



# NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

## OUR REGION, YOUR COG



**Connecting the Dots** – The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG) builds on a foundation of planning expertise, institutional context, and historical continuity to incorporate strategic innovation in local and regional plans and propel regional competitiveness.

The COG has supported the planning and development needs of Northwest New Mexico for nearly 40 years. It has a dual designation as one of 7 regional planning districts for the State of New Mexico and as an economic development district designated 20 years ago by the US Economic Development Administration. The COG works on behalf of its member governments through customized annual work plans to serve local priorities and uplift the region, in a service area that:

- Encompasses a population of 235,000 people (at a density of 11/ square mile), 50% of whom are Native American;
- Spans 15,000 square miles (nearly twice the size of New Jersey) the majority of which is non-taxable public land;
- Includes the **Counties** of San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola and the **Municipalities** of Aztec, Bloomfield, Farmington, Gallup, Grants and Milan.



Northwest NM Council of Governments  
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Cover picture by Lisa Rodriquez - Top of Pyramid Rock - Churchrock, NM

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**DR. WILLIAM A. HALL**

Chairman of the Board

City of Farmington

**JOE MURRIETTA**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairman, City of Grants

**LOUIE BONAGUIDI**

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chairman/Treasurer, City of Gallup

### **MEMBER GOVERNMENTS**

**Cibola County | McKinley County | San Juan County**

**City of Gallup | City of Grants | Village of Milan**

**City of Farmington | City of Aztec | City of Bloomfield**

### **AFFILIATES**

Northwest New Mexico Regional Solid Waste Authority

### **REGIONAL PARTNERS**

The Enterprise Center/Quality Center for Business, San Juan College

### **Northwest RPO Committee**

*Royce Gchachu, Chairman, Pueblo of Zuni*

Pueblo of Acoma | Pueblo of Laguna | Pueblo of Zuni | The Navajo Nation  
City of Grants | City of Gallup | Village of Milan  
Cibola County | McKinley County | San Juan County

### **NAEDIS**

[Native American Economic Development Investment Strategy]

Pueblo of Acoma

Pueblo of Laguna

Sheep Springs Navajo Chapter

Baahalii Navajo Chapter

Shiprock Navajo Agency RBDO

Eastern Navajo Agency RBDO

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

First, I wish to thank the Board for the honor of serving as its Chairman. My first term on the COG Board was in 1989 and I have been its Chairman for most of the past two decades. Over the years, I have watched this organization grow to be a regional giant, able to weather even the toughest of our country's recessions.



I am pleased to present the FY2010 Annual Report for the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG). 2010 was a very significant year for our organization and I believe this report serves to provide the broader regional community a small glimpse into the big picture of the COG's work.

All COG members and partners should be proud of the many challenges we have met head-on and for which we have successfully found solutions and new opportunities. Not only in this past year but over the last few decades, we have faced issues that needed our attention and COG has been the vehicle to get us through them. Local communities in our region are more capable of meeting challenges due to the work that has been and is currently being done by this agency and its members.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to Patricia "Patty" Lundstrom for her 25-year commitment to building this organization into the regional giant it is today. Her leadership, dedication, and ethic of service will be missed and always remembered. She will continue to be part of our COG family and, I am certain, continue to serve this region with all of her energy, intelligence, and fortitude. It will always be a great honor of mine to have served the region and the COG with her.

I believe the COG staff has transitioned well in these trying times, and I am sure the COG will not miss a beat under the direction of Jeff Kiely, a 20-year veteran of this organization. His insight and leadership will be crucial to keeping the COG relevant and responsive to the region's needs, issues, and opportunities.

Enjoy the Annual Report and I encourage all of you to give us any feedback you may have and to join me in letting Jeff and the COG staff know that they are appreciated.

*Doc*

Dr. William A. Hall, Chairman of the Board, 2010

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



What a year!

When the COG staff went on retreat last June, we were a staff of 11, our budget was strong and State and local government had not yet been hit by the full impact of the Recession Tsunami.

By Fall 2009, the State was registering revenue shortfalls that led to the cutbacks and "claw-backs" that continue to this day. By Winter, the Legislature and Administration made good on millions of dollars of budget cuts, and the cash cow known as "capital outlay" was out of milk! By Spring 2010, State government and local cities and counties were seeing deep reductions in their gross receipts and severance tax revenues. Stalled by a "bear market" in global commodity prices and by onerous environmental regulation, many of our oil and gas companies shipped out to friendlier markets, along with hundreds of employees and their families. Impacts on the COG soon followed, as membership dues dropped by 30%, and our core State appropriation was cut by 20%.

In the midst of the turmoil, and only as a result of a new federal ruling that applied the *Hatch Act* to Councils of Governments, longtime Executive Director Patty Lundstrom took an early retirement at the end of March, after 25 years of leadership of the COG. She continued on as District 9 Representative to the State Legislature, winning her primary in June. Patty also started a consulting company, and in late Spring successfully competed for a consulting contract with the COG for the purpose of generating a recommended plan for sustainability of the COG organization. After 20 years as Patty's Deputy, I was tapped by the Board to serve as Interim Executive Director, and I have been grateful for their support during these challenging times.

Sustainability and "reinvention" are truly the COG's challenge going forward, and our tight-knit staff team has taken on the challenge with gusto and success, surviving the first "wave" of budget hits and moving forward with new contracts and relationships that enable us to keep "connecting and moving the region."

While our governing council remains the elected and appointed leadership of our cities and counties, it is clear that the "COG table" must continue to expand as a network of stakeholders and partners in the regional development work. Many individuals and agencies in both the public and private sectors have contributed to and collaborated with us in pursuing our mission to "advance Northwest New Mexico by serving local governments through regional partnership." All are welcome to "join the circle."

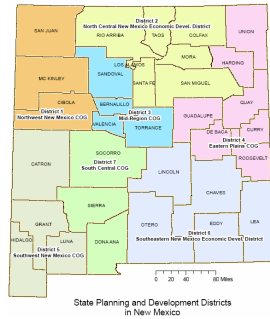
Please join me in celebrating Patty Lundstrom's legacy of service, even as we re-design and re-equip ourselves for the voyages yet to come.

Yours, in gratitude and partnership,

*Jeff*

Jeffrey G. Kiely, NWNMCOG Interim Executive Director

“In fact, we often take for granted the skills, knowledge and trust that the COGs offer New Mexico’s state and local leaders – **an invaluable state resource.**”  
 - *United States Senator Jeff Bingaman*



## OUR REGION, YOUR COG.

For nearly 40 years, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG) has played an integral role in advancing northwestern New Mexico’s economy, infrastructure, & policy.

Today the tradition continues with helping the region:

- Secure a sustainable and affordable long-term water supply,
- Compete in a global marketplace,
- Retain and train a ready-to-work labor shed,
- Plan and develop sustainable communities that local people love to live, play, work, and retire,
- Provide relevant educational opportunities at all levels,
- Support regional transportation and an intermodal approach to transporting people and goods,
- Work for a beneficial balance of energy, economy, and the environment,
- Provide regional advocacy, innovation, and leadership at the local, State, and Federal levels,
- Create venues for regional dialogue and broad-based partnerships to move the region, and
- Navigate programmatic silos and connect the dots...

# ...JOIN THE CIRCLE...

“Creating the Venue for Regional Leadership”

### Investors in Our Region & Your COG:

- Pinnacle Bank
- RDC Capital Markets
- Gallup Vision Source
- Newberry & Associates
- Gurley Motor Company
- Rosebrough Law Firm P.C.
- Millennium Media
- Wilson & Company
- Joyce Planning & Development
- Elite Laundry
- Rio Grande Resources
- DePauli Engineering & Surveying
- Rico Motors
- AZ Public Service
- Vectra Bank
- Grants State Bank
- Merrion Oil & Gas
- BHP Billiton
- George K. Baum & Company
- San Juan College
- San Juan Economic Development Service

### HELP US EXPAND THE CIRCLE:

Investors in the COG receive the following year-round benefits:

- Invitation to the Annual Luncheon;
- Receiving quarterly newsletters and annual report;
- Information blasts on NM conferences and trainings (if desired);
- Consultations with COG staff and contacts;
- Access to COG research, publications, data, and library of planning documents;
- Recognition in helping us provide local and regional forums, conferences, town halls, and reports.

THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT



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## 1. SECURING OUR WATER COMMONS.

The COG authored the Region 6 Water Plan, chaired the Navajo Water Supply Project, and advances local and regional watershed and water planning in Northwest New Mexico.

## 2. STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY.

The COG developed the 2009-2014 Comprehensive Economy Development Strategy (CEDS) plan, works to develop and submit local projects for EDA funding, held the CEDS Fall Forum, spearheaded a new NAEDIS program, and advances local and regional economic development and tourism planning in Northwest New Mexico.

## 3. DEVELOPING OUR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

The COG has been helping facilitate several regional initiatives to foster healthy communities, including the Farmington's Taskforce on Public Inebriation Response and McKinley County's Healthy Communities by Design Initiative.

