conservation takes time, and this was the case with the Diamond Cross Ranch. After many years of considering their options, NMLC is pleased to have completed a conservation easement for the Diamond Cross Ranch with landowners Doug and Elizabeth Craig.

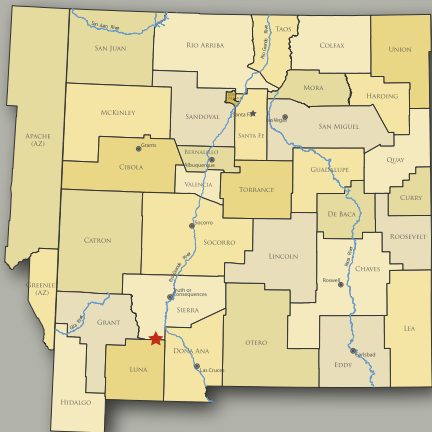
As part of the local ranching community, the Diamond Cross Ranch includes 3,220 acres of deeded land as well as over 12,000 acres of leased Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and State Trust lands. The Diamond Cross Ranch will continue to contribute to the local and regional agricultural economies of the area through livestock production on the property.

The Diamond Cross Ranch provides some very significant natural habitat values. The area contains two prominent natural communities unique to southern New Mexico—Chihuahuah Desert Grasslands and Chihuahuah Desert Scrub—which are known locally as the Nutt Grasslands. These communities support a host of mammal and avian species native to New Mexico, most notably Pronghorn antelope and Aplomado falcon.

The ranch is also located along New Mexico State Highway 27—the Lake Valley Back Country Byway— which has been designated as a national back country byway and is administered by the BLM. The protection of Diamond Cross Ranch will preserve the viewshed along the scenic byway running through this unique and historic part of New Mexico.



The protection of Diamond Cross Ranch increases the total area of land under conservation easement in the Lake Valley area to over 12,000 acres. NMLC will continue with its efforts in the Lake Valley area to support agriculture and to protect the unique Chihuahuan Desert landscape of this part of southwestern New Mexico.



EC Bar Ranch

Size: 94 acres

Location: South of Springerville, Apache County, Arizona

Eco-Region: AZ/NM Mountains

Conservation Values: Agriculture, Wildlife Habitat & Scenic Open Space

Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: December 2009

Sometimes conservation has to defy the limitations of borders. So when NMLC learned about Jim Crosswhite’s amazing restoration accomplishments on the EC Bar Ranch in eastern Arizona and that he had been unable to find a land trust serving his region to complete a conservation easement, we knew that this opportunity was something we could not pass up.

The EC Bar Ranch conservation easement protects 94 acres of restored riparian habitat along a three-mile stretch of Nutrioso Creek, an important perennial stream and tributary of the Little Colorado River. Nutrioso Creek and the surrounding riparian area provide significant habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife, including several state and federally threatened and endangered species.

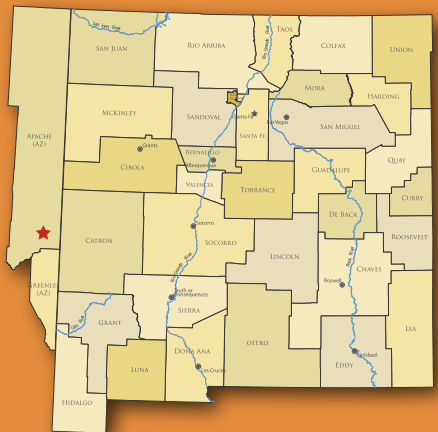
Through significant land management and restoration efforts over the past 13 years, Jim Crosswhite has achieved many “firsts,” and set an example for how to combine sustainable grazing practices with conservation in Arizona.

Perhaps one of his most impressive accomplishments is the removal of 13 miles of Nutrioso Creek from the list of non-compliant water bodies under the Clean Water Act by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This has resulted in the EC Bar Ranch attaining the highest water quality and aquatic/wildlife habitat standards for any landowner, public or private, in Arizona. In addition, for the first time ever, as part of a Safe Harbor Agreement with the



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the federally endangered Little Colorado River Spinedace was relocated from a segment of Nutrioso Creek on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest to the EC Bar Ranch.

