

2020

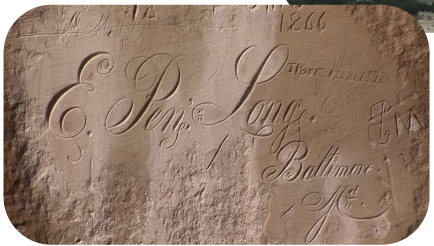
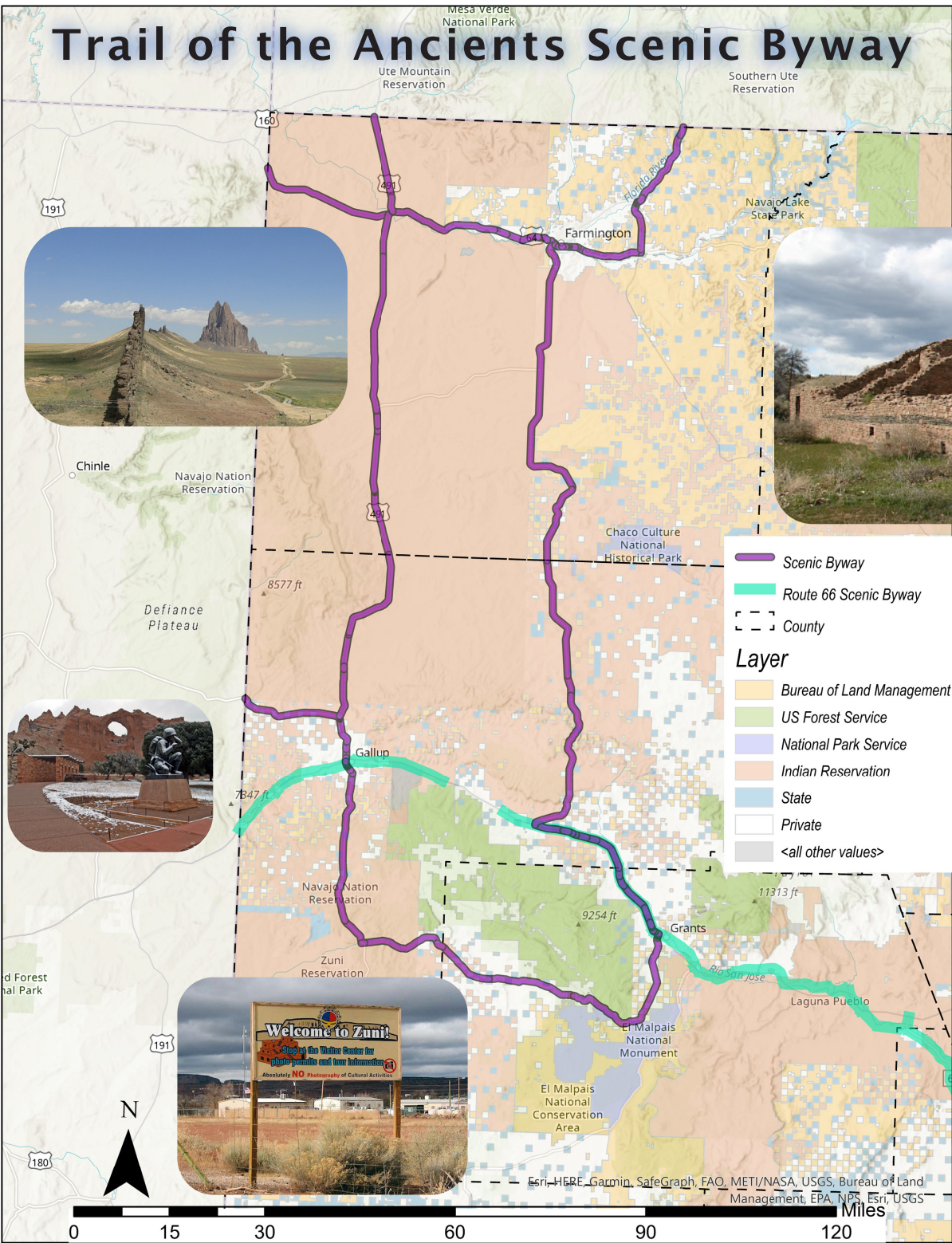


# ANNUAL REPORT

Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments



# Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway



Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, Esri, USGS



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# Words from the Chairman

*Dear Friends and Neighbors,*

I deliver to you the COG's Annual Report to highlight the tremendous work they do to move forward our region. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all present and past Board members that volunteer their time and expertise. I believe the COG has taken a tremendous step forward in the last year under the leadership of our Executive Director. Mr. Evan Williams has focused on a simple four-point philosophy to stabilize, grow, and advance the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, our region, and all of our communities.

**Staffing:** recruiting, building, supporting, and managing the best team and talent in the region.

**Financial Accountability:** maintaining fiscal constraint and internal controls, correcting audit findings, and continuously improving our fiscal position.

**Service Delivery:** adding value to our members, delivering on work programs, and providing professional services.

**Economic Development:** getting back to the basics of asset-based economic development based on sound planning, data and analytics, and delivering strategic infrastructure through projecteering.

The second item that has affected us all is the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had profound impacts on our loved ones, how we conduct business, and carrying out our daily lives. I believe that the COG embodies the spirit and the know-how to assist us in the recovery process as we rebuild our communities, businesses, and economies to be stronger, more resilient, and more diverse. They have already been facilitating a Recovery Plan for our region and finding, funneling, and following up on resources and tools that can be deployed to assist us. I invite our members, partners, and communities to lean on the COG for this type of leadership and support.

I firmly believe that by working together we can make great things happen and with the COG supporting us -- we can achieve what others say is impossible,

~ Billy Moore, Chaiman of the Board



# Message from the Executive Director

Planning for Recovery Starts Now: There are four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness response, and recovery. The step in the cycle that typically gets overlooked is the recovery part of this process as it is longer term, not as visible, after the fact, and thought to naturally occur on its own. To be frank, if the response does not happen effectively there is no reason to have a recovery plan, but recovery planning is indispensable in the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. This means: a strategic action plan drafted, quality input and data garnered, assets and resources mapped, a Recovery Czar named, a partnership of private, public, and tribal sectors mobilized, and impact evaluated.

With our designation as the Economic Development District for our three-county region of Cibola, McKinley, and San Juan counties, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments is being sought to assist our region and the US Economic Development Administration in leading on a comprehensive recovery plan.

Rightfully, there is a ton of focus on mitigation, preparedness, and response to the COVID-19 crisis, including economic support programs focused on providing relief to unemployed workers, businesses temporarily closed, and business owners having difficulties paying employees. Some of us are getting buried under the daily avalanche of COVID-19 relief programs and updates, but organizations and financial institutions exist to assist with connecting people and businesses to these short-term survival measures.

But who is thinking about long-term recovery and building business resiliency and redundancies for the new normal? After Hurricane Katrina, there was a recovery plan, process, and partnership to re-build communities affected by the disaster. To bring them back, not the same but hopefully stronger, more diversified, and more equitable in terms of opportunity and prosperity. With COVID-19 pandemic, never let a bad crisis go to waste. This is our time to set the table by taking a step back, planning our strategy, and implementing it together.

*continued..*



**THOSE WHO SAY IT CAN  
NOT BE DONE, SHOULD NOT  
INTERRUPT THOSE DOING IT.**

Our regional economy was already on the verge of crisis due to the collapse of coal markets. The price of oil is causing New Mexico to reduce spending. COVID-19 is compounding these problems with gross receipts tax revenues eroding to dust. So, why would we just re-arrange the chairs on the 'Titanic', when we could build a whole new ship. Let me be clear, I am not advocating for leaving on way side our region's intrinsic assets, natural resources, or competitive advantages. These must be incorporated in a thoughtful approach as they are critical and not easily replaced in the macro picture.

The COGs around the State of New Mexico are working State agencies to develop a comprehensive but focused Recovery Plan for New Mexico to leverage resources in a way that builds a resilient, diversified, and globally sustainable economy. Our COG has drafted a framework and is surveying regional economic development professionals, community experts, and grassroots leaders to prune their best ideas. The challenge is not finding places where investments need to happen but prioritizing the top ones that will have the greatest impact and position our region for the future.

We know that businesses will reopen, employees will get back working, and taxes will begin to fill coffers to fund needed programs and services again. Bottom line, this is the American economy and Northwest New Mexico where business is still done with handshakes and hard work. But how does our region and New Mexico use this crisis to leapfrog our economy ahead? It is time to get into the game, roll up our sleeves, and kick a little butt New Mexico, not wait until manana. Let's plan the recovery today!