## 4. FOSTERING OUR LIVABLE/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES.

The COG has been involved in downtown revitalization efforts, programs, and projects throughout our region and utilizing smart growth principles to plan for walkable/bikeable design, transit-oriented development, in-fill development, Brownfields reuse, and innovative housing efforts. The COG works to plan and develop sustainable communities that people love to live, play, work, visit, and retire.

## 5. STEWARDING OUR ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCES.

The COG has been a regional leader in the developing the venue to discuss environmental issues in broad-based settings, including our leadership to create a NWNM "Community Action for a Renewed Environment" (CARE) and the NWNM Brownfields coalitions, both funded by EPA, along with our work with uranium legacy cleanup policy, planning, and funding.

## 6. IMPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

With funding provided through the NM Department of Transportation, the COG staffs the Regional Planning Organization (RPO) that develops transportation plans and priorities for the region and State. The COG and its RPO members work hard to increase rural transportation funding; prioritize projects; support intermodal transportation; including transit and alternative modes; and support the regional Scenic Byway, "Trail of the Ancients—NM".



COG works to make members of the NM Legislative Finance Committee at home in Our Region.

**OUR REGION, YOUR COG.**

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## 7. HARNESSING OUR ENERGY ADVANTAGE.

The COG has worked hard to ramp up efforts to develop a regional energy plan that will balance retention of traditional energy sectors, improve energy production technologies, increase energy efficiency, and capture new markets in renewable energy production and green industry growth. The COG has started an energy efficiency program to plan, audit, and retrofit government facilities.

## 8. ADVANCING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES.

Northwestern New Mexico and the Four Corners region is the greatest place on earth. The COG continues to work with local communities to utilize their assets, their beauty, their history, and their authenticity to create both a quantity of opportunities and to better the overall quality-of-life. The COG has been instrumental in Adventure Gallup & Beyond and the Zuni Mountain Trails Partnership aimed at expanding the outdoor adventure venues and trails in Cibola and McKinley counties.

## 9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT & VICTORIES.

The COG has a 40-year track record on making significant returns-on-investment for the region. Even after losing about 30% of the staff, we have some major victories that we want you to celebrate with us. It is on the backs of our hard-working staff, the vision of the elected officials, and the strength of our regional partners that we take this time to celebrate.

## 10. LOOKING BACK TO MOVE FORWARD.

The COG reflects on the tremendous career of former 25-year Executive Director and Regional Leader, Patty Lundstrom, and remembers her vision for our future – a goal for the next ERA of your COG.



**OUR REGION, YOUR COG.**

**Left:** COG arranges Governor Richardson signing of historic American Indian legislation in Gallup.

**Above Middle:** Indian Affairs Committee climbs up Pyramid Rock Trail in Red Rock Park.

**Above Top:** COG creates Public-Private partnerships to solve regional needs— here shown with BNSF and local officials.

1.

## SECURING OUR WATER COMMONS.

“NGWSP: Bringing real water, to real people, in real time”



### NAVAJO-GALLUP WATER SUPPLY PROJECT Authorized at Last.

52 years after the New Mexico State Engineer was quoted in the Congressional Record on the “only sustainable water supply” for northwestern New Mexico, and 18 years after New Mexico Senator Pete Domenici asked our COG to chair a project steering committee to actually implement that solution ... on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 President Obama signed the *Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009*, which includes approval of the settlement of Navajo Nation claims in the San Juan River and, as a part of that settlement, authorization to construct the **Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project**.

New Mexico Senators Pete Domenici and Jeff Bingaman led the legislative process in the Congress, and dozens of scientists, planners and government leaders have been “in the trenches” of this sustained drive – led and coordinated these past 18 years by your COG Executive Director in tandem with great staff at the Bureau of Reclamation, City of Gallup, Navajo Nation, and State of New Mexico among many others. It is one of our region’s most momentous socioeconomic achievements in recent history, won on the strength of unprecedented levels of collaboration and sustained hard work by professionals from diverse agencies and disciplines.

Even as this vulnerable, super-complicated, and ultimately successful legislation was finally on its way to the White House in late March, our good friend and colleague Mike Connor – chief architect and steward of the technical aspects of the Navajo-Gallup legislation as Democratic lead staff to the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee – was being nominated by President Obama as the next Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation.

As momentous as this news is, there is still much to be done. As Navajo Nation attorney Stanley Pollack would say, “We’ve made it to the starting line.” A whole new cycle of planning, collaboration and hard work now lies before us. The future role of the COG is not totally clear, but everyone still wants us at the table in a significant manner. It is also unclear just how quickly or completely the overall scope and design of this mammoth project will be accomplished, or how the volumes of water to be accommodated will change (or not) as a consequence of climate change and/or good old-fashioned drought. But the opportunity is tremendous, and our best efforts going forward will be needed to shepherd this Project into reality.

This is an accomplishment in which all COGsters, past and present, can share. It is “one shining moment” in which we can see more clearly why we do what we do.

The COG, through the efforts of Patty Lundstrom and Jeff Kiely, has acted as chair to the project steering committee for the last 18 years. It is one of our region’s most momentous socioeconomic achievements in recent history, won on the strength of unprecedented levels of collaboration and sustained hard work by professionals from diverse agencies and disciplines.

# 1.

## SECURING OUR WATER COMMONS.

### REGIONALIZE FOR SURVIVAL. MCKINLEY COUNTY SMALL WATER SYSTEM REGIONALIZATION PLAN.

The COG staff has been working to join together small water associations to regionalize services including administrative (e.g. meter reading, billing, etc.), operations & maintenance, planning, and regional project financing and development. In 2004, the McKinley County Commission solicited the COG to develop a water advisory board, modeled after the highly successful Gallup Water Board to discuss issues, advise the Commission on policy, projects, and programs, and recommend actions. A continuous theme and struggle of conversation was listening and assisting small systems in meeting the daily struggle of providing water and wastewater services in an environment of growing bureaucratic regulations, overwhelming financial oversight responsibilities, limited resources, and aging infrastructure.

After holding annual Small Systems Forums in 2006 and 2007 with experts from NM Rural Water Association, Environmental Finance Center, Rural Community Assistance Corporation, and State and Federal staff, the County Water Board worked to join systems together in conversations about sustainability, building economies-of-scale, sharing resources, and sharing the burden. The County Water Board and COG staff worked to secure funding from the State of New Mexico Legislature in the amount \$100,000 through a special appropriation for pilot regionalization projects statewide. This funding was used to hire Daniel B. Stephens and DePauli Engineering & Surveying to develop the McKinley County Small Water Systems Regionalization Plan—Phase I. During Phase I of the project, the project team:

- summarized previously completed water plans and studies for the McKinley-Cibola area,
- tabulated baseline data from 22 small water systems,
- identified key issues from water system,
- proposed potential regionalization strategies both locally and region-wide,
- outlined possible funding sources to pursue, and
- provided implementation plans for the strategies that were proposed.

The Phase I Plan spurred a great deal of interest behind the regionalization concept and several systems continued to meet with COG support. This process led to a successful 2008 NM Water Trust Board application for planning and design work needed to complete a Phase II project. The Phase II project costing \$278,426.00 was just finalized and presented to the Commission by COG staff. During Phase II, consultants worked intensively with seven (7) willing systems to provide final design work for ready-to-go regionalization projects and provide systems with planning including:

- developing asset management plans and operations & maintenance plans,
- compiling an inventory of existing and potential resources available to each system,
- preparing an analysis of how systems can work with the County Fire & Rescue to reduce ISO rating,



# 1.

## SECURING OUR WATER COMMONS.

COG develops regional solutions for regional issues

### MCKINLEY COUNTY SMALL WATER SYSTEM REGIONALIZATION PLAN. (continued)

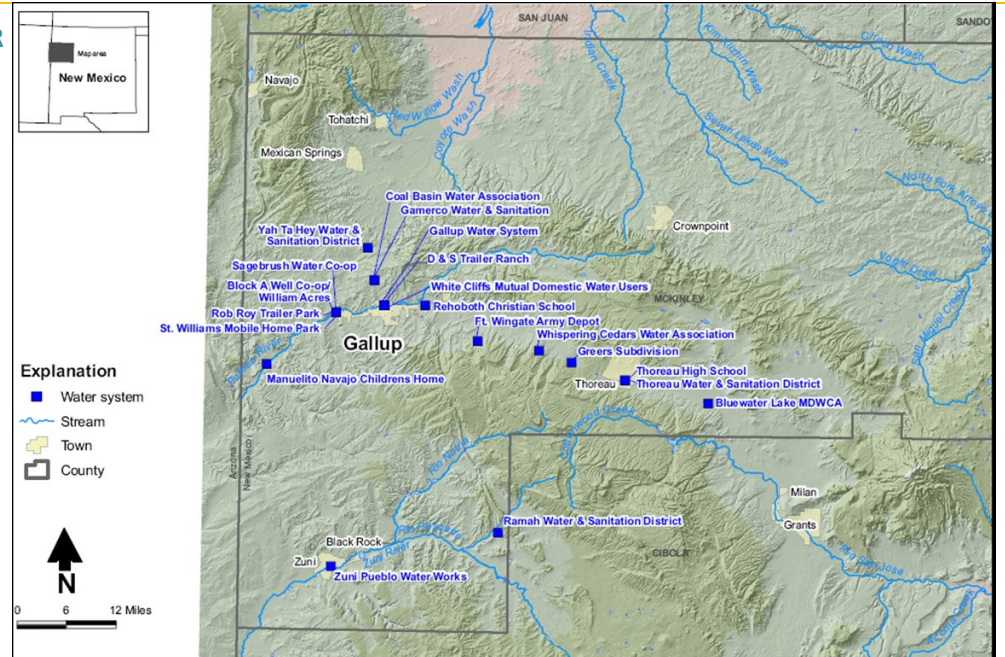
- summarizing the current and potential McKinley County regionalization strategies,
- defining a regionalization funding strategy going forward.