Seemingly tireless, Mr. Crosswhite intends to continue his good practices such as removing invasive plants to improve habitat for the endangered Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and other birds. “I look forward to doing more outreach to educate the public about restoration and private land protection strategies,” he says. “I also would like to help Arizona figure out how to create tax incentives similar to New Mexico’s for landowners who donate conservation easements to qualified organizations such as the New Mexico Land Conservancy.”



Sierra y Llanos Land & Cattle

Size: 225 acres

Location: Just east of Las Vegas in San Miguel County

Eco-Region: Southern Rockies

Conservation Values: Agriculture, Scenic Open Space, & Wildlife Habitat

Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: December 2009

Werner Muller says that when he and his wife Helen first moved to the Las Vegas area in the summer of 1970 they had no idea that they would eventually spend their entire lives working, living and raising a family on what was at the time a “windblown, over grazed, piece of dry land southeast of Las Vegas.”

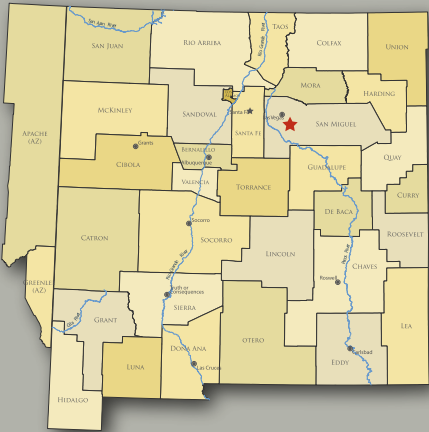
Over the years, the Mullers expanded their initial 100 acre purchase and gradually transformed the farm into a productive organic cattle and hay operation. The family has also been active in the agricultural community, working with New Mexico Cattle Growers Association, the San Miguel County 4-H Program, the San Miguel County Fair, the Storrie Water Project Users Association, Tierra y Montes Soil and Water Conservation District, the San Miguel County Extension Service, United World College, the Quivira Coalition, the New Mexico Organic Commodities Commission, and the Northern New Mexico Acequia Association. Through their collaborations with neighbors, government agencies and other groups, the Mullers have improved their land and prospered in the process.

The farm is located along the entrance road to the Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge, a stop-over area for a large number of migrating birds. Werner and Helen envision their farm as part of the buffer for the refuge as well as an eventual greenbelt around the perimeter of Las Vegas.

This vision is well on its way to becoming a reality. NMLC has now protected over 1,250 acres around the Las Vegas National



Wildlife Refuge east of Las Vegas and is actively pursuing the protection of more land in this area.



Rutheron Land & Cattle

Size: 53 acres

Location: South of Chama, near Los Ojos in Rio Arriba County

Eco-Region: Southern Rocky Mountains

Conservation Values: Agriculture, Scenic Open Space & Wildlife Habitat

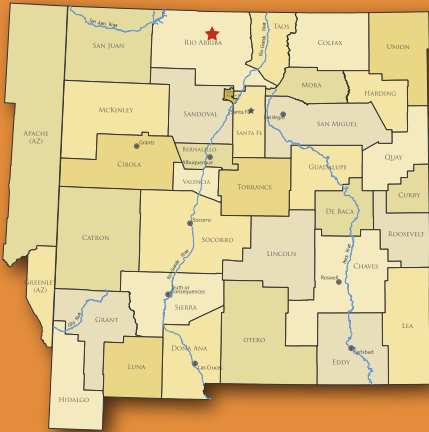
Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: October 2009

The Rutheron Land & Cattle property, near Heron Lake State Park, is one of the finest examples of what happens when landowners invest sweat equity into their land. In 1992, when Bill Horn and his wife Dianne purchased the property, it was over-grazed, run down, and an eyesore to the locals. Within a few years Mr. and Mrs. Horn transformed the property into a productive, well-maintained farming operation.

The property forms part of a picturesque agricultural corridor along Hwy 95 and affords magnificent views of the San Juan Mountains and Brazos Box. It is located in an area that is frequented by elk, white-tailed deer, mountain lion, black bear, fox, bobcat, coyote, badger and several species of raptors and waterfowl. It contains multiple ponds used by local and migrating bird populations.