~ Evan Williams, Executive Director

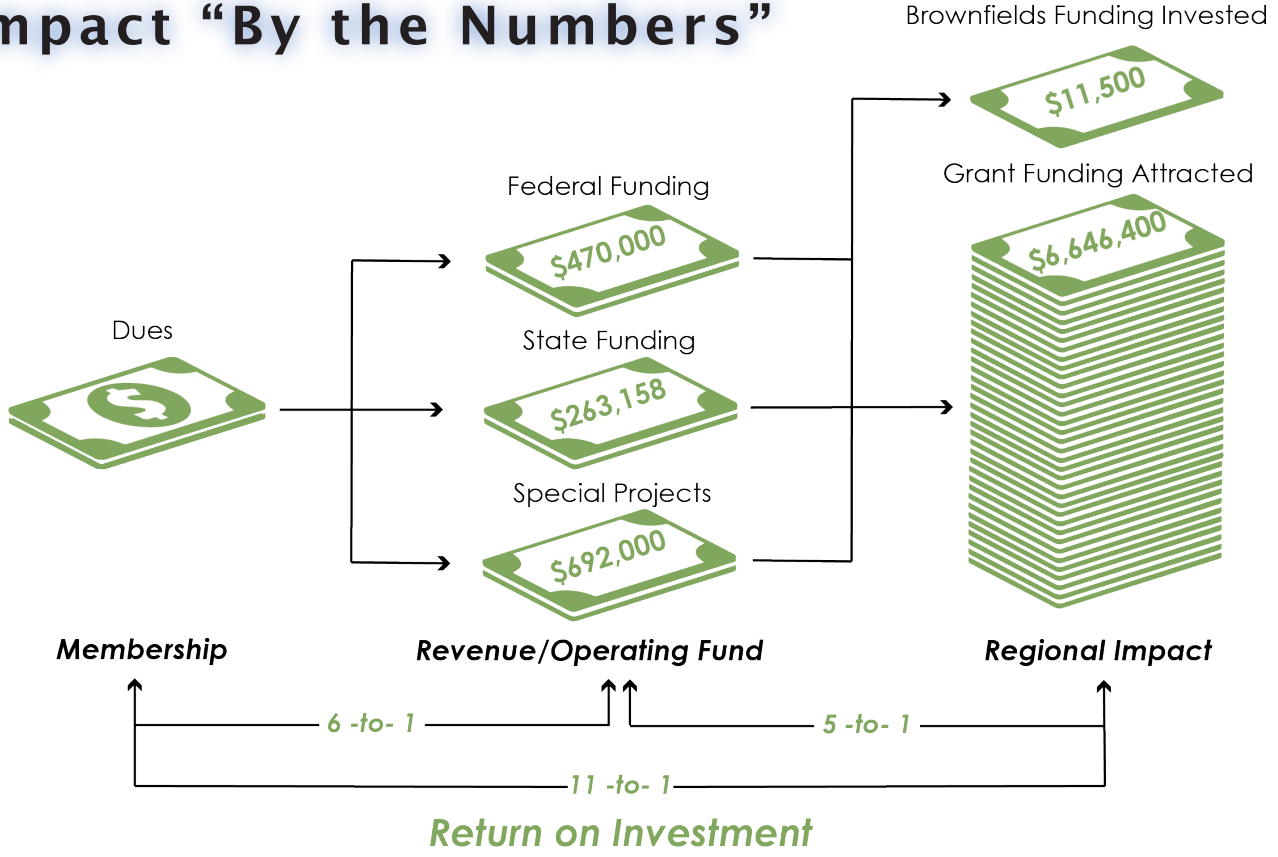


***Ways that the COG is preparing now to be the change in our region:***

- (1) **Working** every day on planning, developing, and financing needed infrastructure projects, including transportation and broadband crucial to our economic competitiveness as a region.
- (2) **Working** with the US Economic Development Administration to target \$988,400 in creating shovel-ready industrial sites in our region through their Assistance to Coal Communities program.
- (3) **Helping** Local Government Division setup a Small Business Assistance Program using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.
- (4) **Continuation** of a regional Brownfields program aimed to invest \$500,000 to restore environmental concerns and flip properties and building from non-productive sties to community catalysts.
- (5) **Nomination** of the Trail of the Ancients byway as a tourism tool to drive visitation to and around our region once restrictions are lifted.
- (6) **Producing** a series of Community Prospectus for each county to drive Opportunity Zone investments into our region.
- (7) **Approving** and updating our Revolving Loan Program to help new business start-ups and entrepreneurs after CARES Act funding is exhausted but access to capital remains an issue.



# Impact "By the Numbers"

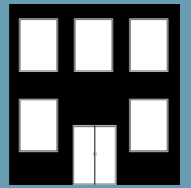


# National Recognition



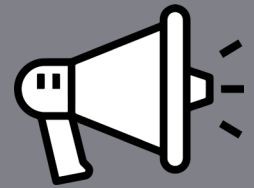
- 1**  
*NADO Impact Award  
Zuni Mtn Trails Project*
- 1**  
*of 10 U.S. Recreational Economic for  
Rural Communities Awardees*
- 1**  
*Trail of the Ancient - only NM Scenic  
Byway Nomination*

## Building Improvements



- \$90,000**  
*Roof Repair*
- \$10,000**  
*Broadband Upgrade*
- \$2,000**  
*Alley Mural Project*
- \$1,200**  
*Garden Project*

## Marketing & Social Media



- 1**  
*Professional Website*
- 74**  
*Twitter Followers*
- 100**  
*Facebook Followers*
- 1**  
*YouTube Channel*

## Newsletters & Reports



- 3**  
*"Connecting the Dots" Newsletters*
- 4**  
*"Snapshot of the Session"*
- 1**  
*Annual Report*



# 2020 Legislative Session Recap



One of the unique services that the COG provides for our members is access to our legislative assistance and expertise. Among other services, the COG assists in facilitating Legislative Forums, working on capital outlay requests, presenting to interim Legislative Committees, and tracking policy and legislation. This year, Executive Director Evan Williams was stationed in Santa Fe and participated in the 30-day Session.

Some take-aways from the 2020 Legislative Session and items to consider as we prepare for the next:

**Executive Order 2013-006:** Executive Order #6 and other agency regulations are important to comply with. It is critical that all entities meet the Executive Order and discuss bottlenecks and issues with Legislators on regulations that are stifling projects.

**Spend Baby Spend:** The winners next year will be those entities that are ready to spend once the Governor signs the capital outlay bill, in terms of procurement, fast-tracking projects with on-call contractors, and implementing “quick strike” project teams that meet regularly. Capital Outlay funding is split between general fund cash and severance tax bond.

**Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP):** Think about how the ICIP ties into Legislative requests and regional priorities. The Capital Outlay request is now tied to ICIP language. As you prepare your ICIP, please update all “Legislative language” sections of priority projects. Need to transform the ICIP into your entity’s planning tool and make it useful to you — the ICIP IS NOT A WISHLIST.

**Projecteering:** Continue to improve and discussion your projecteering (project development) process to transition projects from concept to completion. Inventory what projects did not get fully funded, bring those to the COG and allow us to identify funding resources to close the gap. Allow us to projecteer your project.

**Escalante Generating Station Next Steps:** House Bill 8, which was approved and signed into law, was the jumping point for a series of investments into the Prewitt Industrial Park initiative. Since being signed, the COG along with various agencies have developed programmatic plans to rejuvenate the Prewitt area industrial cluster. A complete master plan of the area has been completed and more in-depth site design has commenced. Recent work stemming from HB8 also resulted in similar activities to occur at the Milan Farms Industrial Park.

**Say Thank You:** Legislators often get criticized for many things, and almost never get thanked for the job they do and the accomplishments they achieve. Send a letter thanking them for capital outlay and other appropriations. Host a press conference. Invite them to a groundbreaking. Invite them to report out to your elected body. Same goes for Executive staff and Departments that supported us in the process. Did you say thank you yet?

Over the course of the Legislative Session, the COG produces a series of newsletters titled “Snapshots of the Session”. These newsletters recap legislation and activities that directly impact the communities of Northwest New Mexico. This past session the COG produced the following:

Money Bills - focused on breaking down all legislation that provided funding to State and local needs, programs, and projects.

Veto City - focused on the Governor’s action including her targeted vetoes to reduce spending caused by dramatic decline of oil prices.

Priority Bills - reviewed the status of priority legislation that impacts our region and local governments, including funding bills, transportation and economic development related, and bills that impact local government either positive or negative.

Escalante - focused on all legislation and funding that was directed to assist our region’s recovery from the closure of the Prewitt Escalante Generating Station in December 2020 or those bills that could be leveraged to assist the bi-county area.

In June, a Special Session of the Legislature was called to order due to economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the states dependence on oil and gas revenues. With the need to rapidly disperse funds for recovery planning, small business assistance and testing, the state targeted projects that had little to no encumbrance, shuffled funds from programs and enacted regulations to ease the economic impact of the virus.



# Regional Champion Dr. John Pinto

Each year, the COG Executive Committee selects individuals from each of the COG's three county areas for the annual award of "Regional Champion". The purpose of the award is to acknowledge and thank the work of civic leaders who demonstrate outstanding regional vision, engagement, and commitment to processes of cross-boundary collaboration. These individuals have shown dedication to the goals and values of the COG, as we work together – collectively – to "lead the field and move the region".

This year, the Committee felt that it needed to sidestep tradition and spotlight the late, Dr. John Pinto as the sole Regional Champion. Dr. John Pinto, a Navajo Code Talker in World War II who became one of the nation's longest serving Native American legislators and the longest serving in New Mexico State history has not only worked to improve the lives of residents in northwest New Mexico, has made conscious efforts to support all residents of the state. He was born in 1924 to a family of Navajo shepherders and was raised in Lupton, Arizona, and Gallup, New Mexico, and passed on May 24, 2019 at the age of 94.

Among many of the impactful efforts put forward by Senator Pinto, advocating for and securing money to expand Highway 491 from two to four lanes in San Juan and McKinley counties was one of his biggest highlights.



The recent photos of him earning his honorary degree from Navajo Technical University made me smile for days, because he was so deserving. He was an incredible ally in our fight to address missing and murdered indigenous women.

*"He is with his beloved wife now - who never left his side. The sadness of Senator Pinto's passing will reverberate with New Mexicans statewide, as his advocacy and love for our state was never ending. His loss to us will be remembered in many ways. My deep condolences to his family and to the Navajo Nation."*



U.S. Congresswoman, Deb Haaland paid her respects to Pinto and offered her "deep condolences to his family and to the Navajo Nation."

*"Over the course of many years I have been fortunate to have spent time with Senator John Pinto. From organizing in Indian Country to a visit to the Round House as a Congresswoman, it was always clear Senator Pinto was a fierce advocate for the best interests of New Mexico."*



***Honoring the Doctor of Public Service, John Pinto as Northwest New Mexico's Regional Champion of serving 43 years for the State of New Mexico, the longest serving Senate Democratic member of District 3; San Juan County and McKinley County.***

- Díbéłzhíní (Black Sheep Clan) and born for the Táchii'nii (Red Running into the Water People Clan).
- United States Marine Corps, Navajo Code Talker.
- Bachelor's & Master's Degree, Elementary Education.
- Gallup-McKinley County School system for 28 years.
- Legislative Liaison, Navajo Nation Division of Transportation since 1988.
- President, Gallup Indian Community Center for 20 years
- Breadsprings chapter President for 4 years
- Red Rock Chapter Secretary-treasurer for 6 years



- Eastern Navajo Tribal Council for 10 years.
- McKinley County Board Commissioner for 4 years.
- Member of the interim Legislative Indian Affairs Committee since 1989.
- Senate Indian and Cultural Affairs Committee Chair since 1987.
- 1987 designation of "American Indian Day"
- 2004 Cabinet-level 1 Indian Affairs Department.
- 2019 Native American Filmmakers Grant Fund
- Senior member in the Senate.
- Wife, Joann, 63 years of marriage.

***"I've never wanted to quit. People love me. I go places, meet people and learn things. They call me the Traveling Senator"***



# Senator John Pinto Memorial Fund Awards

Native American Filmmakers receive grants to help open new doors into the film industry

Senator Pinto recognized that as the New Mexico film industry moves forward, so must the Native American film industry. SB 649 was passed in the 2019 legislative session. The 2019 legislation provided \$100,000 for Senator John Pinto (SJP) Memorial Fund Awards in honor of the late Senator John Pinto and his relentless support for the Native American Film Industry. Twenty \$5,000 grants were awarded to Native film students and filmmakers, living and working in New Mexico. Funds can be used toward pre-production, production, and post-production. Grantees must be registered members of one of the tribes or pueblos of New Mexico.

