



# 2021 Annual Report

Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments



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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.

## Key Metrics:

- The third straight year with no turnover.  
Financial Accountability: maintaining fiscal constraint and internal controls, correcting audit findings, and continuously improving our fiscal position.
- The first clean opinion with no findings since 2011.  
Service Delivery: adding value to our members, delivering on work programs, and providing professional services.
- Successfully delivered several projects: McKinley County Comprehensive Plan and Zuni Mountain Trail Design and QA/QC projects.

**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.

Key Metrics:

- Added a Regional Economic Development Program Manager and Regional Recovery Coordinator to support our communities.
- Attracted a slew of EDA investments totaling over \$5M.
- Re-invested over \$400,000 in local economic development organizations to add capacity to their efforts.

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, Chairman of the Board

# Message from the Director



## Together Let's Fast Forward to Better

The COVID-19 pandemic has underlined and exacerbated the cracks in our systems, economy, and social fabric. If something was eroding, it was torn down; if something was under the surface, it got exposed; if certain markets or businesses were declining, they closed; and while workers that use technology continued to thrive, those in touch industries were sidelined. This crisis reminded us all that we are related and connected – the virus did not discriminate, nor did it abide to jurisdictional boundaries and lines on a map.

As the economic development district for the region, we look to add capacity and value at the macro-level by setting and implementing the global strategy. Last year, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG) laid out a seven-point strategy in an article entitled, “Plan Today for Recovery Tomorrow”, and we will benchmark our accomplishments against those same goals to showcase our organization’s commitment to not just talking about it but being about it.

Tactics and outcomes that highlight getting things done that make a difference 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. This work continues everyday with large projects in the pipeline targeted for new State and Federal funding. Over the last year, COG attracted over \$10M for projects in the region representing an 11-to-1 return on investment for our members and 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. COG and its partners have developed two spec-building designs, one shovel-ready site, and two sites ready for final design. A good example is the Prewitt Industrial Park, which was awarded an Impact Award by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) in 2020.
3. Helping Local Government Division setup a Small Business Assistance

Program using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. COG continues to support the roll-out of recovery programs throughout the State and our region. COG helped the City of Gallup secure \$1M for West Logan Avenue through CDBG – the largest award in program history in New Mexico.

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 catalyts. 90% of program funding has been deployed including investments on two sites in Milan, four sites in McKinley County, and two sites in Bloomfield.
5. Nomination for National designation of the Trail of the Ancients byway as a tourism tool to drive visitation to and around our region once restrictions are lifted. The Trail of the Ancients Byway received national designation and we launched the reboot of the Four Corners Geotourism website. This project was submitted for recognition as a NADO Impact Award for 2021.
6. Producing a series of Community Prospectus for each county to drive Opportunity Zone investments into our region. Opportunity Zone brochures were produced and are actively being used to attract investment and potential deals in 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. COG attracted another \$990,000 for this program, which is set to relaunch this program to increase access to capital throughout the region in the Summer 2021.

The COG also completed several planning processes including creation of a Regional Recovery Plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Regional Transportation Plan, McKinley County Comprehensive Plan, and the Zuni Mountains Trails & Conservation Master Plan. I am most proud of my team as they stepped out and stretched further to meet the challenges and opportunities to assist our communities in making their visions a reality. They did not wait for plans to be completed but planned and produced in real time. We invite you to our YouTube channel where we are putting out regular pressers on our work and its impact.

We don't want to see our region just return to normal, we want to fast forward to better. We are stronger together and louder when we speak with one voice – let's make sure they can hear us from the Roundhouse to halls of Congress.

## Regional Champion Award



### Martha Garcia

#### Cibola County

- Elementary Teacher and School Administrator
- Past President, Ramah Navajo Chapter
- Development Officer, Ramah Navajo Chapter
- Community Development Director, Ramah Navajo Chapter 638 Program
- Member, Ramah Navajo School Board
- Commissioner, Cibola County
- Vice-Chair, Northwest NM Council of Governments
- Wife | Mother | Grandmother

For over four decades, Martha Garcia has been a strong, wise and dedicated leader on behalf of the people of Pinehill, Ramah Navajo Community, Cibola County and the State of New Mexico. Always thoughtful and well-informed, Martha has been a steadfast and stalwart champion of her community's struggle for self-determination and development, carrying on the founding mission and philosophy of the Ramah Navajo School Board, which was one of the nation's very first "self-determination" indigenous communities.