This planning process has been extremely successful and has continued to create the Mariposa Water Alliance. This Alliance is made up of many of the participating County systems who are working together to reach a joint vision of having a sustainable, affordable, and quality water and wastewater system for its citizens. This Alliance continues to work the COG and McKinley County to implement physical improvements needed to improve systems.

In 2010, the NM Water Trust Board (WTB) received an application on behalf of these systems that outlined the McKinley County Regionalization Project, a bundled package of now shovel-ready projects. Early indications from the WTB meetings, reveals that the County's proposal will receive full funding at **\$1,859,703.00 to implement this innovative and well-planned set of projects.** These projects will provide emergency tie-ins

to systems that routinely loss water service due to infrastructure failures and additional regional and local water storage and fire suppression.

The COG staff believes this has been an effective process and model for other small communities that may need to band together to ultimately survive and begin to thrive.



**Map Above:** showcases communities that participated in Phase I of the planning process. **Picture to Left:** Michael Daly, County Water Board Chairman, showcases a reverse osmosis system that has transformed White Cliffs MDWUA drinking water from NM's worst to best.

## 2.

## STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY.

### Creating the Next Generation Economy, Rooted in Traditional Values.

Get your copy of our Region's CEDS plan:  
[www.nwnmcog.com/programs](http://www.nwnmcog.com/programs)

#### Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

The COG is Federally-designated to serve as the **Economic Development District** for Northwest New Mexico. Under this designation, and with a small annual grant from the Economic Development Administration, the COG is responsible for putting together a 5-year, regional strategy plan for economic development.

In June-July 2009, the COG put the final touches on the 2009-2014 CEDS plan for Northwest NM. The plan includes:

- An extensive **Background** piece, enhanced by a PowerPoint presentation utilized to bring current economic factors into focus.
- Our **Analysis of Economic Development Problems and Opportunities**, which is also enhanced by a more detailed treatment of economic issues across the region's key economic sectors.
- Our new 5-year **CEDS Goals and Objectives**, shaped with a view to being able monitor and measure actual changes in the economy over the five-year period.
- A description of the **Community and Private Sector Participation** process we have utilized – including consultation with a CEDS Strategy Committee and a network of CEDS Partners.
- A compendium of **Strategic Projects, Programs and Activities** – comprising the “meat” of the plan, organized to align with our Goals and Objectives.
- A **CEDS Plan of Action** that introduces the idea of the “Fall Forum” that brings together many partners and stakeholders in the region to update ourselves on global, national and regional trends, to take a closer look at strategic goals, objectives, projects and implementation issues, and strengthen partnerships going forward in carrying out the regional strategy.
- **Performance Measures** that we will use to track our progress toward making a difference in the region.

The following strategic goals and objectives have emerged for this new 5-year CEDS:

#### Goal #1 **STRONG SECTORS:**

Remain strong in our five key economic sectors:

**Retail, Health Care & Social Assistance, Energy, Tourism, and Construction.**

#### Goal #2 **DIVERSIFICATION:**

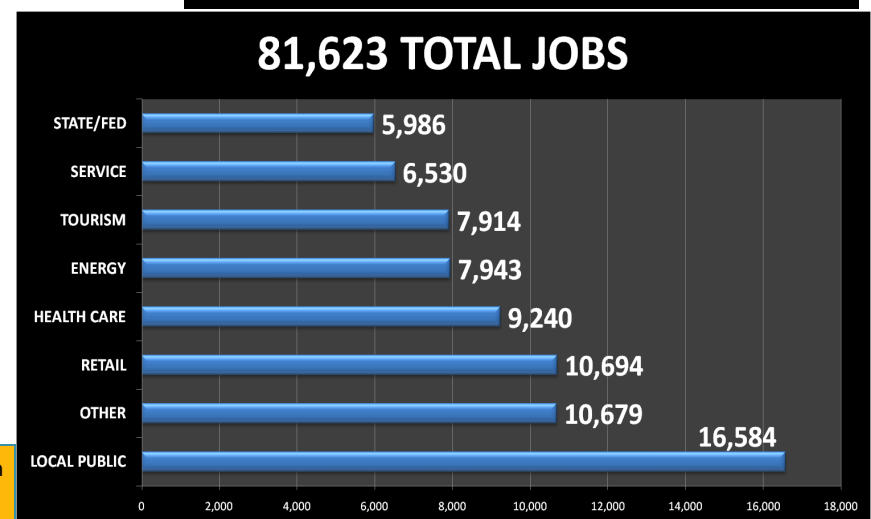
Improve our competitive position by increasing diversification of the economy, including creation of vibrant downtowns, and expanding the Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Transportation & Warehousing sectors.

#### Goal #3 **REGIONAL INNOVATION:**

Improve organizational infrastructure, education & workforce development, and researching & implementing best practices in economic development.

Chart: Jobs in Northwestern New Mexico by sector in 2007—since which the COG has seen dramatic loss of base jobs and a need for a full-throttle implementation of the CEDS plan.

### Regional Sectors by Jobs - 2007



## 2.

## STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY.

*The goal of the COG is to foster and facilitate activities, programs, and projects that will strengthen our region's competitiveness in the global marketplace.*

### Creating the Next Generation Economy, Rooted in Traditional Values. *(continued)*

The COG continued throughout last year to advance our regional economy and implement EDA's mission in Northwest NM by the following activities:

- **The CEDS** – The region's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* (2009-2014) was updated and submitted in July 2009.
- **NAEDIS** – We concluded Phase I of the 2-year, EDA-funded NAEDIS initiative (*Native American Economic Development Investment Strategy*), setting the stage for continued relationship-building with tribal partners, sound economic planning and collaborative work to bring tribal projects to investability.
- **Enterprise Center** – The EDA-funded construction project at the Farmington Enterprise Center on the San Juan College campus is complete, and the renovated spaces are being utilized.
- **Regional Forum** – The COG hosted the regional *CEDS Fall Forum* in November 2009, which included keynote presentations by Lt. Governor Diane Denish, former NARC Director Bill Dodge and others, along with participatory workshop sessions – first, organized by county; secondly, organized by topic area: Business Policy & Entrepreneurial Support; Tourism & Downtown Redevelopment; Education & Workforce; Strategic Infrastructure & Housing; and Energy & Natural Resources.
- **EDA Visits Region**. COG worked to bring Pedro Garza, EDA Regional Director, to Cibola County for a tour of potential projects (more in NAEDIS section).
- **Uranium Legacy Cleanup** – The COG is helping to facilitate statewide policy and funding development on cleanup of legacy uranium mining and milling sites, while maintaining a dialogue with diverse stakeholders on prospective new mining under new regulation and with new technologies.
- **Brownfields Redevelopment** – The COG is managing a \$1 million Brownfields Assessment grant from the EPA which will result in an inventory of brownfields properties that are identified, assessed, and ready for redevelopment.
- **Workforce Assessment** – The COG is partnering with New Mexico TechNet and the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions to fill in gaps in administering the ACT-certified "WorkKeys" testing system throughout the region to ascertain skill sets and inform workforce training programs.

#### Emerging Initiatives:

- **Energy Efficiency** – The COG is helping lead energy efficiency initiatives throughout the region, with an eye to growing the region's role and capacity in the green economy.
- **Enterprise Facilitation** – The CEDS calls for increased focus on enterprise facilitation, business incubation and other mechanisms for supporting entrepreneurial development.
- **"Projectteering"** – We are looking to strengthen the COG's niche as liaison and field agent for state and federal agencies in identifying, developing, financing and implementing public projects.



**Picture Above:** Diane Denish, Lt. Governor, delivered the keynote address at 2009 CEDS Fall Forum and stressed the need for NWNM to lead in developing a State Energy Plan.



## Native American Economic Development Investment Strategy.

### ORIGINS

NAEDIS originated as a concept resulting from consultations with EDA-Austin Regional Director Pedro Garza regarding economic development in 'Indian Country'. EDA Regional staff has encountered unique obstacles and difficulties in trying to work with tribal agencies on EDA project development and funding.

The COG Executive and Deputy Directors explored with Mr. Garza the possibility of a special collaborative planning project, whereby the Northwest New Mexico COG would serve as a planning partner, technical assistant and liaison to EDA and other investment resources. The idea would be to assist tribal economic development agencies to identify and prioritize economic development projects, help bring those projects to "investability" status, assemble them in a financing portfolio, and submit them to EDA and partnering funders for potential investment. At length, the EDA Austin Regional Office approved the application and awarded \$100,000 effective May 2008 through April 2009.