The New Mexico State Film Office has announced recipients of the SJP Memorial fund Awards. "All of these filmmakers expressed an enduring need to be the bearers of their own stories, and no longer accept the inconsistency of having stories told about their culture from an outsider's viewpoint," Economic Development Department Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes said. "That's the legacy of Senator John Pinto and why we are honored to highlight this work."

The COG's very own, Carrie House, Planner at the COG is a recipient of the Senator John Pinto Memorial Award. Her project titled „Diyin ~ Holy Project“ is Carrie's creation of an indigeneous Dine self-narrative. It is a personal and spiritual journey through the multimedia fine art of the filmmaker's late brother, Conrad House. The film will be an experimental documentary of the deep revelations of Carrie and Conrad's spritual connection with the Holy People, within Navajo worldview.

"As film is a cornerstone of our culture and history. Each of these filmmakers has an essential story to tell, and the Senator John Pinto

Memorial Fund awards will help bring these stories to the screen," New Mexico State Film Office Director, Amber Dodson, said. "We are immensely thankful to the late Senator John Pinto and his granddaughter Senator Shannon Pinto, and truly thrilled to support diverse storytelling and filmmaking in New Mexico."



**Michelle Lujan Grisham** @GovMLG · Jul 16  
 Congratulations to the twenty recipients of filmmaking grants from the Senator John Pinto Memorial Fund!

The late senator was an ardent champion of Native American filmmakers – these grants will enable Indigenous artists to tell their own stories.



20 Native filmmakers receive Sen. John Pinto grants  
 The \$5,000 grants were awarded to film students and filmmakers living and working in New Mexico  
 @abqjournal.com





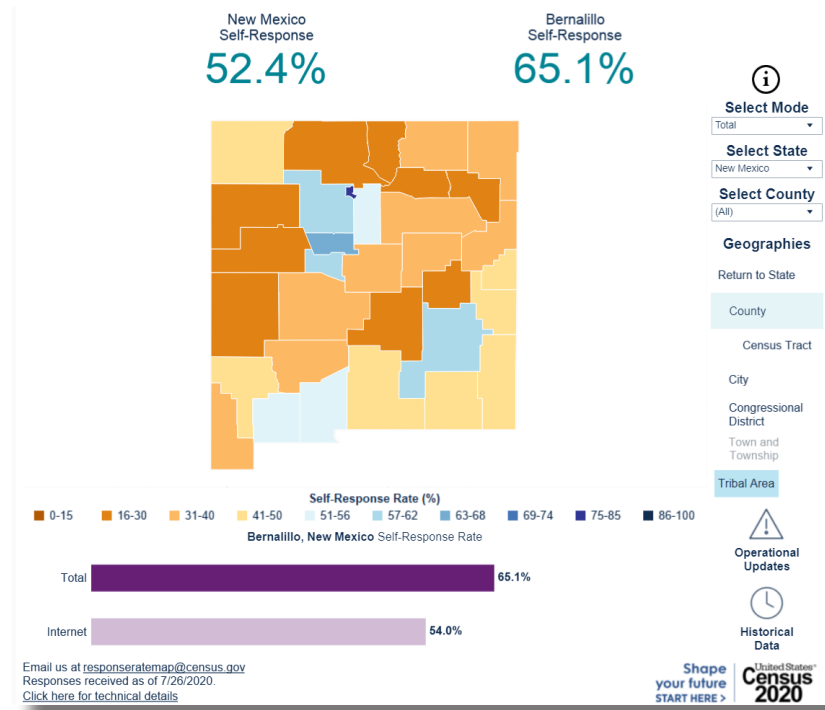
# 2020 US Census

Each year, Census data directly impacts federal funding for more than 100 programs Nationwide including school lunch programs, federal and state highway construction programs, education programs and much more. The results of the Census affect planning and funding for healthcare including programs such as Medicaid, Medicare Part B, State Children's Health Insurance, and the prevention and treatment of substance abuse. Needless to say, with each New Mexican accounting for \$5,000 a year in federal funding and \$50,000 over the course of the next 10 years, it is imperative that every person that can be counted is counted.

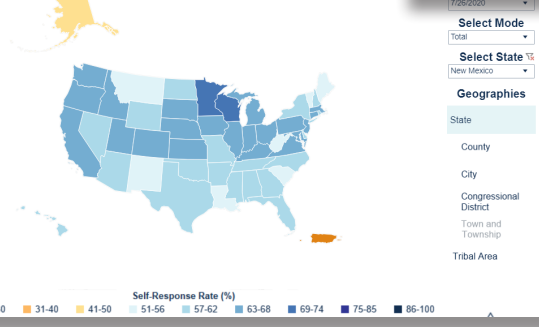
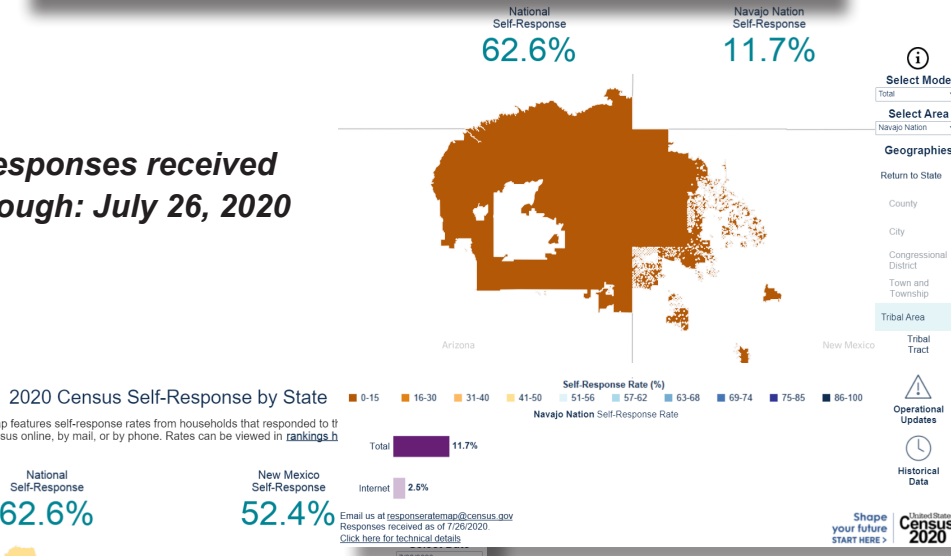
The 2020 Census is immensely valuable for the businesses community, as the results are used to provide insight into the communities they serve. Information such as income, commuting patterns, population trends and growth projections are generated using census data. Industry relies on census data and the analysis concluded to make decisions such as whether or not to expand operations, determining locations for new sites, determine if there is a local labor force to support expansion efforts and most importantly it helps determine the return on investment.

The COG understands the importance of the Census and has committed staff time to assist various efforts around the region. COG staff has participated in county level census outreach initiatives call complete counts committees. These committees are responsible for getting the word out by developing promotional material, recruiting volunteers, and coordinating with local agencies. In northwest New Mexico, these committees are critical as we have one of the highest undercounted areas in the country.

In addition to complete counts committee support, the COG assigned Planner Carrie House to assist the region and state with the work conducted as part of the U.S. Census' Participants Area Statistical Program (PSAP). The purpose of the PSAP program is update statistical area boundaries which will subsequently be used as part of the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey estimates and the Economic Census. In our region, changes to census tracts, census blocks, census block groups, county census divisions, and census designated places were submitted and approved.



**Responses received through: July 26, 2020**





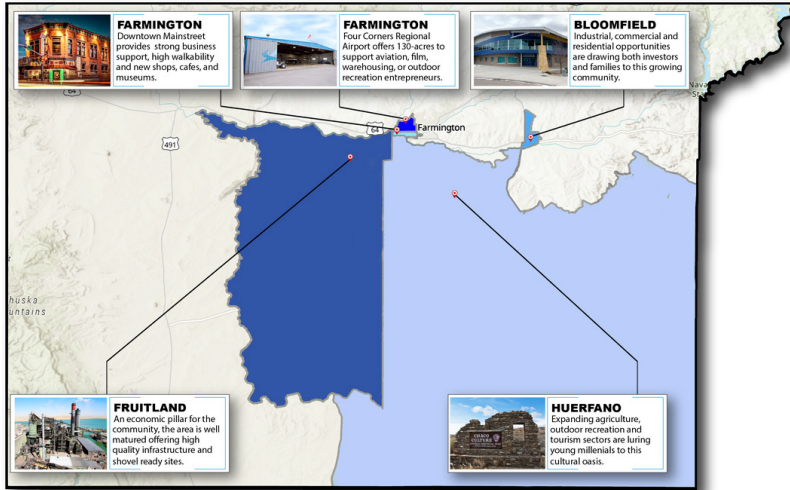
# Promoting our Qualified Opportunity Zones

Since being designated, the region's 10 Qualified Opportunity Zones have been promoted to prospecting and expanding industries. Without proper promotional material this task was rather ineffective. Seeing room for improvement, the COG by way of Executive Director Evan Williams and Economic Development Program Manager Michael Sage made the decision to develop county-level promotional material to be used by the State, local governments, local economic development organizations and other organizations that aim to improve the economic vitality of the region.

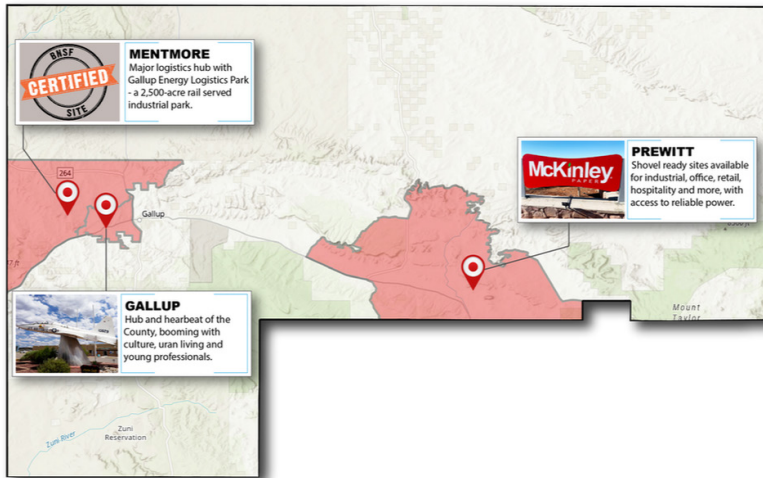
The promotional materials are designed to identify the boundaries of the QOZ, highlight community assets and to promote local economic development projects for potential investment. The use of these materials was first identified while scouring through best practices highlighted by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and the US Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The COG is continuously working to better market the QOZs and the bountiful economic opportunities that reside in our region to the rest of the world. We have and will continue to incorporate QOZs into our regional plans including the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan (CEDS), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and the Northwest New Mexico Economic Post-Pandemic Recovery Plan.