Martha is credit with leading the Ramah Navajo Chapter in a class action suit against the Federal government in 1990 that eventually awarded settlement funds to various tribes for the underpayment of self-determination contracts at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. She has championed issues in the halls of Congress and throughout the Federal government to pioneer a new generation of tribal government, sovereignty and self-determination to make local decisions and fulfill Federal promises to the people of our region and beyond.

At the same time, Martha has been an expert inter-cultural and inter-agency interpreter, conflict-resolver and problem-solver. She is known locally, regionally and nationally as someone who brings people and ideas together, even while advocating for the aspirations of her own people. All of this, she has done while dedicating herself to raising a family and being a mature and supportive member of the many extended families making up the fabric of her clan and of her community.

Martha is a life-long learner that is always looking for new trends in community and economic development that can assist her community, the County, and region to reach a more diverse and equitable economy with opportunities for every community. She has helped governments get back on track and transform into more accountable and transparent operations that are more inclusive to all constituents.

In recent years, Martha has strengthened her regional credentials as a Board of Directors member and officer of the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, helping to oversee the work of the COG through these challenging times and providing wise counsel and support for the COG's many ambitious programs.

## Regional Champion Award



### Larry Maynard, P.E.

#### Agency Partner

- District Engineer, New Mexico Department of Transportation (20 Years)
- Program Manager, Technical Support Engineer, and Assistant District Engineer, New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department, Milan (8 Years)
- Operator, Various Mines in Grants Area
- Studied Civil Engineering at University of New Mexico

Larry Maynard, P.E. has served as the Senior Executive Engineer and District 6 Engineer since November 2001 for the New Mexico Department of Transportation. He has been responsible to manage the District's 3,166 lane miles of roadway, 1,352 NMDOT-owned National Highway System bridge deck areas, all other assets and equipment. Moreover, as District Engineer Larry managed 245 full time employees to maintain a complex network of transportation assets to keep people and goods moving in New Mexico. From interstates to back roads; from bridges to tribal/local public agency (T/LPA) consultation, Larry has managed our District and its assets with distinction and with a light touch.

As District Engineer, Larry was responsible for all Highway and Transportation Department functions within the District, which includes Cibola, McKinley, portions of Sandoval, San Juan, Rio Arriba, Valencia, Socorro and the majority of Catron Counties. The New Mexico Department of Transportation is responsible for maintenance, construction, and traffic operations for the State Transportation System. The Department also administers various programs, which provide technical and funding assistance to Local Government Entities and Tribes within the District.

Larry actually knows our roadway system like the back of his hand; every mile marker and every bump on every road throughout the District. He is guy that when you ask who might have the interchange plans that were done in 90's; he tells you he might have a plan set in his garage. While many like to Monday morning quarterback transportation issues, Larry is guy that worries about keeping I-40 open and whether construction traffic mitigation will keep everyone safe. His institutional knowledge spans Federal Transportation bills from ISTEA to TEA-21 to SAFETEA-LU to MAP-21 and the FAST Act, he has survived political winds and changing priorities and thrived in both lean years and boom years. He has been involved in some of the largest projects in partnership with tribal nations including US491 Four-laning Project, Exit 102/I-40 Interchange, and New Mexico Highway 6 Improvement Project. Larry has always been fair and understands

the difference between coordination, consultation, and cooperation and that relationships ultimately are what it takes in Northwest New Mexico to achieve mutual understanding and thus success.