One component of the grant was intended to focus on a labor study process, based on a model relating labor capacities to market projections, as proposed by well-known New Mexico economic developer Mark Lautman.

The Economic Development Office of the City of Santa Fe likewise sought to pilot such a labor study, to include hiring of a professional demographer with specific expertise in market-related labor data analysis and a potential partnership between the Northwest COG and Santa Fe in the design and implementation of such a study. The COG would take the lead on working with tribal representatives to customize survey and data analysis needs and processes for the tribal communities. Unfortunately, Santa Fé opted to invest in alternative strategies and this partnership didn't materialize.

As an alternative to the partnership with Santa Fé, the COG forged its own relationship with the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and New Mexico TechNet to locally implement ACT-certified "WorkKeys" skills testing in partnering communities, to serve as a basis for community-wide assessment of workforce capacities while providing immediate data feedback to the test-takers and, in aggregate, to their community leaders.

### STATUS

**Staffing.** As the project evolved, primary responsibility for project implementation was assigned to existing COG planning staff, with minor amounts reserved for local consultants for integration into the broader regional plan (CEDS, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy). Although the project was substantially matched, there was still insufficient budget to commit personnel full-time to the initiative.

**Tribal Partnerships.** Consultation was initiated and sustained with elected and staff leadership at the Pueblo of Laguna and Pueblo of Acoma (lying mostly in Cibola County), the Pueblo of Zuni (in McKinley County), and Navajo Nation agencies including three "Local Governance-certified" Chapter governments of the Navajo Nation (Baahaali, Sheepsprings and Newcomb), the Navajo Nation's Regional Business Development Offices (RBDs) in Churchrock and Shiprock, and the Pueblo of Jemez.

**External Partnerships.** The COG assembled a wide-ranging network of external agencies as active and/or potential partners in the NAEDIS initiative, including the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, New Mexico Creates, New Mexico Museum Foundation, New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, New Mexico TechNet, New Mexico Economic Development Department, New Mexico Community Capital, Impact New Mexico (enterprise facilitation), the Governor-appointed Native American Arts Authenticity Task Force, the New Mexico State Legislature, the Global Center for Cultural Entrepreneurship, the Corporation for Enterprise Development, Oweesta, the Gallup Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial Association, Chuska Regional Development Corporation, and the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway Association.



## 2.

## STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY.

*The goal of the COG is to foster and facilitate activities, programs, and projects that will strengthen our region's competitiveness in the global marketplace.*

### Native American Economic Development Investment Strategy. (continued)

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(1) Working relationships were established with the numerous tribal and external partners in the NAEDIS initiative. The strength and productivity of these relationships vary across the spectrum, from preliminary/tentative consultations to full-blown partnerships in identifying, developing and financing projects. This partnership network, still in its early stages of development, was not fully tapped, awaiting the relationship-building phases of the project, but it provides a good foundation for moving forward in future phases of NAEDIS. Of particular note was the partnership with New Mexico TechNet, which is the private entity on contract with the State's Labor department ("Department of Workforce Solutions) and certified by ACT to administer the WorkKeys testing program.

(2) A preliminary portfolio of tribal projects was assembled. These, too, are in varying stages of maturity and "investability," with most of the projects in a developmental stage ranging from "Grade E" (an idea, not yet developed into a full project concept) to "Grade A" (fully developed, vetted, partially financed, and investable).

- The "Acoma Steel" project was prepared and submitted to EDA in the form of a public works funding application, but the application was rejected. This project nevertheless represents one of the strongest entries in the NAEDIS portfolio, and its investability will continue to be worked on.
- The "Laguna Mesita Facility" project is rapidly maturing into "investable project" stage, and it was the centerpiece of Regional Director Garza's site visit to Cibola County on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Meeting with EDA Regional Director Pedro Garza with COG, State, and Cibola County partners, leaders, and officials.



#### PROSPECT

The Northwest New Mexico COG is ready for "Phase II" of the Native American Economic Development Investment Strategy (NAEDIS) initiative. In many key respects, "it's only just begun," and there is a strong foundation for building on the lessons learned, the relationships established, the projects identified and the planning processes refined during NAEDIS.

On Cinco de Mayo 2010, the EDA Regional Director Pedro Garza, left the Gulf Coast oil spill and economic crisis to join COG staff on a tour and to receive several presentations in Cibola County, NM. The COG would like to recognize Associate Planner Michael Sage, for coordination of this special appearance and Bebe Sarmiento, Executive Secretary for her relentless follow through in getting "the man to the region". COG staff also facilitated several meetings to detail Cibola County projects including:

1. **Cibola County Hospital Office Expansion**
2. **Grants Learning & Resource Center**
3. **Pueblo of Laguna Mesita Facility Improvement Project**

COG staff then toured Mr. Garza through Cibola County to showcase its resources, assets, and potential projects in the area. Mr. Garza left impressed of the community cohesion and leadership, as well as, the progress in the Native American Economic Development Investment Strategy (NAEDIS) program. He felt like the District had good potential in leveraging some EDA funding into projects presented. COG staff is continuing to finalize and help support the development of EDA applications for these projects.

### 3.

## DEVELOPING OUR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.



### “ENDING THE CYCLE OF PUBLIC INEBRIATION”.

#### FARMINGTON’S TASKFORCE ON PUBLIC INEBRIATION RESPONSE

The City of Farmington called on the COG to facilitate a task force of professionals to study and recommend strategies to create a sustainable response to the public inebriation problem. After a year-and-a-half of work, a final report was prepared and presented to Council.

Farmington has made significant progress in addressing the long-standing, vexing and complex issues surrounding the phenomenon of public inebriation within the City. This social phenomenon lies at the “back end” of a cycle of substance abuse – a severe and visible symptom of a systemic problem that affects, to a greater degree than in most places, Native Americans in communities bordering on towns throughout the northern hemisphere.

In our region, dating back to the “Fighting Back” days and before, coalitions have arisen, faded and re-emerged over the years in response to the many aspects and elements of chronic, systemic and multigenerational substance abuse. At the turn of this century, Farmington took the lead in partnering with the visionary Navajo Nation Vice-President, the late Dr. Taylor McKenzie, resulting in a Behavioral Health Summit and formation of the Totah Behavioral Health Authority.

Even so, the problem has continued to challenge the City and its partners, and it was clear that broad-based strategizing would be needed to make an enduring difference. To this end, the Mayor and Council discussed the need for a community conference, to address this important community issue. The City administration called upon the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments to assist in convening and facilitating a Task Force on Public Inebriation Response, composed of community professionals most involved in the public safety, behavioral health and other issues surrounding the public inebriation phenomenon. This Task Force met throughout 2008, leading to the Community Conference held in Farmington on October 31<sup>st</sup>, followed by a policy advisory memorandum in connection with City Council actions to restrict certain alcohol sales in the City, as well as a conference report.

The Farmington model has included a commitment to both (a) the interests of broader public safety and quality of life and (b) the interests of the individuals involved in cycles of alcohol abuse and homelessness. The model has addressed the need for intervention into the anti-social behaviors of individuals, while at the same time seeking ways to get those individuals into protective and rehabilitative programs.

While there are many ways to describe or organize the systems of response that are needed to address behavioral health issues, the Task Force has found it most useful to divide its discussions and recommendations into four “domains of response”:

- the Preventive (involving a system of community-based strategies “upstream” from the dysfunctional behaviors manifesting themselves in the public inebriation phenomenon, including public policy measures to re-shape the community environment around access to and abuse of alcohol).
- the Corrective (involving the tools of the law enforcement system to reduce criminal behavior and mandate actions that may lead to recovery and rehabilitation);
- the Protective (involving services that remove individuals from the street and provide shelter and the opportunity to detoxify); and
- the Rehabilitative (involving services that treat the disease of alcoholism and support sustained sobriety and reintegration into the community).

## 3.

## DEVELOPING OUR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

*It takes a community to raise a healthy child;  
it takes a COG to design a healthy community.*

### McKINLEY COUNTY, NM: "HEALTHY COMMUNITIES BY DESIGN".

In March 2007, the McKinley County Commissioners and Evan Williams, COG Senior Planner, traveled to Washington, DC to advocate for funding to build a new dialysis center. At that time, the epidemic of obesity and diabetes had begun to spiral out of control, hitting Native American and Hispanic populations the hardest. The County Commissioners explained to the Federal Delegation that McKinley County is currently facing an epidemic, when it comes to obesity and diabetes in our community. A key stat that put this epidemic in perspective was that within our Native American populations in McKinley County, reports that 1 out of 3 persons older than 50 years of age will need dialysis services in their life.

The County Commission received funds for the dialysis center from both the State of New Mexico and the Federal Delegation. Facility construction is now complete. It was agreed that there was no way to ignore the tremendous need at the backend of this problem, but to only put money into the backend of the problem would be unsustainable and inhumane. Further, it was agreed that more funding was needed to combat these issues on the front-end of the issue and that aggressive prevention programs and rapidly-deployable strategies were needed. The County decided to ask the COG to take a leadership role and to facilitate coordination so that all of its citizens would have access to healthy lifestyles and healthy foods.