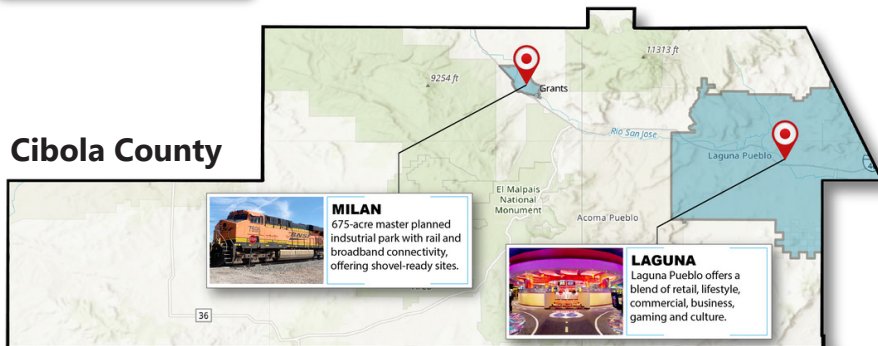
## San Juan County



## McKinley County



## Cibola County





# EDA Investments in Northwest New Mexico



As an Economic Development District, the Northwest New Mexico has often reached out to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to seek assistance by way of technical assistance and funding to improve the economic vitality of the region. From the COG's perspective, establishing a relationship with EDA that shifts the economic climate of the region was paramount. Executive Director Evan Williams has worked tirelessly to ensure that relationship has been bonded by working closely with EDA Regional Director Jorge Ayala and EDA New Mexico Representative Trisha Korbas.



EDA Regional Director, Jorge Ayala and COG Director in discussion at Board Meeting

The relationship between the COG and EDA was evident during Jorge Ayala's recent trip to Northwest New Mexico. Mr. Ayala was invited to and presented to the COG Board during the October Board meeting. The message of Mr. Ayala's presentation was clear – recent economic activities and the impending downturn puts Northwest New Mexico at a real disadvantage but EDA will do everything in its power to assist your region in mitigating the negative affects of closures while improving economic opportunity for your residents. He noted that prior to the closures, partnership with the COG has resulted in EDA investments in the region. Mr. Ayala noted that since October 2015, EDA has invested \$4,812,377 into our region. Investments include the following:

**2015:** POWER's Assistance to Coal Communities: \$327,300 in Economic Adjustment-POWER funds to the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Gallup, New Mexico, to support Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Economic Development District to direct and coordinate a study in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado.

**2015:** POWER's Assistance to Coal Communities: San Juan College (\$1.4M) to the fund the School of Energy to increase economic diversification and re-employment services to workers in the region.

**2015:** POWER's Assistance to Coal Communities: \$147,900 in Short-Term Planning-POWER funds to the Navajo Nation, Window Rock, Arizona, to fund the development and implementation of a comprehensive economic development strategy for the region served by the Navajo Nation Indian Tribe.

**2018:** Assistance to Coal Communities: \$1,000,000 grant to Navajo Technical University of Crownpoint, New Mexico, to build a Metrology and Materials Testing Center (MMTC) that will help diversify the Navajo Nations' economy and train displaced workers in the energy sector.

**2018:** University Center: The Harvest Food Hub was funded for \$564,000 under a five-year grant to establish a food hub in San Juan County.

**2019:** Challenge Program: Under EDA's i6 Challenge, San Juan College will launch the Big Idea Innovation Accelerator at the recently opened San Juan College makerspace, The Big Idea.

**2019:** COG receives \$980,400 to support the design of Prewitt Industrial Park and Milan Industrial Park, as well as standing up the Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program.



EDA Regional Director, Jorge Ayala and CCEDF Director, Eileen Yarborough at Milan Industrial Site



# CDBG - White Cliffs Water Improvement Project

In fiscal year 2020, COG staff worked closely with McKinley County and the Community of White Cliffs to develop and submit a competitive application to the New Mexico Department of Finance's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) for improvements to the White Cliffs Mutual Domestic Water Users Association's storage and supply network.

The project will upgrade a functionally obsolete water system that is over 45 years old. The Project will also provide new water storage tanks to provide reliable water supply and increase capacity for fire suppression for the residents of the community. New waterlines, waterline sensors, pump station including building, site work, chlorination system and controls and electrical work will be completed.

To ensure feasibility and readiness, the COG worked closely with DePauli Engineering to develop a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), with McKinley County and White Cliffs to secure matching and leverage funds, secure control of the site and to complete Environmental Review.

In September 2019, the Community of White Cliffs, McKinley County and the COG were notified that the project was awarded \$500,000.00 in CDBG funds. Coordination between all parties also resulted in an additional \$109,042.88 in matching and leveraged funds.

Since being notified of award, the COG has continued to act as liaison between all stakeholders to ensure the project is administratively set-up for success.

Construction is slated to begin in late Summer and is anticipated to be completed by Spring 2021.

## In other news...

In accordance with NMSA 1978, Section 1 1-6-4(B)(5), the COG's former executive director, Jeff Kiely, was selected and appointed — by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and the Secretary of State, Maggie Toulouse Oliver — to represent the state's District 1 region and community. Congratulations! Together, we will continue to move our region forward. "Leading the Field to Empower Communities and Move the Region"

Contact Information:  
 Phone: (505) 979-0551  
 Email: [jkiely1995@gmail.com](mailto:jkiely1995@gmail.com)



Mike Daly of White Cliffs holding CDBG check for \$500,000.00 for the White Cliffs Water Project

## Project By the Numbers

CDBG AWARD	\$500,000.00
Matching Funds	\$50,000.000
Leveraged Funds	Leveraged Funds
Total Project Cost	Total Project Cost
Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) %	Low-to-Moderate Income (LMI) %
Number of People in Target Area	Number of People in Target Area
CDBG Cost Per Beneficiary	CDBG Cost Per Beneficiary



On October 7, 2019, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, through the Recreational Economy for Rural Communities program, announced their selection of 10 communities across the United States which will receive direct technical assistance “to help revitalize their Main Streets through outdoor recreation”

One of our own, the City of Grants, was named one of the recipients of this program and looks forward to leveraging technical assistance to improve the main street corridor by tapping into the outdoor recreation industry. As a recipient of the program, the City of Grants will be appointed a team of planners and industry experts whose sole responsibility is to assist the city in developing “an action plan to grow the local outdoor economy in ways that promote sustainable resources management and environmentally friendly community development”.

Since notice of award in October, the City of Grants has work closely consultants and the RERC committee to develop a plan for community engagement as it works to identify and outline strategies aimed at improving the local economy via recreation. Initially, the City and the RERC committee agreed to host a series of community workshops in Grants to garner input from residents throughout the county. However, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, methodology for garnering such information has shifted from in-person community workshops to virtual workshops, which will be held in November 2020.

The COG, which sits on the RERC committee will continue to participate and will assist with virtual outreach efforts in the coming months. Additionally, the COG will utilize the RERC to springboard other recreation projects and initiatives.

## Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC)

On September 25, 2019, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments was awarded \$988,400 from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA). This award was based on a \$540,000 that was provided by the State Legislature. The focus of this funding was to support a workforce development initiative and the planning and design of industrial parks in Prewitt and Milan.

The COG put these dollars into the region by contracting with:

- Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation
- International Business Connection, Ltd.

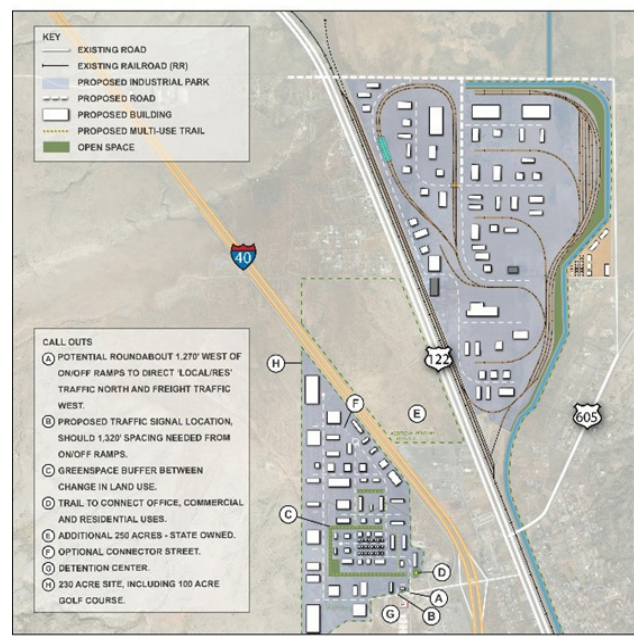
- Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation
- Wilson & Company

Since entering into contracts with the agencies above, the COG has made significant progress to improve economic opportunity in Northwest New Mexico. Below is a brief recap of work completed over the year:

The Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program graduated its second cohort in March 2020. The cohort which has completed the industrial workforce curriculum, now have the skills to enter the area’s industrial workforce. Much like the first cohort, these students will be placed in area industrial employers such as the Rhino Glove Factory. Needless to say, the cohort is eager to begin their new careers locally.

Site planning and design at both the Prewitt and Milan industrial parks were fast-tracked and were completed by the end of the 2020 fiscal year. The COG continues to progress with industrial park site development by introducing more funds into the sites. The hope is for the COG to quickly take initial site design and conduct more detailed engineering to advance recruitment efforts of both counties.

“The Trump Administration is working tirelessly to champion areas around the country that have been adversely impacted by the closures of coal-fired power plants,” said U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Dr. John Fleming. “These workforce training programs will help increase business and job creation in New Mexico’s Four corners region.”





# Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program



**GGIWP**

**GREATER GALLUP INDUSTRIAL WORKFORCE PROGRAM**

The Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program was developed based on dialogue between local economic development groups and area industry employers. During discourse, industry employers noted limited labor force in McKinley County especially those

trained in industry standards as a significant hindrance to daily operations and expansion efforts.

In an attempt to combat the issue of limited industry trained workforce, the COG in conjunction with the Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation (GGEDC), McKinley County and various industry employers applied to, and were awarded U.S. Economic Development Administration's Assistance to Coal Reliant Communities grant funding to develop the Industrial Workforce Program.