Larry has always been available and open to sit down on any issue, project, or challenge facing the region, our communities, and localities. While probably being the smartest engineer in the room, he never makes anyone feel less and helps everyone gain a fuller understanding of the process without it feeling heavy-handed or utterly discouraging. He has participated actively with the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) to discuss the local and tribal priorities and how the District prioritized limited funding for maximum benefits. He understands that transportation project funding is a team sport and has been a staunch advocate providing support to T/LPA's to acquire other sources of transportation funding whether capital outlay or other State and Federal dollars. He has helped shape transportation funding programs to fit local and tribal needs including the new low-match and flexible NM Transportation Project Fund.

Michael Sandoval, Cabinet Secretary for New Mexico Department of Transportation provided the following remarks:

"I couldn't be prouder of Larry's leadership and accomplishments. He is truly deserving of the Regional Champion award. Larry has been instrumental in working with legislators, local officials and Federal and Tribal Governments to secure funding for infrastructure in District Six. Larry has consistently maintained a genuine concern for the traveling public and has ensured any emergency and routine work is completed with care in a timely manner. Outside agencies, constituents and employees respond positively to Larry's calm demeanor as he leads with quiet confidence. He is extremely proactive and has worked very hard to ensure the success of his employees, the District and NMDOT."

The COG is happy to bestow this honor to Larry Maynard before he well-deservedly rides off into the sunset and starts a new journey.

# Regional Champion Award

## Douglas W. Decker

### McKinley County

- Attorney, McKinley County
- Trainer, NM EDGE Community College and National Association of Counties (NACo) Conferences
- Past President, McKinley County Bar Association
- Member/Past President, Adventure Gallup & Beyond
- Member, Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments
- Member, Mount Taylor/Zuni Mountains Collaborative and Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership
- Director, Coalition of Arizona/New Mexico Counties for Stable Economic Growth
- Devote Husband, Father (4), Grandfather (7)



Doug Decker has served McKinley County as its Attorney for over 25 years. He has occasionally stepped up to fill in as the County Manager during transitions in leadership. He carries the County's institutional knowledge and can tell the history of how things came to be from Works Progress Act (WPA) artwork to trails to subdivisions to water rights and land jurisdictions. He jokes about being paid by the word or now by the syllable but in all honesty his worth is priceless.

Doug Decker is always looking out for #1 – his client, McKinley County. There is no amount of work that he would not do to protect and serve that client. Even in that, Doug has a unique ability to judicially and prudently find a way to get to yes, figure out a win-win, and apply the law with common sense and rural context. When you see a character in a movie, trying to portray a country lawyer, Hollywood would do well to model Doug Decker.

Doug Decker has served the region with distinction for over 30+ years through an impressive portfolio that can be tied together under the themes of justice, service leadership, and asset-based community development. He is a life-time learner that has delved into complex legal subjects and also more than dabbled with County bonds, Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, Zuni Mountains Trail System, and water system regionalization efforts. He has returned his knowledge by teaching at the NM EDGE Community College on a number of topics and has a knack of breaking complex things down and painting a picture for you even though he will diminish his artistic talents with self-deprecating humor.

Doug Decker has been a champion of the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG) and its mission of regional service. He has provided all of our organization's helpful free legal counsel and has always been a friend to the COG referring almost every special project, Brownfield site, and community or water system in need. His confidence in our professional service and ours in his, has

bonded us in the work and to the higher calling of daily service.

Doug Decker draws on his faith and family. He is always proud of where he comes from (Holbrook, AZ) and where his family has grown to. He can explain his connection to each and every trail in the area to one of his children that built it through their sweat equity given in the Youth Conservation Corps program. While Doug has built a foundation that everyone in the region can stand strong on, he continues to think bigger and look out further to the future for the generations to come.

Billy Moore, COG Chairman and McKinley County Commissioner describes Doug Decker well:

"For the several decades that I have known Doug Decker, he is a consistent and tireless advocate for our extended community. He has championed the health and wellbeing of our people, land, and economy and he has done it while always trying to bring people together. He is the heartbeat that keeps McKinley County and our region moving forward. He is a model of integrity that all should aspire to emulate."