Land always responds to good stewardship and the Horns have worked hard to take care of their property. NMLC is very gratified to have been able to help the Horns protect what they have worked so hard to create.



Eagle Heights

Size: 64 acres

Location: North of the Village of Jemez Springs in Sandoval County

Eco-Region: Southern Rockies

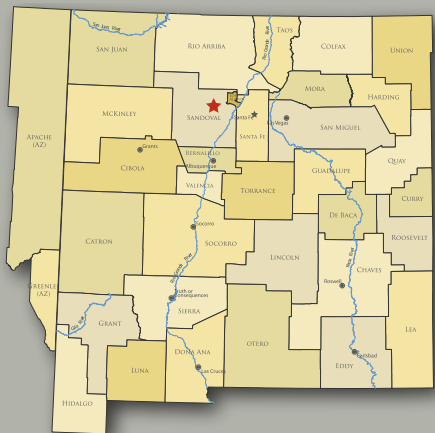
Conservation Values: Scenic Open Space & Wildlife Habitat

Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: December 2009

Private lands surrounded by national forest lands, known as in-holdings, are often highly desired for development. The landowners of the Eagle Heights property, Jeff Johnson and Susan Schillaci, recognized this phenomenon and have placed 64 acres of highly developable land within the Santa Fe National Forest under conservation, preserving the land’s natural habitat and scenic open space values.

The Eagle Heights conservation easement is located along Highway 4—the Jemez Mountain Scenic Byway. The easement will protect a portion of the scenic corridor along Cañon de San Diego which includes the Jemez River, Soda Dam, and the Village of Jemez Springs. The conservation easement will also protect in perpetuity the significant natural habitat of the property, including the multiple natural springs and seeps that are important watering areas for wildlife species native to the area. The property also affords spectacular views of the Tent Rocks National Monument.



Sparks – West

Size: 5 acres

Location: Within the Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque Bernalillo County

Eco-Region: Rio Grande Valley

Conservation Values: Agriculture & Scenic Open Space

Type of Project: Donated Conservation Easement

Date Completed: December 2009

In 1973, British economist E.F. Schumacher authored a collection of essays entitled “Small is Beautiful.” In the book, Schumacher challenged the common belief that “bigger is better” and argued for the use of small, appropriate technologies to give people more control over their lives.

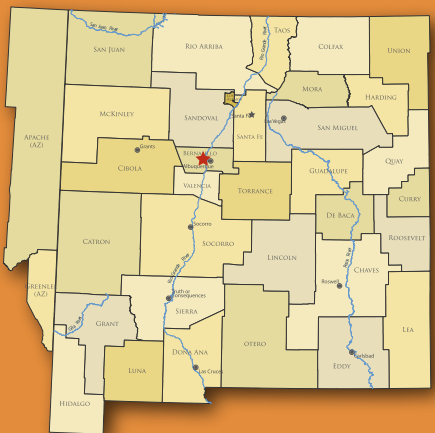
This belief can be applied to ecology and land conservation as well. Urban environments often lack significant agricultural and natural open space areas that could contribute to local food production, scenic views, wildlife habitat preservation, and preserving community identity.

The Sparks – West conservation easement is a prime example of an oasis of significant agricultural and scenic open space values in the middle of an intensely developed urban landscape. The Village of Los Ranchos shares NMLC’s belief in the importance of protecting these small open spaces and has joined NMLC as a co-holder for the conservation easement deed on this property. The owners, John and Cynthia Sparks, have been long-time advocates for land conservation and the donation of this conservation easement solidifies their commitment to this cause.

Half of the property is under irrigated cultivation, producing hay for local buyers. The other half includes a stand of mature cottonwoods that form part of the area’s natural heritage— the middle Rio Grande “Bosque.”



NMLC understands the importance of conservation in an urban environment, and— along with our past efforts in Corrales—has successfully completed six projects in the greater Albuquerque area that support the preservation of small-scale agriculture and scenic open space.