The GGIWP is a 400-hour / 10-week industrial training program which results in students obtaining stackable credentials providing a pathway to employment and a new career. The training curriculum was designed collaboratively by Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation and various industrial employers from McKinley County including Marathon Petroleum, Peabody Energy, McKinley Paper, and Tri-State Generation & Transmission. Components of the curriculum include:

- Introduction to Safety
- Introduction to Pipeline Industry
- Introduction to Instrumentation
- Introduction to Heavy Equipment Operations
- Introduction to Welding

In its current design, the GGIWP has three programmatic segments: curriculum review, work-experience, and on-the-job training. Graduates receive the following national industry certifications:

1. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10-Hour Training Program – Certification
2. National Center or Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Blue Card - Certification
3. ACT WorkKeys Skills Assessment - Certification

On December 13, 2019, a cohort of 12 residents from McKinley County graduated from the inaugural class of the Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program (GGIWP). A majority, if not all graduates have found employment with area industrial employers such as Marathon Petroleum, McKinley Paper, Gallup Indian Medical Center, Rhino Health, and Stone Material Handling. In March 2020, the program graduated its second class of students and although placement has been limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students remain positive that skills learned, certifications obtain, and experience gain have/and will improve their opportunity for employment within local and regional industry employers.

## Success Metrics



**85 APPLICANTS**

- Engaged the program as marketed (10,000)
- Signed up to participate (175)
- Interviewed and screened (78)
- Showcases the need in McKinley County



**27 PARTICIPANTS**

- Selected for inaugural and second cohorts
- Participated in 400-hr/10-week program
- Learned GGIWP curriculum & applied skills
- Applied knowledge in homebuilding
- Engaged in community service learning



**24 GRADUATES**

- 24 completed curriculum and graduated
- 20 placed in an opportunity at local industrial employers
- 4 placed in CDL or continuing education



**4 NATIONAL CERTIFICATIONS**

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10-Hour Training Program
- National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) Blue Card
- Heavy Equipment Operator certification
- ACT WorkKeys Skills Assessment



**10 INDUSTRIAL SPONSORS**

- Local industrial employers that provided funding, resources, training, and other program support
- Provided local opportunities for placement and apprenticeship



# Prewitt & Milan Industrial Parks

Background - During the 2019 New Mexico Legislative Session, the Legislature passed House Bill 2 Junior (CS/HB548), which included \$190,000 "to perform all steps necessary to develop Prewitt Industrial Park" in Prewitt, New Mexico and \$150,000 "for industrial infrastructure planning" in Milan, New Mexico. With a quick turnaround needed to mitigate negative impacts of closures, the New Mexico Economic Development Department entered into an Inter-Governmental Agreement with McKinley County and the New Mexico Local Government Division entered into a Reimbursement Grant Agreement with the Village of Milan.

With information in hand and end goal identified, both McKinley County and the Village of Milan reached out to the COG and entered into an Inter-Governmental Service Agreement to manage more detailed scope of works and deliverables which included:

1. Develop a project scope-of-work and procure needed site planning and development services, including site analysis, property boundary survey, appraisal, drainage mapping, environmental studies, utility analysis and preliminary engineering reports a rail analysis.
2. Re-energize the HM72/41 Prewitt Industrial Cluster and Milan Cluster Teams as project stakeholders to oversee the projects moving forward.
3. Produce project deliverables and a final product.
4. Provide a final report of results from the project including cost allocations and expenditures, and any leveraging of these State funds.

Since entering into an agreement with McKinley County and the Village of Milan, the COG has managed this work, including sub-contracting via the Cooperative Education Services (CES) to Wilson & Company (WCO) who was the program lead in planning, design, and development of the Prewitt Industrial Park and speculative building. This report is aimed to capture the high-level results of the program and satisfy Item #4 above.

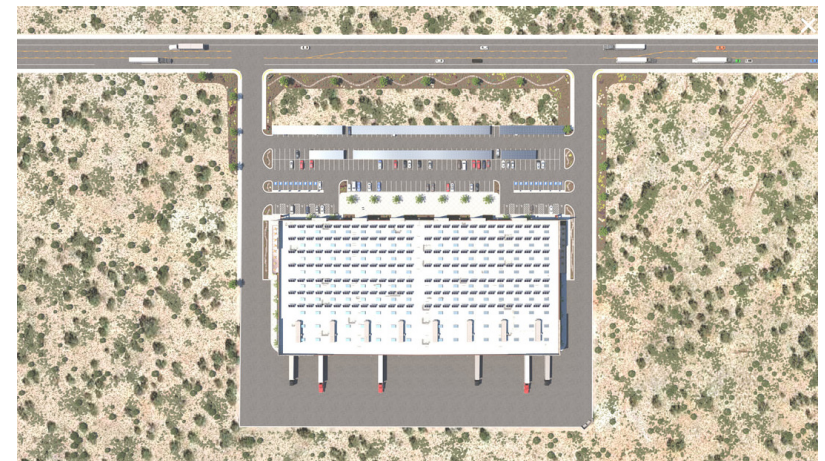
Doing what the COG does best, various sources of funding were sought and were obtained to assist with the activities conducted at the Prewitt Industrial Site. The following is a brief recap of leveraging and resource gathering efforts made by the COG on behalf of the project:

## McKinley County - Prewitt Leverage

- The \$190,000 in State funding was leveraged to obtain an additional \$988,400 from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to assist



*Conceptual Design of a Warehouse Facility at the Prewitt Industrial Park*



*Plan View of a Spec Building at the Prewitt Industrial Park*



*Conceptual Design of Industrial/Office Space at the Milan Industrial Park*



# Prewitt & Industrial Park *continued..*

with both Industrial Parks and other economic development activities throughout the region.

- The COG partnered with NMED to invest \$11,499.48 into Phase I Environmental Service Assessment (ESA) reports for two sites in the Prewitt area and an additional \$286,585.18 for Phase I and Phase II assessments at the Milan Farms site.
- The COG was awarded a sub-region Transportation Planning grant to study transportation network in both the Prewitt and Milan Areas in support of this project moving forward. This grant from New Mexico Department of Transportation is for \$120,000 with a \$30,000 local match.
- The COG also worked with its partners and area Legislators to secure several Legislative appropriations in 2020 Session, including \$420,000 in capital outlay to plan, design and construct industrial development sites, including buildings and infrastructure, for McKinley county; \$3.5M in House Bill 2 special transportation appropriations that could support transportation infrastructure in Prewitt Area; and \$9M in dedicated Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) for Cibola and McKinley counties to rebound and transition from the closure of Tri-State's Escalante Generating Station.
- The Project Team, under Representative Patricia A. Lundstrom's leadership, secured a \$5M community investment from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. for economic revitalization efforts.
- Follow-up applications for the the Milan Farms Industrial Park has been submitted to continue site design.

Since being tasked with managing the project, the COG has spearheaded many integral activities aimed at achieving the overall goal. To date the COG has assisted in completed the following:

- Property Appraisal - *Prewitt only*
- Property Boundary Survey - *Prewitt only*
- Drainage - *Prewitt only*
- Environmental / Biological / Archeological Studies - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Utility Analysis - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Preliminary Engineering Report for Utilities - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*

- Preliminary Rail Analysis - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Conceptual and Preliminary Design - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Site Certification - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Spec Building Program - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Virtual Spec Building - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Design Baseline Spec Building - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*
- Development Agreement & Maintenance Covenants - *Prewitt & Milan Farms*

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments appreciates McKinley County for entrusting the management of this important work to our organization and staff. Further, we acknowledge the importance of our partnership with McKinley County, its membership, and contributions that allow us the capacity to respond and retain a professional team to support these projects.



## 120,000 SF SPEC BUILDING

- Tilt-up concrete construction for cost effective and time sensitive solutions
- Facilitated Permitting Process
- Preliminary Spec Building Design Plans available

## ACCESS

- Major Highway I-40
- BNSF Southern Transcon
- 24/7 self-service fuel available
- Grants-Milan Airport

## WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

- New Mexico State University (NMSU) grants available for workforce development
- Accessible local workforce supported by Albuquerque which is less than 1-hour away
- Training Incentive Program (JTIP) funds classroom and on-the-job training for newly-created jobs

Conceptual Design of Spec Building at Milan Industrial Park

# Zuni Mountain Trails Projects

In September, the Forest Service received an order from the United States District Court for the District of Arizona stating that the agency's "timber management" actions must cease pending a formal consultation regarding potential effects to the Mexican spotted owl. Based on this order, an injunction has stopped any and all work including trail building that involves timber activities. This has limited and all but ceased our trail building activities for the season related to the Milk Ranch & McGaffey Trail project.

## Milk Ranch & McGaffey Trail System:

- Trail C & D: Completed including QA/QC and USFS approval
- Trail A, B, and 4: Partial completion
- All other trail segments have yet to begin
- USFS is documenting delays to provide the County with evidence for the need of an extension.

**Milk Ranch Trail head:** The trail head will be completed once cattleguard, signage, and kiosk are installed this Spring. Quartz Hill Trail System: Kerry Woods has completed design for Priority #1 and is working with Carrie House to groundtruth remaining priorities. There are some challenges to overcome due to closure of two-track roadways and designing a sustainable system. The expectation is to bid out the construction of this trail system, while continuing to produce trail design plan sets (as weather allows).

**Quartz Hill Trail head:** A meeting was scheduled out at Milk Ranch and Hilso trail heads to have McKinley County road crews walk through process with Cibola County. Materials are being ordered.

**McKenzie Ridge Trail Connector:** Kerry Woods is working on simplifying the design to create a more efficient and sustainable trail connector. McKinley County submitted its environmental level of effort package, grant agreement pending.

**Project Coordination:** Julie Padilla and Kerry Woods have been instrumental in coordinating the partnership and team, including the development of a new tracking tool to manage trail segment status to assist with project coordination and implementation.

## Milestones:

December 18th. ZMTP Cibola/McKinley County partnership meeting: to discuss McGaffey area and Quartz Hill Trail Project; signage, cattleguards, and trails.

- Heritage Surveys for Trail Systems construction
- SOW and RFP for McKinley and Cibola

## Next Steps: *based on lifting Injunction and COVID-19 unknowns*

- Materials, Installation, and Trailhead Construction are lined out to proceed
- RFP for Trailbuilding Services





# Navajo Nation Food Mapping Project

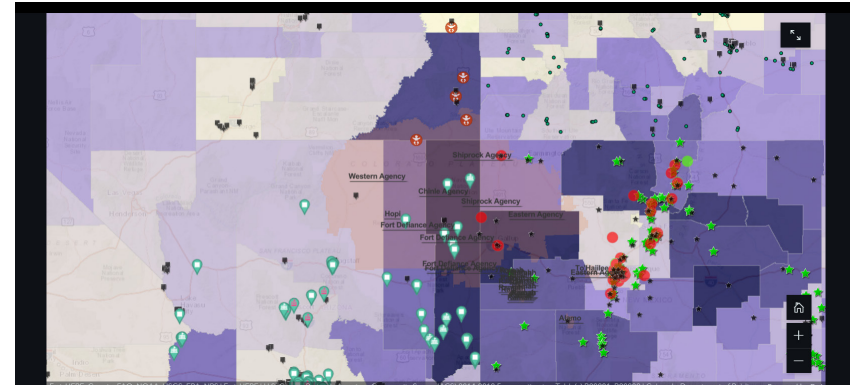
Collaborating partners from Navajo Food Access Navigation Program (NFAN/Navajo Department of Health), Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment (COPE), Northwest NM Council of Governments (COG), and the New Mexico Community Data Collaborative (NMCDC/NM Department of Health) received a grant from the USDA Food & Nutrition Services Program to conduct mapping of the Navajo Nation's access to food. The grant, which was established in 2010 under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA), authorizes funding for federal school meal and child nutrition programs and increases access to healthy food for low-income children.