The COG is bestowing Doug Decker with this award to cement his humble leadership on many successful regional initiatives. He has worked at all levels of government from helping Navajo Chapters and at the kitchen tables of newly elected Water Association members to the courts and County Commission meetings to Santa Fe and Washington DC. No one mistakes Doug Decker as his professional and physical comportment reflects the virtues and ethics that he stands for and delivers.

It has been the COG's honor and pleasure to have locked arms in service with Douglas W. Decker.





## Regional Champion Award



### Nate Duckett

#### San Juan County

- Mayor, City of Farmington
- City Councilor, City of Farmington
- Past Chairman, Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Member, Farmington Chamber of Commerce
- Volunteer, Football and Baseball Coach
- Devote Husband, Father (2)

Nate Duckett has served as Mayor for the City of Farmington since 2018. He is polished and delivers the vision of not only Farmington but San Juan County and the Four Corners like no one does to the entire world. He has been a pioneer to move the City at light speed into a brighter future.

Prior to entering the world of government, Mayor Nate Duckett began his professional career in corporate management, eventually transitioning to the insurance industry. For 12 years, he operated multimillion-dollar retail stores for Hastings Entertainment in New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas. He went on to a career in insurance and for 10 years was the owner of Farmers Insurance the Duckett Agency, specializing in personal, commercial and life insurance, as well as financial services for retirement and college savings plans. Currently, Mayor Duckett works in the commercial risk management sphere for the Kysar Millennium Leavitt agency.

Mayor Duckett first entered into local politics in 2014 when he successfully ran for Farmington City Council. In 2018, he was elected mayor. His years of service as an elected official and as a board member of the Farmington Chamber of Commerce and Leadership San Juan have given Mayor Duckett an astute knowledge and insight into the inner workings of the community. It has also provided him with a strong network of service-minded people dedicated to its success.

Mayor Duckett's 20 plus years of professional interactions with thousands of individuals has helped him successfully hone his interpersonal skills. His goal is to use these skills, in concert with leaders throughout the city and region, to develop a road map for economic diversification through the development of our outdoor recreation assets, retirement community initiative, location-neutral jobs, and promotion of our long-standing and newly developing energy industries to ensure we have sustainable growth and remain attractive to employers providing economic base jobs of which we all benefit from.

Mayor Duckett is dedicated to the success of Farmington, having moved here from Denver when he was 15-years-old, graduating from Farmington High School in 1996, and receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology from the University of New Mexico in 2001.

Within one month of moving to Farmington, Mayor Duckett met the woman of his dreams; she later became his wife. They were married in 2001 and have two amazing children. The Ducketts enjoy being outside and exploring the Four Corners region as a family. Mayor Duckett also volunteers as a youth football and baseball coach and considers himself a highly skilled home chef!

# Audit

## Clean Bill of Health – FY2020 Financial Statements and Audit

The audit is an important thermometer of an organization’s health for a given year. It provides a check and balance on internal controls, standard operating procedures, accounting practices, and financial reporting of an organization. It offers a general review and provides recommendations including finding or areas of improvement that need to be addressed moving forward by the leadership of an organization.



Highlights include:

- This audit was submitted to the State Auditor’s office approximately 45 days earlier than the prior year.
- For the second year in a row, the COG’s Finance Team including our consultant Armando Sanchez, Managing Principal, SJT Group, LLC. was able to draft and submit our own financial statements. Our Auditor estimates that of the governmental agencies that are required to have annual financial audits; less than 10% can draft their own financial statements.
- The COG received an unmodified opinion, e.g. “clean opinion”.
- The COG received no findings.
- The COG’s ability and capacity provides the Board of Directors a high level of confidence in our budget and financial reports to base policy decisions.
- The last time that the COG received a “perfect audit” e.g. a clean opinion with no findings was 2011.