The COG was approached to help generate a community response that become entitled - "McKinley County, NM: Healthy Community by Design" Initiative. This program was seen as a major priority of McKinley County (especially with respect to ARRA funding opportunities) of diabetes and obesity prevention, staff work included:

- **"McKinley County, NM: Healthy Community by Design" Plan & Strategy.** Completion of a draft Community Action Plan (CAP) and MAPPS strategy.
- **NM DOH-ARRA Pre-application.** Gained the nomination by NM Department of Health to be one of the two communities in all of NM to compete for the small cities/rural areas CDC-ARRA grant program.
- **CDC Application.** Submitted "an approved but not funded" application to the CDC's "Communities Putting Prevention to Work" program. Recommendations and improvements to this application will be completed as per CDC request by a community working group.
- **Childhood Obesity Advisory Council/University Volunteer Support.** The Childhood Obesity Advisory Council created to oversee a strategic partnership of RMCHCS, the University of Colorado Denver, the University of North Colorado and Vanderbilt University for a pediatric obesity pilot project. Working with two Colorado Colleges and their graduate students to assist our community in processing data and assisting us with a comprehensive community approach.
- **RWJF Application.** We worked with the McKinley County Health Alliance, IHS, RMCHCS, Connections, Inc., State DOH, etc. to apply to Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's "Communities Creating Healthy Environments: Improving Access to Healthy Foods and Safe Places to Play in Communities of Color" but which was also denied.
- **Federal Advocacy.** The County has submitted an application to the Federal Delegation for seed money to start-up this program as well. The County Commission and Senior Planner met with each of the five offices to pursue this funding in Washington, DC.
- **NM Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities.** Patty Morris, NM DOH, who heads up the NM Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities initiative has informed the COG that they would like to partner with our community to create a McKinley County program. They have offered up to \$50,000 to hire a contract employee to assist in staffing the overall "McKinley County, NM: Healthy Community by Design" Initiative.



# 4.

## FOSTERING OUR LIVABLE/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES.

### REINVESTING IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN.

#### Creating a Vibrant Farmington MRA.

Recognizing that local government plays a major role in support of downtown, the City in 2006 designated Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA). This began the process of redevelopment in downtown Farmington using resources available through the NM Metropolitan Redevelopment Code.

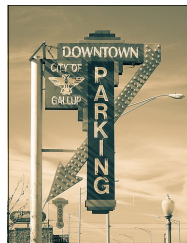
The MRA incorporates three distinct areas: Downtown, Civic Center Neighborhood, and Animas District. The overarching goals for these areas include:

**Downtown Goal:** Revitalize Downtown Farmington by creating a visual and functional identity as the heart of the Four Corners area, with streetscape improvements, adaptive reuse of older buildings in a shopping park environment, with residential uses, encouraged by incentives for redevelopment.

**Civic Center Neighborhood Goal:** Preserve the neighborhood character by protecting existing structures, improving infrastructure & minimizing the impact of the Civic Center expansion.

**Animas District Goal:** Redevelop the Animas Neighborhood as a mixed-use development with new types of affordable housing, expanded medical and cultural facilities linking Downtown to the Riverwalk.

COG staff has attended numerous MRA meetings to review the proposed development plan and has met with City planning officials to discuss potential COG assistance with MRA development activities, as outlined in the MRA plan.



#### COG provides support for Gallup BID.

In March 2009, the Gallup City Council passed the Gallup Business Improvement District (BID) Ordinance 2009-1 (the "BID Ordinance"), which established a special assessment district that includes more than 35 blocks at the heart of Historic Downtown Gallup. Establishing the BID now provides a private-sector driven improvement and reinvestment program for downtown. Funding for the BID comes from a special assessment on business and commercial property owners within the BID boundaries. The funding collected will be matched by the City of Gallup dollar to dollar. All funding will be contracted to the newly formed Gallup BID, Inc, a non-profit organization.



This group will be responsible for working in close conjunction with individual business owners and property owners throughout the BID to identify needed improvements and investments. A business plan was developed by Joyce Planning & Development and adopted by the BID Board, which highlights the need, the advantages, a management plan, and an initial list of potential improvements and investments. The Gallup BID will provide improvements and services to commercial properties located within the central business district of Historic Downtown Gallup. During this last year, COG has entered into a contract to manage the Gallup BID and has contracted with Doug Evilsizor to run the day-to-day operations. COG executive and planning staff provided extensive technical assistance to the BID Board including but not limited to:

- Obtained staffing, facilitated BID Board, and implementation of a public relations plan, included but not limited to, the development of PR piece outlining the basic questions, advantages, and information regarding the Gallup BID, and the development of the Gallup BID website ([www.gallupbid.com](http://www.gallupbid.com)).
- COG also worked on an application to the McCune Foundation and salvaged a \$150,000 Legislative appropriation from NM clawbacks.
- With support from BID Manager, the Gallup BID created a downtown walking map, developed a billboard program, signed a historic agreement with NM Tourism Department to promote downtown, and worked on parking and street crossing solutions with NMDOT.



## 4.

## FOSTERING OUR LIVABLE/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES.

COG works to plan and develop sustainable communities that people love to live, play, work, visit, and retire.

### CITY OF GRANTS TAKES ON SLUM & BLIGHT.

The City of Grants has been busy in addressing two major issues impacting residents' quality of life: repairing city streets and tearing down unsafe and/or abandoned buildings. The City of Grants has 62 miles of paved road and 90% of them are in need of repair. A recent GRT increase will net an additional \$400,000 for road repairs. Concurrently, through an increase in garbage rates, netting an additional \$75,000, the City of Grants has begun to tear down the over 150 structures within the City identified as unsafe or abandoned. Specific progress related to the above mentioned initiatives include:



#### 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Roosevelt Ave:

Project includes full roadway construction including storm drainage, water and sanitary line replacement, curb & gutter, sidewalks, street lighting, and pedestrian bike lanes. Currently reauthorizing SAP appropriations to include planning and design as allowable expense. GRT increase will provide \$700,000 match for \$2,800,000 in construction funds. Phase-I construction on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Roosevelt Ave is currently anticipated for summer 2011 (EPA spending \$5M in ARRA funds to clean up Grants Chlorinated Solvent Plume Superfund site on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Street).

#### Johnson Street:

Through the COG's Planner Michael Sage, the City of Grants developed and submitted a successful \$500,000 CDBG construction grant application for Johnson Street improvements. Project will include full roadway construction including storm drainage, water and sanitary line replacement, curb & gutter, and sidewalks. Project will also improve fire access, safety, and protection through construction of turnabout where current dead-end exists.

#### Nimitz Avenue and Bridge:

The City of Grants received \$800,000 in ARRA funds for reconstruction of the Nimitz Bridge. The project has been successfully designed and is currently being advertised for construction. Additionally, with \$860,000 in construction funds, the City is moving forward with Phase-I Nimitz Avenue street improvements.

#### Demolition of Buildings:

The City of Grants is currently advertising an RFP to demolish an additional 11 buildings. Previously, the City of Grants demolished an abandoned 4-unit apartment complex. The abandoned complex had caught fire and the resulting damage presented an unsightly nuisance for the City.



*Grants Mayor Joe Murrietta looks over some major road damage on Estancia Street in Grants. A recent GRT increase will net the City approximately \$400,000*

## MILAN: NORTHSIDE INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLAN

Through a successfully funded 2009 CDBG planning grant, developed by NWNMCOG, the Village of Milan recently initiated development of a Northside Infrastructure Master Plan. Local conditions such as malpais rock, shallow ground water, and asbestos concrete water lines provided the impetus for the plan. The Plan will touch or review components of infrastructure planning, drainage, transportation, utility coordination, and water/wastewater.

The Northside Infrastructure Master Plan is located immediately south of a newly acquired and master planned 900-acre Milan Industrial Park. The Northside Infrastructure Master Plan will compliment and support future development of the industrial park.