In Gratitude to Our Supporters

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Alphagraphics
Century Bank
Community Bank
Gardner Associates/La Pradera
LandAmerica New Mexico Title Company
Linson’s Fabrics
New Mexico Tax Credit Alliance
NCA Architects
Strugar Conservation Services
Verde Heritage LLC

Individuals

Anonymous (9)
Paul Abrams & Abigail Adler
Charmay Allred
Chilton & Judith Anderson
Dale & Gail Armstrong
Michael Bartlett
Cynthia & John Bartosek
Tony Benson
Isaac Benton
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Jack Wright

Foundations

Albert I. Pierce Foundation
LEF Foundation
McCune Foundation
New Cycle Foundation, in honor of Joseph Montoya
Turner Foundation



Government Partners

New Mexico Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Dept. – Land, Wildlife & Conservation Easement Program
U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Farm & Ranchland Protection Program

Other Supporters

Defenders of Wildlife
The Forest Trust
Land Trust Alliance
Taos Land Trust
World Wildlife Fund - Chihuahuan Desert Program

Managing Your Contributions Wisely

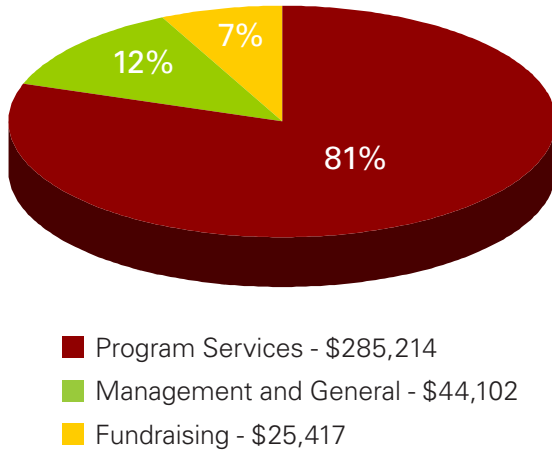
NMLC continues to improve its internal financial systems, and completed its second annual financial audit this year. The following data is derived from the 2008-2009 financial audit prepared by Porch & Associates of Albuquerque, NM in August, 2009

Statement of Financial Position

June 30, 2009 and 2008

Assets	2009	2008
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$383,990	\$70,715
Accounts Receivable	\$ 108	–
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 3,519	\$4,358
Land, Buildings, and Equipment, Net	\$978,733	\$23,420
Other Assets	<u>\$289,294</u>	<u>\$269,655</u>
Total Assets	\$1,655,644	\$378,188
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities	2009	2008
Accounts Payable	\$2,092	\$ 15,468
Accrued Expenses	\$10,123	\$3,342
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	\$4,190	\$ -
Long-Term debt less current maturities, net	<u>\$235,425</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Total Liabilities	\$251,830	\$ 19,151
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	\$1,116,643	\$ 83,182
Unrestricted – board designated for stewardship	\$ 282,171	\$269,655
Temporarily Restricted	<u>\$ 5,000</u>	<u>\$6,200</u>
Total Net Assets	\$1,403,814	\$359,037
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,655,644	\$378,188

Allocation of Operating Expenses



Stewardship Fund Growth

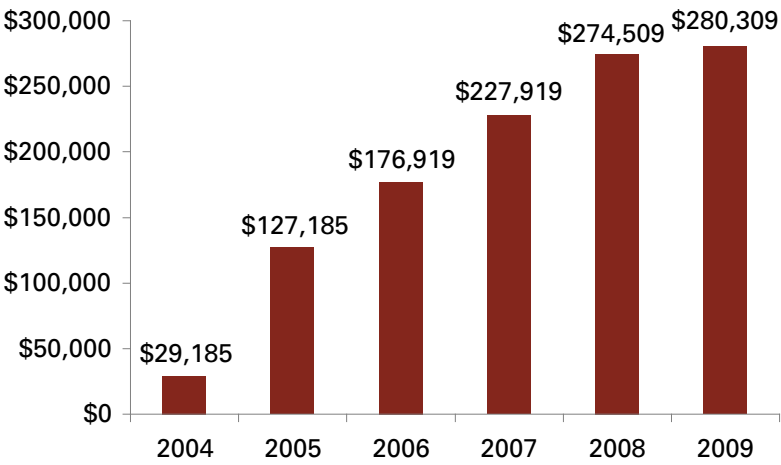


Photo by Clay Ellis





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NEW MEXICO
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Preserving New Mexico's Land Heritage