Here is a snapshot of our audit history:

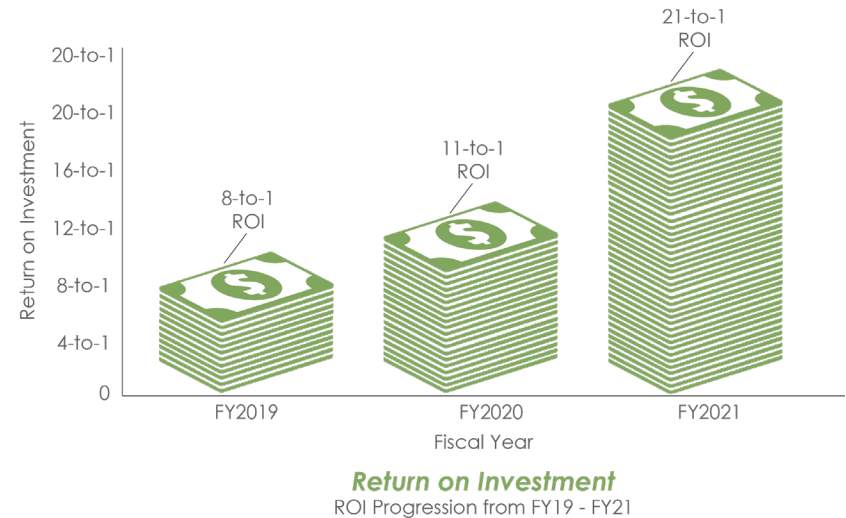
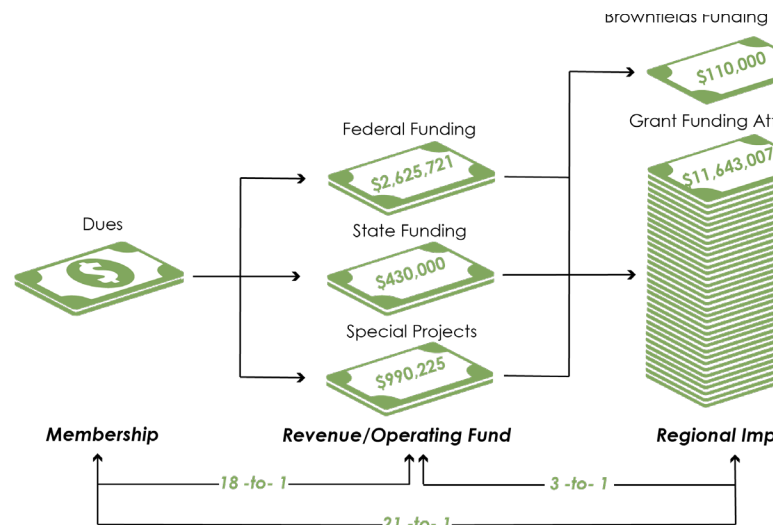
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>Opinion</b>	Unqualified	Unqualified	Unmodified	Unmodified	Unmodified	Unmodified	Unmodified	Unmodified	Unmodified	Unmodified
<b>Previous Year Findings</b>	0	0	1	1	4	1	2	3	3	1
<b>Current Findings</b>	0	1	1	4	1	2	3	3	1	0

Special thanks and appreciation to our Finance Team and for Martina Whitmore’s leadership in making this a smooth and efficient process. She also has become a Notary Public and our certified Chief Procurement Officer, which resolved the only previous year findings for FY2019.

# Impact by the Numbers

## Impact by the Numbers

The COG continues its total quality management approach to become a results-oriented work environment. To better track outputs, the COG staff has put together a number of performance metrics and set goals for fiscal year 2021 based on previous year's performance and expectations for the current year. Using Microsoft's Power BI application, the COG can track this and report in real time providing a new level of transparency and accountability to our members, clients, partners, and to the region.