In 2006, the Village of Milan, through a CDBG planning grant, developed the Milan Southside Infrastructure Master Plan. Since 2006, the Village (pop. 1811), with NWNMCOG support, successfully completed:

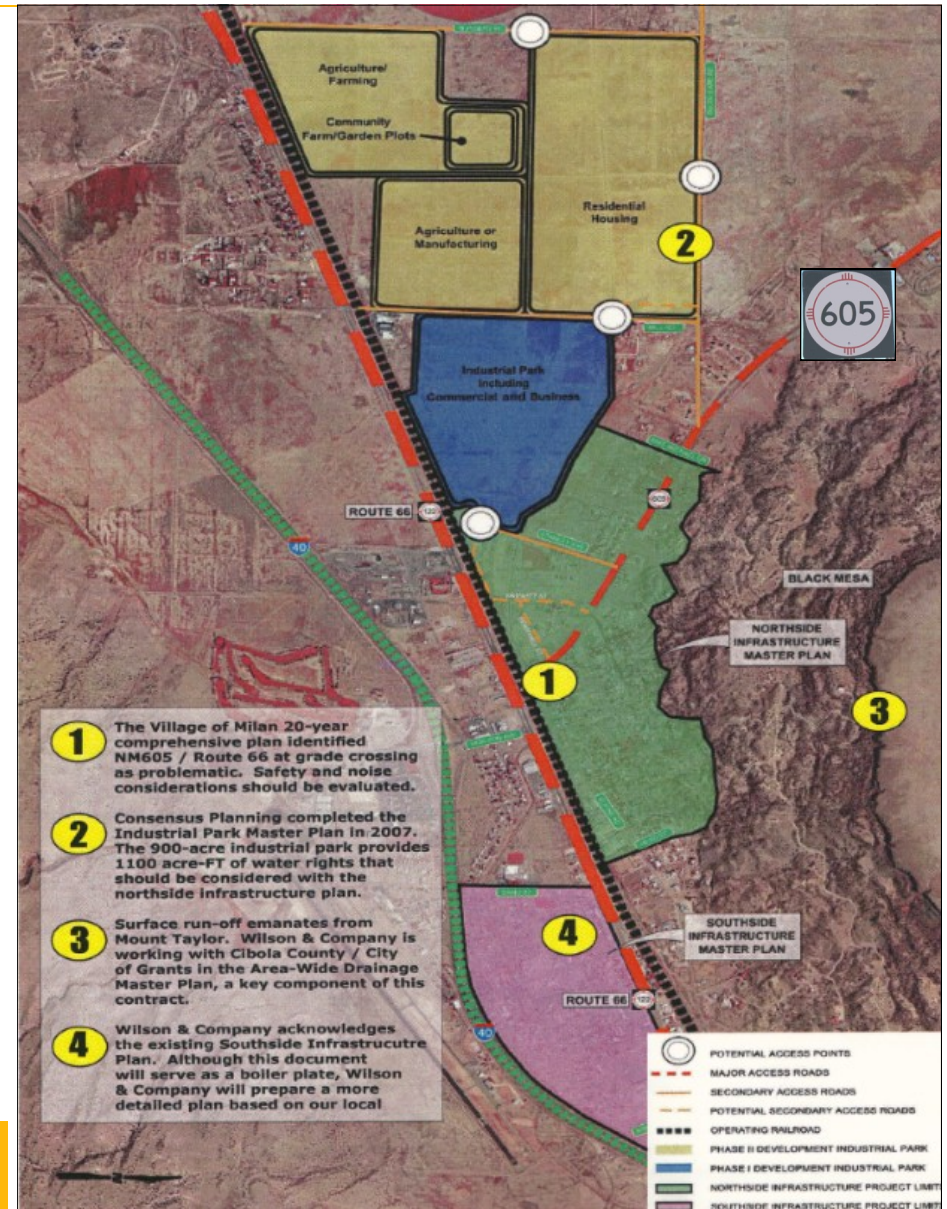
- 2007 Uranium Avenue / Milan Street project (Phase I), funded in part by a \$450,000 CDBG construction grant;

And received ARRA Federal stimulus funds and CDBG funds for:

- 2009 Uranium Avenue (Phase II) project, to be funded by a \$475,000 CDBG construction grant;
- 2010 Village of Milan-Multi-purpose Center Project: \$200,000;

The Village of Milan, under the leadership of Mayor Tom Ortega, carried over the same discipline and vigor into the Northside Infrastructure Master Plan.

The Northside Infrastructure Master Plan was completed in January 2010 with COG support and oversight.



## NORTHWEST NM CARE: “COMMUNITY ACTION FOR A RENEWED ENVIRONMENT”.

**McKinley EPA CARE Level II Grant: Na’nizhohzi Waste Stream Reduction Project.** In 2006-2008, the COG was awarded a \$81,161 CARE grant for 2-year program to create a broad-based stakeholder coalition that could inform, vet, and prioritize toxic risk reduction strategies. At that time, the COG was the only regional and rural project and one of only twelve (12) nationwide.

As one of the country’s charter “Level 1” grantees under EPA’s CARE program (“Community Action for a Renewed Environment”), the COG worked with community partners to prepare and submit a CARE “Level 2” grant application to EPA. The McKinley CARE Network came up with a cohesive plan & partnership around the themes of waste stream management, recycling, alternative energy, and green technology. The COG collaborated with the Gallup-based nonprofit Connections, Inc., which has agreed to serve as the grant’s fiscal agent. The COG drafted the grant and will remain at the table and in good stead with EPA. In January, EPA informed the COG and its partners that our CARE level 2 grant application was awarded funding of \$288,898. COG staff provided grantwriting and TA for the development of the CARE II waste stream reduction project for McKinley County. This project includes components for recycling, renewable energy projects, and green technology projects that contribute toward waste stream reduction.

This announcement coincided well with the development and Earth Day grand opening of the new McKinley County Recycling Center at the Solid Waste Authority transfer station off Hasler Valley Road in Gallup, NM.

An emphasis in this CARE II project, is to leverage the opportunity for small towns and rural counties to successfully participate in recycling and environmental stewardship and to become a model that can be replicated elsewhere. In this regard part of this project includes development of an Environmental Advocacy Center, that will provide staff supported research toward developing sustainable waste stream reduction initiatives (recycling, alternative energy, green technology), allowing our small communities and rural populations to participate in environmental stewardship economic opportunities.

A copy of “CARE II News” can be provided for details on this achievement and CARE level II project. 2009-10 highlights include:

- NWNM Regional Solid Waste Authority (SWA) opened a New Regional Drop-off Recycling Center in Gallup;
- COG completed a Comprehensive Recycling Plan for McKinley area and a Hub & Spoke plan for the two-county region;
- COG applied on behalf of SWA for a ARRA Hub & Spoke grant for equipment and two NMED Recycling & Illegal Dumping grant to dispose of illegal tire stockpile in Grants and to construct a pole barn, which were funded this year; and
- CARE staff permitted and constructed a compost recycling facility, several community gardens, and working on strategies for Environmental Advocacy Center;



Another interesting development related to the CARE Level II program, C&D<sup>2</sup>, a green home manufacturing company, which produces SIP panels out of Styrofoam is setting up a facility in the Gallup area. C&D<sup>2</sup> is looking at the feasibility of creating a bio-diesel production facility that would power their equipment. This manufacturing company alone could easily consume all the fuel we could produce from current waste oil streams available in the Gallup area.

**Picture of:** Billy Moore, new SWA Director, looking out on new landfill cells. He has been key to recycling and waste stream reduction initiatives in the region.





**BROWNFIELDS: COG’S NEW MILLION DOLLAR PROGRAM**

On May 8, 2009, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson announced the availability of \$1 million in grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to help communities in Northwest New Mexico clean up sites known as “brownfields” which may have perceived or actual contamination by hazardous chemicals or pollutants. The grant will help revitalize former industrial and commercial sites, turning them from problem properties to productive community use.

“Cleaning and reusing contaminated properties provides the catalyst to improving the lives of residents living in or near brownfields communities,” said EPA Administrator Jackson. “A revitalized brownfields site reduces threats to human health and the environment, creates green jobs, promotes community involvement, and attracts investment in local neighborhoods.”

The Northwest NM Council of Governments has been working for several years on the EPA “Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)” project. The Brownfields program is a direct offshoot of CARE, and in 2008 the COG formed a regional coalition of stakeholders and contracted Zia Engineering to finalize a community-wide assessment grant proposal to EPA.

The COG was selected to receive an assessment grant of **\$1 million** to conduct environmental site assessments, cleanup planning, health monitoring, and community outreach activities on contaminated and/or underutilized properties for the purpose of reuse for economic, housing, and/or greenspace development. The COG finished its RFP process in May 2010—vetting five competitive firms for assessment and cleanup planning services. The COG has chosen to contract with the top 3 firms. The COG Board has reviewed and approved these contracts triggering the start of this program.

**Several projects are in the queue and the COG is actively soliciting additional sites.**

**Examples of Projects in the Gallup Area:**



**County Property Along 491** (Private owned land, Private Developer) – Phase I Report finalized on former illegal dump site, no further action needed. A developer is currently creating a manufacturing business on this property.

**Boardman Junkyard /Hasler Valley Rd** (City of Gallup) - purchased land after assessment was completed) – Phase I Report produced and no further action needed beside proper debris removal.

City of Gallup working on developing business opportunities for this property.



**Lexington Hotel** (CARE 66, Non-Profit) – Phase I and Phase II Reports completed on the project – site needs asbestos and lead paint remediation – currently pursuing a EPA Cleanup Grant. CARE 66 has a planned transition housing project slated for this historic building, once remediation has been completed.



## 6.

### IMPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

#### “CONNECTING THE SCENIC BYWAY TO REAL DOLLARS”



The COG RPO Planner is a member of the Trail of the Ancients (TOTA) Scenic Byway Association. Historically, the COG led this byway project including development of a corridor management plan, and application for federal designation to create a national four-corners TOTA byway corridor with participating states Arizona, Colorado, and Utah (Colorado and Utah are already certified as national byway corridors).

The Association held meetings March 1 in Laguna and June 8 in Farmington during the past six months. The RPO Planner submitted a \$50,000 marketing proposal in March for 2010 funding to develop signage, a website, and brochures. The RPO Planner and the TOTA Association President presented the proposal to the N.M. Scenic Byway Council on April 12, and of 14 applications submitted statewide, five were forwarded to the FWHA National Byway Administration for funding consideration, including our proposal.