The COG, which employs individuals skilled in the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was sub-contracted to carry out the development of interactive food access maps that will be used to depict the scarcity of food and limited access that Navajo residents have to quality and healthy food. The COG's own, Carrie House, led the development of the interactive maps. Due to the vast landscape of the Navajo Nation, partners decided to focus mapping efforts on three Navajo Nation regions: the Shiprock Agency, Fort Defiance Agency and the Eastern Agency. These areas cover all of New Mexico's portion of the Navajo Nation and parts of East Central Arizona.

Resulting from this effort was the creation of a "StoryMap" of food access on the Navajo Nation. A "StoryMap" is an online presentation tool that lets developers combine authoritative maps with narrative text, images and multimedia content. Included into the Navajo Food Access "StoryMap" is information, including maps, of NFAN's survey results of USDA child nutrition schools and Chapter community program locations, USDA food distribution locations, WIC office locations, available stores that accept SNAP (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program , food stamps), Food vouchers, and WIC (Women Infant Care).

Additional data from a variety of credible sources, including broadband, income, poverty, commuting patterns, SNAP, WIC, Indian Health Services (IHS), health facilities, gardens, farms, stores and food cooperatives were incorporated into the analysis.

To view the Navajo Nation Food Access "StoryMap" please visit: <https://nmcdd.maps.arcgis.com> and search Navajo Food Access Navigation Program story map



# Local Government Transportation Project Fund

During the 2019 Legislative Session, Senator Patricio Ruiloba (D-12, Bernalillo) and Patricia Lundstrom (D-9, McKinley & San Juan) introduced and passed House Bill 694, which created the Local Government Transportation Project Fund (LGTPF). The LGTPF allows the State to invest in a wide range of local transportation project types, at all stages of readiness, and only requires a minimum (5%) local match. This funding carries more value for New Mexico communities because it is not limited by functional classification (traffic volume) for roadway corridors – any road of any size qualifies for this funding.

With \$50 million available state-wide, our region including the Regional Transportation Planning Organization and the Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization, fared well with almost \$13 million allocated from this fund. Representative Lundstrom and Senator Ruiloba have now introduced House Bill 26 replacing “local governments” in HB694 with “counties, municipalities and tribes” in HB26. This change in legislative language, will ensure inclusion of tribal communities. In addition to a relatively low match

requirement from local governments, a hardship waiver is available for governments who are financially capped. This waiver is beneficial for and has been utilized many small communities throughout the State.

At this point, contractual agreements for funded projects have been submitted to the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). This has enabled projects to commence, with anticipated start dates in the near future. Projects are slated to be completed by January 2024.

Much appreciation is due to our new Transportation Commissioner Mr. Charles Lundstrom. Mr Lundstrom helped distribute this funding in a fair and equitable manner across most of the County, Municipal and Tribal governments within our region. We are excited about continuing this partnership to ensure that transportation needs in Northwest New Mexico are met.

## LGTPF Projects in Northwest New Mexico

DISTRICT	ENTITY	PROJECT TITLE	STATE	ENTITY	TOTAL
5	City of Bloomfield	East Blanco Bridge Project Phase II	\$90,250	\$4,750	\$95,000
5	City of Farmington	San Juan Boulevard Resurfacing Project	\$546,250	\$28,750	\$575,000
5	San Juan County	County Road 5500 Bridge Replacement Project	\$2,375,000	\$125,000	\$2,500,000
6	Cibola County	County Road 18B	\$902,500	\$47,500	\$950,000
6	City of Gallup	East Nizhoni Blvd Reconstruction Project	\$332,500	\$17,500	\$350,000
6	City of Grants	Washington Bridge Replacement	\$1,425,000	\$75,000	\$1,500,000
6	McKinley County	Manuelito Canyon Bridge and Road Improvements	\$2,850,000	\$150,000	\$3,000,000
6	Village of Milan	Haystack Phase II	\$120,248	\$6,329	\$126,577
6	Navajo Nation – Baahaali Chapter	Baahaali Transfer Station Access Road Improvements	\$281,437	\$14,813	\$296,250
6	Navajo Nation - Bahastl’ah Chapter	Highway 491 Roadway Safety Audit	\$142,500	\$7,500	\$150,000
6	Navajo Nation – Mexican Springs Chapter	Navajo Route 30 and US Highway 491 Safety Audit	\$19,000	\$1,000	\$20,000
6	Navajo Nation – Tohatchi Chapter	Highway 491 Roadway Safety Audit	\$71,250	\$3,750	\$75,000
6	Pueblo of Acoma	SP 130 Veterans Blvd Roadway Project	\$1,136,912	\$59,837	\$1,196,749
6	Pueblo of Laguna	Interstate 40 Concrete Box Underpass	\$1,900,000	\$100,000	\$2,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$12,192,847</b>	<b>\$641,729</b>	<b>\$12,834,576</b>



# Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway



For several the decades, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments and its Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) program have been involved in promoting and designating scenic byways as a tool to market the region to travelers and locals alike. In December 2019, President Donald J. Trump signed the new National Scenic Byway Bill "Reviving America's Scenic Byways Act of 2019" into law by President Trump and FHWA program guidance.

COG staff are undertaking a challenging process to gain recognition and designation for portions of our Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway as a National Scenic Byway. On February 13th, the Federal Highway Administration launched the nomination portal for electronic submission of applications. Applications are due to NMDOT by May 1st. The agency then has until May 15th to submit statewide nominations to FHWA. We also have re-formed the Byway Council with representatives from each jurisdiction who are helping with the application and support letters.

- 2002: State of New Mexico lifts moratorium and announces a deadline for nominations of new State scenic byway designation. COG rallies the region, assembles a steering committee, defines the byway, and submits a nomination application for the Native Heritage Trail.
- October 2002: State of New Mexico designates the Native Heritage Trail as a State scenic byway.
- 2003 – 2005: Organizational development of the Byway Council and planning for the byway commenced.
- 2007: COG and its partners successfully petitioned the State Transportation Commission to rename this byway as "Trail of the Ancients" New Mexico as this evaluate the byway's chance to gain Federal status in connection with TOTA-CO and TOTA-UT that were already designated, and the hopes of getting a Four Corners byway in all four States.
- 2008: A Corridor Management Plan was completed for the byway.
- 2008: The Trail of the Ancients Byway Association, supported by the COG, developed and submitted an application for Federal nominate as a National scenic byway, but were rejected.
- 2009-2012: The Trail of the Ancients Byway Association was active facilitated by the COG and received several byway grants including signage, kiosks at State/Federal/local visitor centers, marketing, and physical improvements.



- 2012-2019: The Trail of the Ancients Byway Association morphed into other initiatives or associations including Region 1 Tourism Board, RTPO, and/or Four Corners Geotourism Stewardship Council, of which the COG has continued to be active partner.

**The designation of National Scenic Byways are determined by six (6) "Intrinsic Qualities":**

- Scenic Quality,
- Natural Quality,
- Historic Quality,
- Cultural Quality,
- Archeological Quality and
- Recreational Quality

**The corridor we are proposing for national designation possesses all six intrinsic qualities in abundance, but we must choose a primary one, which will be archeological with a secondary of cultural qualities, which should help differentiate our byway from others in nation.**

# COG Tweets in Review



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Jul 14

N.M. Film Office Announces Recipients of the Senator John Pinto Memorial Fund Awards. Congratulations to COG's own Carrie House! We appreciate Senator John Pinto's legacy and vision in planting the seeds for the next generation of storytelling.  
[ow.ly/2ds350AxZQh](https://ow.ly/2ds350AxZQh)



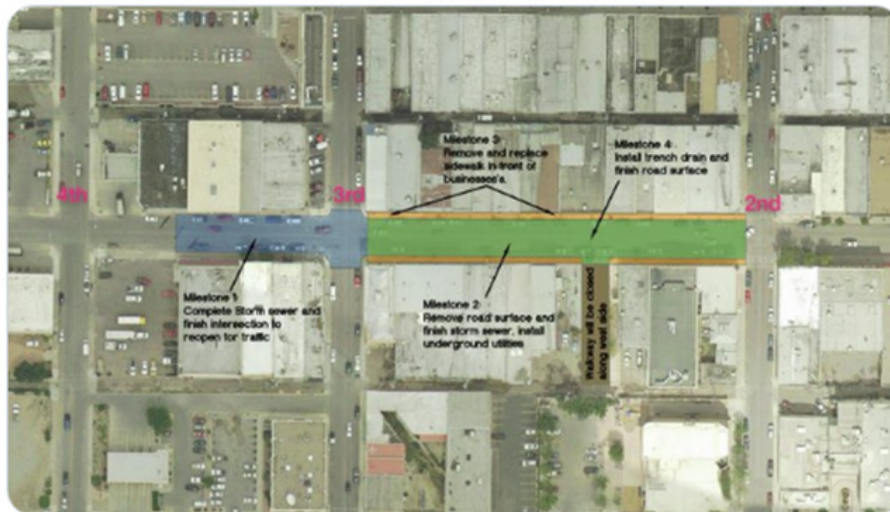
**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Jul 4

Want to make a difference? Be the change? Help businesses and communities recovery economically. The Economic Recovery Coordinator position is calling - will you answer? Join the best team in Northwest New Mexico today! [nwnmco.com/employment-opp...](https://nwnmco.com/employment-opp...)