### New attracted investments:

- \$1,000,000 from NM Community Development Block Grant for the City of Gallup for West Aztec Avenue project.
- \$750,000 from NM Community Development Block Grant for San Juan County for ADA Facility Improvements.
- \$1,250,000 from US Economic Development Authority to San Juan County for fiber and power redundancy at San Juan Medical Center, \$600,000 for the City of Gallup to plan the Gallup Mobility Hub and Autonomous Vehicle Cluster, and \$780,000 for Village of Milan final design of the Milan Industrial Park.
- \$406,085 from NM Human Services Department's RISE grant for jail services and \$910,000 from the Water Trust Board in McKinley County.
- Participation in the LEDA and JTIP awards for McKinley Paper.
- \$990,000 from US Economic Development Authority to the NWNMCOG for the Revolving Loan Fund.
- Several Brownfields site assessment reports from our Brownfields Coalition program in Milan, Bloomfield, and McKinley County valued at about \$110,000.
- \$250,000 in private community assistance funding from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.
- Continued annual investment into local economic development organizations at close to \$380,000 to support their capacity for local project delivery.

# 2021 Legislative Session Recap



The COG begins preparing for the legislative session, in the fall of each year, starting with the completion and final submission of the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plans (ICIPs) for all entities, including all tribal, local and county governments and other special districts and senior center facilities. ICIPs are quick references for funding agencies and capital outlay process. Again, ICIPs are not wish lists!

Applying projecteering strategies will help make this process more manageable in terms of document and project readiness. The COG can assist with your projecteering needs.

Prior to winter session, the COG provides assistance to local entities that wish to request for legislative funding for projects. The COG also facilitate legislative forums and committees to discuss local priorities, policies and other critical issues. A series of newsletters, titled "Snapshots of the Session," recap legislation and activities that directly impact our communities.

Recapping the 2021 Legislative Session:

1. **Capital outlay** awardees will be ready to spend money once the Governor signs the capital outlay bills. Entities are now tasked with procurement, on-call contracting, etc.
2. **House Bill 8** (approved/signed) sparked a series of investments into the Prewitt Industrial Park project. The COG and standing partners developed a master plan complete with site designs.
3. Milan Farms Industrial Park to follow suit on this process.

Next steps:

We have now come full circle again.

1. Complete/submit ICIP updates.
2. Resolutions need to be approved.
3. Cash match funding identified.
4. Compliance with Executive Order 2013-006 (audits, etc.).
5. Prepare for 2022 Capital Outlay Process

# EDA Investments



The COG has been told over and over by our members that economic development, diversification, and resiliency is the number one issue that our region needs assist with and should be a heightened focus for the COG as the regional Economic Development District.

The COG has responded by strengthening our relationship with the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) to make a case for investment to sustain, expand, and transition our traditional energy resource reliant economy to more stable,

innovative, and diverse economy that creates good-paying for people who are rooted here. From 2015-2020, the COG working with our local and tribal economic development organizations (EDOs) and partners attracted nearly \$5M in EDA funding into our region for planning; to major investments at San Juan College including workforce programs, university center, and a new accelerator program; to a new Metrology and Materials Testing Center at Navajo Technical University; to assistance to coal communities' priorities.

**CARES Act Funding:** On May 7, 2020, US Department of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross announced that the US Economic Development Administration was set to receive and solicit proposals for \$1.5B in CARES Act and COVID-19 recovery application. The COG has been very active and aggressive in building a portfolio of investment-ready project based on its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Plan. The following were awarded due to these efforts and our regional partnership:

1. District Recovery Funding (\$400,000): to support COG capacity for recovery planning and services.
2. Assistance to Coal Communities #2 (\$988,400): to finalize design of Milan Industrial Park and other EDO support.
3. Revolving Loan Fund (\$990,000): to capitalize a COG CARES RLF program to provide access to capital.
4. CARES Act Planning (\$600,000): to the City of Gallup and Greater Gallup EDC to plan the Gallup Mobility Hub and Autonomous Vehicle Cluster.
5. CARES Act Planning (\$150,000): to the Pueblo of Acoma to continue its comprehensive economic development planning program.
6. CARES Act Construction (\$1,250,000): to San Juan County for fiber and power redundancy at San Juan Medical Center.
7. CARES Act Technical Assistance (\$820,550): to Jicarilla Apache Nation

to develop an organization that will maximize the economic benefits of the Tribe's energy resources.