At the June 8, TOTA Association meeting we learned from our Colorado constituents, that they have gained approval from National Geographic magazine to conduct a Geo-Tourism Map Guide project for the four corners region.

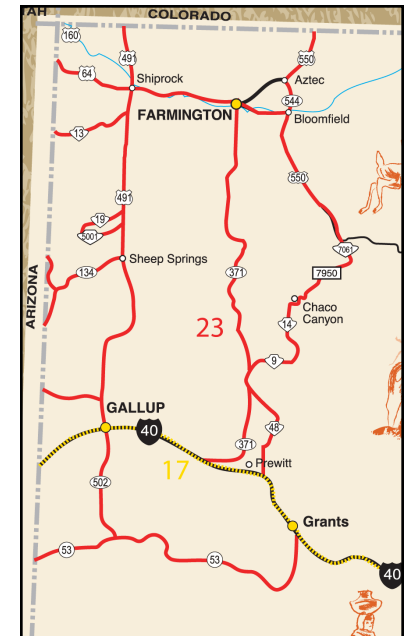
This Geo-Tourism project promotes a more holistic experience of local culture – to allow visitors to experience a region at a much deeper level; it maps out places of interest, events, amenities, and includes a website supported and promoted by National Geographic (NAT-GEO).

Our Colorado partners have already secured \$100K in matching support from Federal sources, such as USFS and BLM. This project will likely have a **very significant impact upon increasing international tourism to our region**, and we are excited to participate in it.

The COG staff met with NAT-GEO Magazine staff and representatives from the four states in Cortez, Colorado on July 14 – 15. It is interesting how tourism opportunities on many fronts are coming together on behalf of our region including archeological, cultural, historical, scenic, recreational (*incl. adventure tourism & trails*), event, and artistic attractions – all with a common theme of authenticity; a theme the international community is interested in, and the Geo-Tourism mapping will promote.

**The project will launch on September 17, 2010 at the Dedication Ceremony for the Four Corners Monument.** At which, time all local sites and attractions can be submitted to NAT-GEO via their webpage (on this project) or in hard copy.

For more information contact the COG staff or for more on GeoTourism: [http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable/about\\_geotourism.html](http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable/about_geotourism.html)



## 6.

### IMPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.



COG Director stands outside the 1940s era refurbished passenger train after luncheon to promote relationship building & discussion.

#### “Building a Partnership with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad”

COG staff worked to support BNSF with developing invitations of local policy officials to a BNSF luncheon on the train.

The company sought to promote positive relations between the community leaders and this major employee in the County. BNSF reported that the trains are usually a good indication of economic activity and reported that they have seen business increase in the last several months. This could be excellent news for the region.

BNSF went on to report on economic trends and their own business planning for future growth.

The community members were given a chance to ask serious questions about BNSF’s plans and discuss local issues such as the Allison Corridor and 2nd & 3rd Street Improvement projects, the proposed Gallup Quiet Zone, safety and fencing issues along BNSF’s route, and employment trends for the Gallup Rail yard. BNSF also presented contributions for local non-profits: Gallup Community Pantry and CARE 66.

### HARNESSING OUR ENERGY ADVANTAGE.

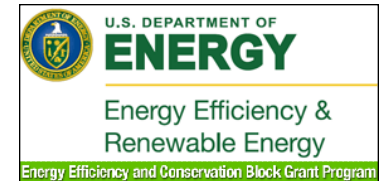
## 7.

#### “COG Starts Energy Efficiency Program”

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG) has entered into a new period of innovation and reinvention. To that end, the COG has partnered with McKinley County to create additional capacity to support governmental energy efficiency planning, facility audits, and retrofitting programs. The work is supported by ARRA/Stimulus funding under the US Department of Energy’s “Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant” program.

The COG recently contracted with Jason Jones, Principal of Green Horizon, LLC, a locally-based energy innovation and efficiency company that will serve as the COG’s quality assurance and program manager for Energy Efficiency Services, which will initially include serving as McKinley County’s “Green Team” leader and coordinator of the County’s Audit & Retrofit Program on nearly 40 governmental facilities. The COG and Green Horizon are working to finalize a request-for-qualifications (RFQ) to attract a turn-key energy efficiency company to perform audits and recommend zero-cost retrofits for facilities.

In the spirit of regionalization and creating economies-of-scale for regional initiatives, the COG is looking to utilize Jason’s expertise as broadly and effectively as possible. In this vein, we would be amenable to adding supporting other agencies that would like to join the initiative and contribute funding. Under such contracts, the COG and its contractor would be responsible on your behalf for the RFQ procurement process, organizing site visits, monitoring and reviewing audits and recommended retrofits, analysis of financial strategies, and retrofit installation. This would provide your organization with a quality audit and proper oversight of the entire process. The COG has been working with City of Aztec, UNM-Gallup, City of Gallup, and Gallup-McKinley County Schools on developing similar programs.



## 8.

## ADVANCING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES.

## Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership—“Master Planning the Jewel of the Southwest”.

The Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership proposes to create and implement a trails network for the Zuni Mountains of the Cibola National Forest – that is supported and endorsed by the United States Forest Service, National Park Service, Zuni Pueblo and surrounding communities. Our goal is to create a non-motorized, multi-use system throughout the Zuni Mountains and beyond with potential connections to community trail systems in the Gallup, Grants, Milan, Breadsprings, Zuni, Fort Wingate, Bluewater, and Ramah areas, as well as, nationally prominent trail systems, trade routes, monuments, and parks, such as the historic Zuni-Acoma Trail, the Chain of Craters, the Hogbacks, McGaffey Lake, Ojo Redondo Campground, Quaking Aspen Trailhead and System, El Malpais National Monument, El Morro National Monument, Mount Taylor, Mount Sedgwick, and the Continental Divide Trail System.

This project has the potential of creating many miles of multi-use, singletrack trail. The Zuni Mountain Trail Partnership has begun to expand the membership and identify stakeholders in the region. Public input and grassroots participation will be vital to the development of a master plan that is suitable to all citizens. The ZMTP is currently working on a public participation plan that will be inclusive.

The COG has been a major force in coordinating this initiative that aims to benefit citizens and communities in both Cibola and McKinley counties. The COG has helped to accomplish the following catalyzing tasks, including scripting and being successfully awarded:

- A technical assistance grant from **National Parks Service’s “Rivers, Trails, and Conversation Assistance”** program to facilitate the overall master planning process with community and broad-based stakeholder involvement;
- A marketing grant—**National Park Service Challenge Cost-Share Program (CCSP)** to promote this project;
- A FHWA and NMEMNRD “Recreational Trails Program” grant to build 26 miles and develop the Stanley Polish/Hillso Trailhead in McGaffey area;
- A FHWA and NMEMNRD “Recreational Trails Program” grant to build a new trail system and trailheads in Ramah Lake area.

Some initial Goals of this project include:

- Creation of a multi-stakeholder partnership for the sustainable and environmental sound development and conservation, and restoration of the Zuni Mountains region.
- Development of a Zuni Mountains Master Plan with trail connections and linkages to surrounding communities to provide access to area assets in both Cibola and McKinley counties.
- Identification, inventory, and prioritization of sensitive areas and potential restoration projects throughout the project area. The Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership (ZMTP) estimates that at least three (3) restoration projects will be chosen as models for completion.
- Addressing tourism and economic development opportunities
  - Supporting youth corps and other “green job” initiatives



More information at : <http://www.zunimountaintrailpartnership.com/>



## 9.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT & VICTORIES.

Under the NM Department of Finance & Administration's Local Government Division, the COG is responsible to assist local communities in planning and project development. COG staff worked hard on the following deliverables/ initiatives:

### ICIP.

Completing over 40 local communities Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plans to help communities prioritize and plan for projects. The COG staff also supports Navajo Chapters and other tribal communities with planning and financing of projects. COG staff just presented at the Navajo Nation Infrastructure/Technology Conference at San Juan College to over a 100 officials, staff, and community coordinators on "planning for success".

### CDBG.

Completing and receiving the following CDBG grants for local projects in low-to-moderate income neighborhoods:

- **Cibola County—Seboyeta's Wastewater System: \$500,000**
- **City of Grants— Johnson Street Improvements: \$445,000**
- **Village of Milan-Multi-purpose Center Project: \$200,000**
- **McKinley County— Thoreau Wastewater Project: \$450,000**
- **City of Gallup—Phase II Sky City Improvements: \$375,000**

The COG staff is also lead on implementing and overseeing several of these initiatives and other CDBG projects already funded.



The Village of Milan and Elmer Chavez celebrate together after award of funding.

### Legislative Technical Assistance.

COG staff coordinated several Legislative Interim committee hearings both last Summer and this Fall. COG Planner Evan Williams supported the region in Santa Fe during the two Special Sessions and regular 30-day budget session. Highlights included preventing the removal of hold harmless from food tax bills and passage of Historic Indian Legislation—e.g. Tribal Infrastructure Fund Bill, Indian Arts Authenticity Protection, and Indian Law Institute for Legislators. COG staff worked vigorously to protect all projects from "clawbacks", especially those projects that were moving forward and/or had matching funds committed.