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Jul 4

Coal Avenue Commons Construction Breaks Ground July 13th | Press Release: [ow.ly/9ffe50ApF9x](https://ow.ly/9ffe50ApF9x)  
How Did We Get Here So Fast: [youtube.com/watch?v=3kZ2Vc...](https://youtube.com/watch?v=3kZ2Vc...)  
[#NMMainStreet](#) [#CoalAvenueCommons](#)

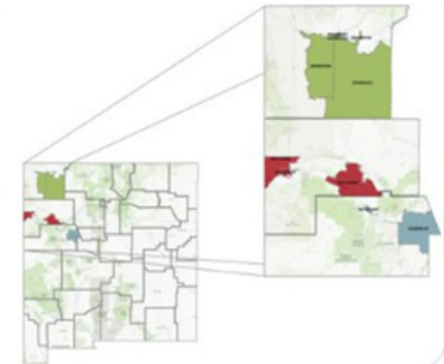


**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Jun 19

Region on the Rise | Northwest New Mexico offers Opportunity Zones ripe for development and investment in the counties of San Juan, McKinley, and Cibola. Check out each Community Prospectus!  
[nwnmco.com/opportunity-zo...](https://nwnmco.com/opportunity-zo...)  
[#OpportunityZones](#) [#EDA](#) [#FourCorners](#)

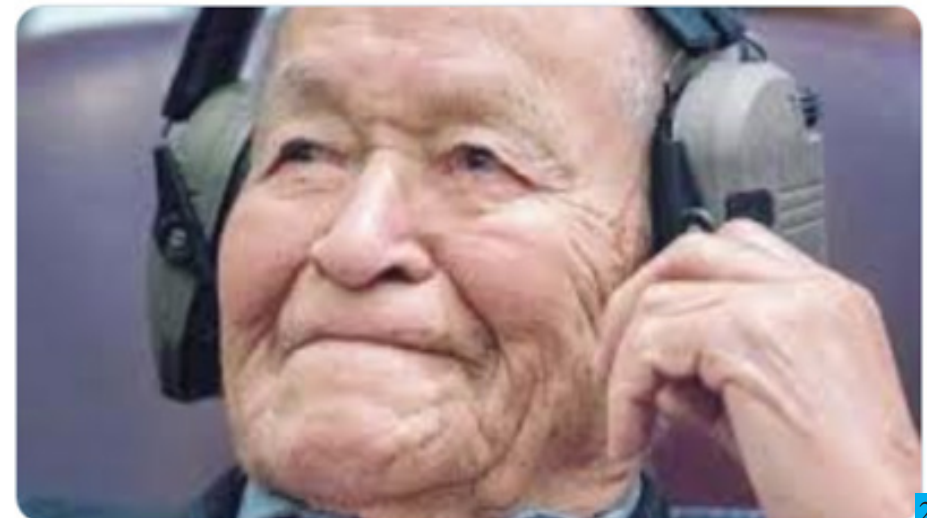
## Opportunity Zones in Northwest New Mexico

Northwest New Mexico has actively engaged in the EDA Opportunity Zones program. The region has a total of 10 opportunity zones (OZs) that span across the three county region. 2 Opportunity Zones are located in Cibola County, 3 in McKinley County and 5 in San Juan County. The Opportunity Zones located in the region are a mixture of rural and semi-urban zones that focus largely on economic based industrial development but does provide opportunity for other industry sectors including retail trade, Educational Services, Health Care & Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation, and Transportation & Warehousing to name a few.



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · May 31, 2019

**@NWNMCOG** thanks **Senator Dr. John Pinto** for defending our freedom and leading our region to a better future. You did it longer, better, and with more love. Warrior | Self-less leader | Life-long learner | Friend You never gave up on us and in return we will never forget you.





# COG Tweets in Review



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · May 11  
Help plan New Mexico's Transportation Future! [newmexico2045plan.com](http://newmexico2045plan.com)

Take the Survey: [surveymonkey.com/r/NM2045Plan](https://surveymonkey.com/r/NM2045Plan)



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · May 7  
EDA rolls out \$1.5B in CARES Act funds. [ow.ly/vSYA50zzLDR](https://ow.ly/vSYA50zzLDR)

Take our Survey to guide investments in the Region:  
[surveymonkey.com/r/ZVTWHDJ](https://surveymonkey.com/r/ZVTWHDJ)



You Retweeted



**TheDailyTimes** @TheDailyTimes · Feb 20  
Four Corners Economic Development CEO Arvin Trujillo said the agreement does not commit either the tribe or the county to spending money on the project.



Navajo Nation, San Juan County officials say partnership could make rai...  
Navajo Nation and San Juan County signed an agreement to partner for planning a future privately-owned freight railroad.  
[daily-times.com](https://daily-times.com)



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Dec 13, 2019  
Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program graduated 12 and placed 12 area residents into career pathways with Marathon Oil, Rhino Health, McKinley Paper, GIMC, and Stone Material Handling.  
| Hats off to @GallupEDC for delivering!  
| Program support from @NMDWS and @US\_EDA



# COG Tweets in Review


You Retweeted


 **New Mexico MainStreet** @NMMainStreet · Dec 20, 2019  
 Congratulations Gallup MainStreet Arts & Cultural District!! 🎉🎊🎊  
 @karaQsmith #NMEcon #NMMainStreet #NewMexicoTrue @CityOfGallup @GallupEDC

 **Levitt Foundation** @LevittFdn · Dec 20, 2019  
 We're thrilled to announce the 2020 Levitt AMP [Your City] Grant Award winners! Each of these 20 communities will receive a \$25k matching grant to present a free Levitt AMP Music Series in 2020.

**2020 WINNERS**

**Berea, KY • Carson City, NV**  
**Earlham, IA • Fort Smith, AR**  
**Gallup, NM • Galva, IL**  
**Houston, MS • Merced, CA**  
**Middlesboro, KY • Ocala, FL**  
**Sheboygan, WI • Shenandoah Jct., WV**  
**Soldotna, AK • Springfield, IL**  
**St. Johnsbury, VT • Stevens Point, WI**  
**Trenton, NJ • Utica, NY**  
**Whitesburg, KY • Woonsocket, RI**

 **NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Oct 31, 2019  
 2019 Impact Award Winner! Press Release



**Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments Receives National Association of Development Organizations 2019 Impact Award**

WASHINGTON, DC - Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (NWNMCOG) based in Gallup, New Mexico has received a 2019 Alexander Wohlbruck Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for its involvement in the East Mesquitarie Trail Project.

The COG helped to form a partnership to plan, design, develop, and deliver a 200+ mile trail system throughout the East Mesquitarie in Chishti and McKinley counties. This project aims to be the premier jewel of trails in the Four Corners Southwest.

NADO is a Washington, DC based membership association of regional development organizations that promote programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies. The association's Impact Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and their partners for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation's regions and local communities.

Award winning projects were honored during NADO's 2019 Annual Training Conference, held October 18-22 in Reno, NV. The 2019 class of award recipients consists of 100 projects from 66 organizations spanning 14 states. These projects are presented in an interactive "Story Map" developed by NADO and CADDm that includes project summaries and partners. The Story Map is available online at: <https://www.nado.org/training2019/>

"The Alexander Wohlbruck Impact Awards program is an opportunity each year for NADO to publicly recognize the important work that regional development organizations deliver to their local communities," said 2019 NADO President Scott Kiser, executive director of the North Carolina Florida Regional Planning Council, located in Greenville. "The projects awarded have made significant impacts on their regions and demonstrate the diversity of programs and resources provided by regional development organizations across the country."

 **NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Oct 8, 2019  
 Grants, NM: 1 of 10 communities in the US to receive this assistance spotlighting NM's Outdoor Recreation strategy for growing tourism, developing small business, and recruiting manufacturing in the outdoor industry cluster.

 Trump Administration Partners with Rural Communiti...  
 EPA News Release: Trump Administration Partners with Rural Communities to Grow Outdoor Recreation ...  
[epa.gov](https://www.epa.gov)

 **NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Oct 2, 2019  
 \$500,000 awarded to White Cliffs MDWUA and McKinley County to improve their water system, fire protection, and ISO rating for the many families. Hats off to Michael Daly for his years of leadership and determination! Thanks to the NM CDC and LGD staff. #CDBG

You Retweeted

 **New Mexico MainStreet** @NMMainStreet · Nov 26, 2019  
 New Mexico investing millions in MainStreet programs across the state. Gallup, Farmington, and Barelás discuss their capital outlay projects on @krqe! •••  
[krqe.com/news/new-mexic...](http://krqe.com/news/new-mexic...) #NMEcon #NMLEG #NMMainStreet #NMPOL #NewMexicoTrue





# Your Team

We are a 50-year old institution with 56 years of experience.

The Council of Governments (COG) has always put the highest value in attracting and retaining human talent. The COG is only as good as the people who serve you. We have a strong commitment to growing our own, retaining and building local talent, and investing heavily in career training and advancement. The COG aims to advance the region, make an impact, and bend the curve of prosperity in our region. To do that we have to have a high trained, capable, and loyal team prepared to adapt, overcome, and get in the trenches side by side with our communities and leaders.

Here our staff profiles, so you are aware of the firepower that exists to advance your goals and assist in the success of our region and your COG. Without your membership and partnership in the COG, we would not be able to meet your goals of having the A-Team at the ready.



Name: Evan Williams  
Title: Executive Director  
Hometown: Somerville, NJ  
Time at COG: 18 years  
Education: Bachelor's Degree, Carroll School of Management, Boston College

Experience/Certifications:

- Emerging Leaders Program Graduate (EDA/NADO)
- New Executive Directors Training (NADO)

What I Enjoy Most about the COG?

I enjoy connecting the dots, bringing people and communities together, and building regional solutions for local issues. I enjoy taking on the “impossible” and seeing incremental progress. I appreciate those that let us swing anyway and believe in the COG and its power to be the change that we all want to see in our world and this region.

What does the COG mean to the region?

Lots of people talk about coming together and uniting around our challenges and opportunities, but that is fundamentally our mission and job every day. The COG for better or worse is responsible for our region's socioeconomics but with our partners have the ability and calling card to make a positive impact and move our region toward a more prosperous and equitable future.



Name: Martina Whitmore  
 Title: Administrative Assistant  
 Hometown: Gallup, NM  
 Time at COG: 11 years  
 Education: Bachelor of Arts in Criminology, University of New Mexico  
 Experience/Certifications:
 

- Certified Procurement Officer
- Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable
- Payroll, Taxes, & Insurance
- Quickbooks
- Audit Support
- Contract and Grant Management

What I Enjoy Most about the COG?

What I enjoy most about the COG is witnessing the staff use their skills that they have attained to help their communities in their own ways. Seeing the pride of a job well done in staff personalities makes me proud to be apart of the team that serves the region.

What does the COG mean to the region?

I have heard many times how “thankful” the people are to have the COG on their side and working for them. Or how the COG has great planners, and how they are grateful that our new executive director is has stayed within our region to serve us. The COG has filled many roles over the years and there is nothing the COG and our staff are not prepared to do.