**New Opportunities:** On July 22, 2021, US Economic Development Administration (EDA) launched it's Investing in America's Communities program underwritten by American Rescue Plan Act and \$3B on targeted investment available the following Notices of Funding Opportunity:

- Build Back Better Regional Challenge (\$1 billion)
- Good Jobs Challenge (\$500 million)
- Economic Adjustment Assistance Challenge (\$500 million)
- Indigenous Communities Challenge (\$100 million)
- Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grants (\$750 million)
- Statewide Planning, Research, and Networks Grants (\$90 million)

As part of the six programs, the Department of Commerce and EDA, working with President Biden's Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities, is making a Coal Communities Commitment, which allocates \$300 million in American Rescue Plan funds to coal communities. This investment will ensure that they have the resources to recover from the pandemic and will help create new jobs and opportunities, including through the development or expansion of a new industry sector.

The American Rescue Plan funding empowers EDA to build upon its greatest strength—flexible funding to support community-led economic development—and provide larger, more transformational investments across the nation. Under the American Rescue Plan, EDA will make grants to state and local governmental entities, institutions of higher education, not-for-profit entities, unions, and Tribes. EDA is not authorized to provide grants to individuals or for-profit entities.



# CDBG Updates

The NM Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program, or CDBG, is funded and managed under the NM Department of Finance & Administration's (NMDFA) Community Development Bureau (CDB). All CDBG applications are submitted to this office.

CONSTRUCTION



## White Cliffs Water Improvement Project

McKinley County

Recap: In the Summer 2019, COG completed and submitted a CDBG *construction* grant application, on behalf of McKinley County. In September 2019, the County was awarded \$500,000. Grant agreement process currently underway.

Purpose: The focus of this project is to improve access to safe, reliable drinking water to the White Cliffs MDWUA community. The goal of the project is to develop a 50,000-gallon water storage tank, complete with improved waterlines that will be equipped with upgrades and new equipment. Long-term goal include connecting to the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP).

Update: Grant agreement process is currently tabled due to a funding gap of \$250,000 that stemmed from a national increase in construction costs and materials, due to COVID. In July, the COG assisted the County in requesting for additional funding from NMDFA. Results currently pending.

Next step: Complete the grant agreement process.



## West Logan Avenue Street & Drainage Project

City of Gallup

Recap: In the Summer 2020, COG completed and submitted a CDBG *construction* grant application, on behalf of the City of Gallup. In September 2020, the City was awarded \$1,000,000.

Purpose: The focus of this project is to improve the neighborhood street envelop, including sidewalks, curb and gutter, to provide safe access for motorists and pedestrians. Additionally, the both water and wastewater lines will also be replaced, and drainage system will also be improved. This grant will fund Phase I of II. Phase II requires new funding.

Update: Grant agreement process currently underway. The City recently submitted documentation for Request for Funds and the Environmental Assessment report, and is currently under review. Design is 100% complete. This is a *shovel-ready* project.

Next step: Seek funding for Phase II.

PLANNING



## Allison Preliminary Engineering Report

McKinley County

Recap: In May 2021, the COG completed and submitted a CDBG *planning* grant application, on behalf of the Allison community and McKinley County. The grant is capped at \$50,000.

Purpose: The focus of this project is to develop a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) for the Allison water improvement project and to determine best approach.

Update: Grant application still under review and final decision is yet to be determined.

# Water Planning

## Water Commons

Together with McKinley County, the COG is working to develop a water program for our region that will be dedicated to addressing local issues with small water systems as well as offering direct assistance and administrative support. This initiative is geared towards establishing a strong intergovernmental relationship with the county's rural special districts (water systems, solid waste, soil and water, etc.). The regional water program will provide the necessary venue for all stakeholders to contribute to effective and responsible management of our shared finite resource.

This idea has stemmed from decades of on-going planning efforts to become a more self-sustaining program, and meeting these goals will require full participation between local governments, special districts, state agencies and other stakeholders. With an overall goal to gain a deeper insight on a number of key issues impacting these small water systems, the COG hopes to develop an effective and impactful program to serve the residents of McKinley County.