### Federal Programs & Policies.

COG staff also worked in Washington, DC to advocate for regional projects such as, Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project, US491, Uranium Legacy Cleanup, Gallup Indian Medical Center Replacement Project, and other regional and local initiatives. COG staff tracked important policy initiatives through its national association—NADO.

### Rural Technical Assistance & Water Planning.

COG staff provided countless hours to help small communities with water and conservation planning, grantwriting and proposal development, budgeting, and other technical assistance. The COG staff provides a lifeline and professional services to help get communities through Board and/or staff turnover or other major crisis.



## “O Captain, My Captain: Patty’s 25 Year Legacy”.

The COG staff wanted to use a portion of this publication to reflect on the career of its fearless leader and Executive Director Patty Lundstrom. For 25 years, Patty Lundstrom provided regional leadership through her hard work that resulted in our combined competitiveness, strategic infrastructure improvements, and national recognition.

In August 2007, Ms. Lundstrom was given the honor of being the keynote speaker at our National Association of Developing Organizations (NADO) Conference to present the future of COG’s—using our region’s experience. She described a larger collaborative of entities in region working together to build a strong economy and bring prosperity to all citizens. She envisioned an expanded partnership with COG’s acting as the super-connector facilitating the regional conversations not only amongst our current member governments, but working cooperatively with the tribes, colleges, hospitals, private sector businesses, and other non-profit and civic organizations to foster real competitiveness and systemic changes. Putting COG at the center of our region’s circle, to create the linkages aligning our CEDS planning and economic development targets with workforce training programs and with relevant education. This vision would position our region and the COG to compete globally and provide jobs to keep our local people local.

In her vision, she talked about the COGs bridging the gaps between funding “silos” to build complete projects and providing inter-disciplined planning processes to create sustainable and livable communities that everyone would want to live, work, visit, play, and retire. She also believed that the Four Corners region would be crucial for Northwest NM’s future success. Linking all four COGs into a Four Corners Commission modeled after Mississippi Delta Region or Appalachian Regional Commission to receive and utilize Federal investments for strategic projects and promote programs built on best practices and local applicability.

To understand the inspiration of Patty’s vision—one needs to understand the COGs history. In her last staff meeting, she outlined 4 major transitions in COG’s development in her career:

1. **MACOG ERA** —the COG begun (circa 1972) as a planning district that served Gallup, McKinley County, Zuni, Navajo, RMCHCS, UNM-Gallup, and Gallup-McKinley Board of Education (D-1). Shortly after Ms. Lundstrom graduated for NMSU, she was put in charge of the McKinley Area Council of Governments. Under her direction with assistance from Chairman Doc Livingston, she solicited new members from Cibola and San Juan counties. After years of hard work and tenacity, she made the COG whole with membership from all incorporated counties and municipalities.
2. **FIGHTING BACK ERA**—In the early 90s, the COG took the lead in the fight against alcohol abuse. The NWNM Fighting Back program worked to reduce the demand for alcohol and other drugs in the three-county area, a 15,000 sq mile region with large Native American population. In 1990, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism recorded that McKinley County had the highest composite index of alcohol-related problems of all 3, 106 counties in the US. The COG’s leadership on this issue resulted in Robert Wood Johnson Foundation investing \$4,569,033 to support this project between 1990-1997, development of NCI detox treatment center in Gallup, 10 local Fighting Back Associations, trained 8 community organizers, closing of drive-up package stores, a united walk on the Capitol, special local-option DWI Liquor Excise Tax, and a spiritually-based healing and training program. Under this unique project, Ms. Lundstrom was able to recruit a young man by the name of Jeff Kiely, who added new spirit and capacities to the work of the COG.
3. **CDC ERA**—In the late 90’s, the COG received several reports on the region’s extreme asset inequity and overall poverty of our region. A report provided by the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) became the centerpiece for the development of the NWNM Community Development Corporation (CDC). The COG again took innovation to the next level by creating a sister agency, non-profit organization that could implement COG’s planning work and offer client-driven services. The CDC was successful in gaining the attention and investment from private foundations, State, and Federal sources.

The CDC developed tools to address asset inequity, access to capital issues, and develop micro-enterprises. These non-traditional tools included the Enterprise Loan Fund, Artisan Micro-enterprise Loan Fund, USFS Loan Fund, the State’s first “Individual Development Account” (IDA) program, Financial Literacy classes, Asset-specific Education classes, unique partnerships with other providers, and business technical assistance. Under the COG’s structure this organization and its programs were successful, but after being spun-out it lost momentum.

### “O Captain, My Captain: Patty’s 25 Year Legacy”. *(continued)*

4. **LEGISLATIVE ERA**—In 2000, the COG Board made the decision to allow Ms. Lundstrom to run for the House of Representatives. After winning her seat, the COG gained a new core competency in advancing our work and gaining a new insight on accessing the State Legislative process. This new dual relationship helped advance projects, policies, and programs for our region. The COG staff was invited to participate on several Statewide Task Forces to tackle major regional issues including Payday Lending, Individual Development Accounts, Uranium Legacy Cleanup, Native Arts Authenticity, Sustainable Transportation funding, etc.

After 25 years at the rein of the Northwest NM Council of Governments, Patty Lundstrom resigned her post as Executive Director effective March 2010. A casualty of the Hatch Act, Ms. Lundstrom opted to remain a NM State Legislator and on June 8th was resoundingly re-elected by her constituency. In her last address to the COG Board of Directors, Ms. Lundstrom issued the following statement: “there is not a day I haven’t enjoyed nor a day that I haven’t looked forward to” being your Executive Director. Ms. Lundstrom leaves behind a massive legacy and list of accomplishments, which have led to the NWNMCOG becoming one of the nation’s most influential and dynamic organizations. During her tenure at the COG, she was instrumental in many strategic initiatives including:

- **Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project:** chairing the Steering Committee for the last 17 years, testifying and gaining Congressional project authorization, and garnering millions of State dollars to provide the local match for this pivotal project.
- **Fighting Back**—COG’s unique leadership in this healthy communities approach to combat alcohol abuse in NWNM, which is continued today in the Farmington Public Inebriate Response Taskforce.
- **NWNM Community Development Corporation:** working to reduce the divide between the asset rich and asset poor in NWNM by developing the CDC, creating financial literacy programs, developing innovative tools like IDAs, and regulating the payday loan industry.
- **Environmental Programs:** addressing environmental concerns by securing one of only ten EPA grants in the nation to develop the NWNM “Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)” program, worked to develop strategies to gain National attention and fund uranium legacy site cleanup, and being the first ever \$1M EPA Brownfields investment in the country.
- **Trail of the Ancients-NM:** getting the State to dedicate a scenic byway that encompassed the majority of region that could act as a backbone for tourism. Also, in tourism expansion—she spearheaded the Adventure Gallup & Beyond initiative to market regional outdoor assets as a premier destination.

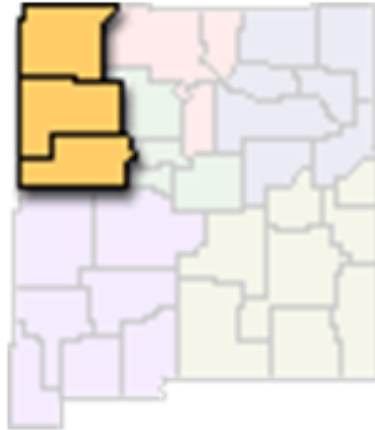


#### THE NEXT ERA:

The COG Board has named Jeffrey Kiely, the Interim Executive Director of the COG, and the team has come together during a period being coined nationally as our Great Recession. Financial constraints are being felt throughout the region and nation, but in this chaos ***the COG enters a new ERA of re-invention, re-definition, and positioning our organization to be a regional leader and meet the challenge of becoming—the COG of the future that Ms. Lundstrom described in her 2007 NADO address.***



## OUR REGION.



CHALLENGING ISSUES,  
SACRED LANDSCAPES,  
THE BEST PEOPLE & PLACE  
ON EARTH.

## YOUR COG STAFF.

### **Executive Leadership.**

Jeffrey Kiely, Interim Executive Director

### **Front Office Team.**

Bebe Sarmiento, Executive Secretary

Martina Whitmore, Administrative Assistant

### **Finance Team.**

Theresa Lee, Finance Manager

Teresa Mecale, Finance Assistant

### **Planning Team.**

Evan Williams, Senior Planner

Michael Sage, Planner

Robert Kuipers, Planner

*A team woven by talent, passion, and dedication.  
A platoon who goes to war for our region's survival at  
every level, day in and day out. Pound for pound, this  
COG staff will out produce any COG in the country.*

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The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (NWNMCOG) is an association of local governments and special units of government within the State's First (#1) Planning District.

Municipal and County government agencies in San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola Counties, are members, while other groups like tribal nations, education institutions, non-profits, private sector and industry, health providers, water associations, and other private and public groups are key partners in identifying and initiating regional planning strategies.

**OUR REGION, YOUR COG.**



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