Name: Angelina Grey  
 Title: Associate Planner II  
 Hometown: Vanderwagen, NM  
 Time at COG: 3 years  
 Education: Associate’s in Liberal Arts, May 2005, UNM-Gallup  
 Bachelor’s (Dual) in Anthropology and History, 2009, UNM  
 Master’s in Community and Regional Planning, 2017, UNM  
 Experience/Certifications:
 

Certifications in SMAW welding and GIS/T  
 Professional experience with providing technical assistance with annual funding programs (i.e. ICIP, CDBG, WTB, ALSTD), and comprehensive plan development

What I Enjoy Most about the COG?

Working for the COG amplifies the notion of “giving back to the community” that stems from the modern Diné credo of ‘get an education and come home to help your people’ that is imparted upon students as sendoff. I am humbled and honored to have been selected to represent our northwest region and to work alongside some of the best planning professionals.

What does the COG mean to the region?

There has always been a chronic need for support in our rural communities, but with the best leadership and planning teams working the forefront, we will continually strive to improve our communities one project at a time.

Yáá’áát’éeéh, shi ké, shi diné’i.  
 (Greetings, my relations, my people.)

To tsoni nish’lo’, Ki’ya’aani’ ba’shish’chiin.  
 (I am of the Big Water Clan, Born for the Towering House Clan.)

Ta’nees’ani e’ da’shi che’, Dibe’ □izh’ni’ e’ da’shi nalí.  
 (My Maternal Grandfathers are the Tangle Clan, and my Paternal Grandfathers are the Black Sheep Clan.)





Name: Brandon Howe  
 Title: Planner / Planning Team Leader  
 Hometown: Prewitt, NM  
 Time at COG: 4 years  
 Education: Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Planning and Design, University of New Mexico - School of Architecture and Planning  
 Master of Community and Regional Planning, University of New Mexico - School of Architecture and Planning

Experience/Certifications:

All of my professional experience has been at a Council of Governments. Experience in implementing State Grant in Aid, Local Government, and NMDOT Regional Transportation Planning Organization work programs.

What I Enjoy Most about the COG?

What I enjoy most about working at the COG is helping communities that I grew up spending time in.

What does the COG mean to

The COG is an integral partner is “moving the region forward”! We are everywhere, from regional initiatives, county-level projects to municipal programming. We are an extension of our local governments.

- Skills:
- Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office apps
  - Confidently able to collect and analysis various types of data
  - Capable of utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to produce maps for projects, programs, and initiatives
  - Proficient in the use of Adobe Illustrator & InDesign which are used to develop plans, reports, and other printed material
  - Proficient in use of Google Sketch-Up which is used to develop conceptual ideas of the built environment
  - Has successfully written and has been award various grants ranging from simple planning grants to complex infrastructure grants
  - Efficient in public speaking and presentations
  - Capable of multitasking and working on various projects, programs, and initiatives in real time



Name: Carrie House  
 Title: Associate Planner II  
 Hometown: Oak-Pine Springs, AZ, Thoreau, NM  
 Time at COG: 4 years  
 Education: Master of Fine Arts Film, Vermont College of Fine Arts  
 Bachelor of Fine Arts Visual Effects/Animation, Santa Fe University of Art & Design  
 Construction Techni-Business, Electronic Publishing; University of New Mexico  
 Natural Resources Conservation, University of Montana

Experience/Certifications:

Drafting Certificate. General Building Contractors License (GB-98, Commercial & Residential)  
 Commercial Driver License (Class A, Double/Triple Trailers, Tanker, & Passenger Bus)  
 Heavy equipment operator. Writer. Filmmaker. Firefighter.  
 Trail Design Specialist (USFS, Bob Marshall Wilderness, MT, Gallup YCC, Zuni Mountains)  
 US Census Bureau: Addressing, Boundary Annexation, Participant Statistical Areas Program, Complete Count Committee  
 Geographic Information Systems, spatial and data mapping  
 COG; NMDOT/RTPO (Trails, FWHY-Scenic Byway), Special Projects; Navajo Food Access Mapping, NMDOH/NM Community Data Collaborative (Program Advisory Group), San Juan Utility Study,

What I Enjoy Most about the COG?

I enjoy utilizing my diverse skills and insight; to troubleshoot, configure, empower, contribute, and support our multi-complex/diverse communities of this beautiful region.

What does the COG mean to the region?

I am still understanding the complexities of partners, governments, and networks. These regional projects, developments and achievements of our COG’s capabilities are necessary. Our region has been impacted by COVID-19 and the digital divide is what we can reconfigure to assist current and future generations. This region will move forward with NWNMCOG.



Name:

Robert Kuipers

Title:

Associate Planner II / Transportation Program Manager

Hometown:

Rehoboth/Gallup, NM and Ganado/OakSprings AZ

Time at COG:

10 years

Education:

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI

Experience/Certifications:

Multiple Training citations in a variety of fields – especially substance abuse and youth services. Honored by the Arizona Department of Education and Navajo Nation for services to youth and children.

What I Enjoy Most about the COG?

The COG is a busy, multi-tasked environment, which makes a huge difference for our member governments by providing a layer of middle management that seeks funding and manages and executes resulting projects within each grant’s contractual limitations and timelines. We are sometimes spread thin under pressure, but we are never bored - as our work contributes significantly to our member governments and makes an annual difference for our region worth millions (and millions) of dollars. Whether economic or infrastructure development, multi-modal transportation or housing and neighborhood improvements, downtown or utility improvements, environmental mitigation – brownfields or energy efficiency the NWCOG has managed projects in all of these areas on behalf of our three county, four tribe region along with all inherent communities. Then there are the plans – the COG provides assistance to our member governments for Comprehensive Plans, Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plans (ICIP), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) – based in community planning, Tribal Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grants – based on Tribal planning for future growth and development. While serving a region of this size can at times be tiring, the difference we are able to make is rewarding, and the people with whom we work, who have stepped up to significant community or regional leadership are both inspiring and energizing. The COG requires a strong work ethic and interpersonal skills but is one of the most rewarding environments I’ve ever worked in related to the difference we make and leave behind on behalf of our regional residents.

What does the COG mean to the region?

The Council of Governments saves our member governments a lot of funding that would otherwise provide adequate internal middle management for a variety of departments – in a variety of governments. The COG has strong connections with legislative, funding, and collaborative agency resources across the State of New Mexico and are trusted by both public and private sector agencies due to multi-year relationships and ongoing mutual support. With the reputation and relationships the COG has built within our region and state, we are able to contribute major, well designed and collaboratively developed steps that move our region and population forward to a quality of life and access to resources that allow us to collectively stay in pace with the front end of world-wide development and opportunities.



Name:

Michael Sage

Title:

Regional Economic Program Manager

Hometown:

Gallup, NM

Time at COG:

6+ years

Education:

Master of Public Administration (UNM-2017)

Bachelor of Arts – Political Science & Economics (UNM-2005)

Experience/Certifications:

Certified Economic Developer (CEcD)

What I Enjoy Most about the COG?

Going to bat for Northwest New Mexico to create economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for its residents.

What does the COG mean to the region?

The COG and its 50-year history as shown that the region is a microcosm of the United States –as a region, there are more bonds that unite than divide, and we share a common goal to see that our grandchildren have better access to employment, education, and healthcare.



# NWNMCOG BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Member Governments

### **CIBOLA COUNTY**

County Commissioner Martha Garcia, Board 1st Vice-Chair  
Manager Kate Fletcher, Alternate

### **McKINLEY COUNTY**

Commissioner Billy Moore, Appointee At-Large/Board Chair  
Commissioner Tommy Nelson  
Commissioner Bill Lee  
Manager Anthony Dimas  
Attorney Doug Decker, Alternate

### **SAN JUAN COUNTY**

Administrative Officer Fran Fillerup  
Commissioner Glo Jean Todacheene  
General Services Administrator Larry Hathaway, Board 2nd  
Vice Chair & Alternate

### **CITY OF AZTEC**

Manager Steve Mueller  
Commissioner Austin R. Randall, Alternate

### **CITY OF BLOOMFIELD**

Engineer Jason Thomas  
Manager George Duncan, Alternate

### **CITY OF FARMINGTON**

Councilor Linda Rodgers  
Assistant Manager Julie Baird, Alternate

### **CITY OF GALLUP**

Councilor Fran Palochak  
Councilor Allan Landavazo  
Manager Maryann Ustick  
Mayor Louie Bonaguidi, Appointee At-Large/Board Treasurer  
Jackie McKinny, Alternate

### **CITY OF GRANTS**

Mayor Martin "Modey" Hicks  
Councilor Manuel Vasquez  
Manager Laura Jaramillo, Alternate

### **VILLAGE OF MILAN**

Trustee Ellen Baca  
Trustee Helen Dayan, Alternate

### **EX-OFFICIO**

COG Executive Director Evan Williams, Board Secretary  
COG Administrative Assistant Martina Whitmore, Alternate

### **AFFILIATE MEMBERS**

Northwest New Mexico Regional Solid Waste Authority

# NORTHWEST REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

## Policy & Technical Committee

### ***Pueblo of Acoma***

Director of Planning & Engineering; Dave Duetsawe,  
NWRTPO Vice Chair  
Transportation Planner of Planning & Engineering, Raymond Concho, Alternate

### ***Pueblo of Laguna***

Transportation Specialist, Gaylord Siow  
Director of Public Works, Brandon Herrera, Alternate

### ***Pueblo of Zuni***

Program Manager of Zuni DOT, Royce Gchachu  
Zuni DOT, Roxann Hughte, Alternate

### ***Navajo Nation***

Northern Agency NDOT, Larry Joe  
Eastern Agency NDOT, Vacant  
Manager of Planning NDOT, Alternate

### ***Cibola County***

Projects Coordinator, Judy Horacek  
Public Works, Gary Porter, Alternate

### ***McKinley County***

Superintendent of Roads, Jeff Irving, NWRTPO Chairman  
Alternate vacant

### ***San Juan County***

P.E., Scott Martin  
Director of Public Works, Nick Porell, Alternate

### ***City of Gallup***

Public Works Director, Stan Henderson  
Grants & Contracts Manager, Alicia Santiago, Alternate

### ***City of Grants***

Projects Director, Don Jaramillo  
Public Works Director, Mark Teshima, Alternate

### ***Village of Milan***

Director Public Works, Jack Moleres  
Clerk, Denise Baca, Alternate

### ***Ramah Navajo***

RNDOT Director, Shane Lewis  
RNDOT Technician, Trina Martine, Alternate





**NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

106 WEST AZTEC AVENUE  
GALLUP, NEW MEXICO 87301  
505-722-4327  
[www.nwnmcog.com](http://www.nwnmcog.com)