The intended water program will be modeled after our region's Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) program. For decades, the RTPO has provided a regional forum focused on transportation and has provided tremendous values for all member governments and tribal entities in our region. The COG plans to replicate this program but for water and hopes the impacts are similar to that of the RTPO. The program will assist with the identification of small water system needs, help recognize and promote the importance of collaboration, and provide various forms of technical assistance.

The Regional Water Commons have monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of each month, at 9AM (*time subject to change*). Next meeting: September 15th.

## Water Regionalization

On a separate measure, the COG is working with the County to research the possibility of water regionalization to assist small water systems with the management and maintenance of their water infrastructure and assets. This model has been employed in other parts of the state with success and have reaped the benefits of a shared management system. Our small water systems in McKinley County and across the region, are stretched thin and are often run by a group of local volunteers. The days of isolated operation and maintenance has passed and the county recognizes the need for this collaborative approach.

The COG encourages all small water systems in McKinley County to participate in this regional collaborative.

## 2021 Rural Water Summit

McKinley County and the COG will be hosting the 2021 Rural Water Summit that will be held on Tuesday, August 31, 2021. This is an all day event. There will be representatives from state and federal agencies present to discuss ways to get a project funded.

Please RSVP if you plan to attend.

### 2021 Rural Water Summit

McKinley County Administrative Building,  
Conference Rooms 201A and 208A  
207 West Hill Avenue, Gallup, NM 87301  
Catered Lunch



The graphic features a background image of a water treatment facility. On the left is the McKinley County New Mexico logo. On the right is a gear icon with a water drop. The main text reads: "2021 RURAL WATER SUMMIT", "Tuesday, August 31, 2021", "from 9:00am to 4:00pm", "Early registration at 8:30am", "McKinley County Administrative Building", "Conference Rooms 201A and 208A", "207 West Hill Avenue | Gallup, NM 87301". A blue circular badge on the right says "SAVE THE DATE!". A text box on the left describes the event's purpose and lists attendees: "Who should attend: Small System Board Officials & Staff, Service Providers, Partnering Entities, Interested Citizens, Local & State Elected Officials". A yellow button says "Register Here". At the bottom, it says "Register with Eventbrite:" and "Any questions or concerns, please contact Angelina Grey at [agrey@nwmnmcog.org](mailto:agrey@nwmnmcog.org) or (505) 722-7327".

# COG Tweets in Review

 **NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Mar 1  
 Aztec, Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments discuss plans for outdoor recreation facility.  
[daily-times.com/story/news/202...](https://daily-times.com/story/news/202...) via @TheDailyTimes



Aztec, Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments discuss plans f...  
 The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments presented a proposal for moving forward with a project that the city hopes will ...  
[daily-times.com](https://daily-times.com)

 **Greater Gallup EDC** @GallupEDC · Feb 9  
 Plans are underway to restore passenger service back to the Gallup Municipal Airport. [j.mp/38VuPAH](https://j.mp/38VuPAH) For more #GallupNews, click here. [j.mp/2SaJbmM](https://j.mp/2SaJbmM) #EconomicDevelopment



 **NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Feb 26  
 The Road less traveled is now a National Treasure.  
 #RTPO NMDOT | U.S. Department of Transportation  
 Watch our weekly presser to find out why?



Putting Our Region on the Map | Weekly Presser  
 Our Region, Your COG | February 22-26, 2021To provide a overview of the top accomplishments of ...  
[youtube.com](https://youtube.com)

 **NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Feb 19  
 Hot off the Press! Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments drops its Regional Transportation Plan to move transportation forward in our region.  
 #RTPO | NMDOT  
 Check out the details in our Weekly Presser:  
[youtu.be/qpsVQOMy1NY](https://youtu.be/qpsVQOMy1NY)

 **NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG  
 Putting our Region on the Map! #RTPO  
 #NewMexicoTRUE @NMDOT @NMecondev @NMtourism

 **Federal Highway Admn** @USDOTFHWA · Feb 16  
 FHWA officials today announced 49 new designations to the America's Byways® collection, including 15 All-American Roads and 34 National Scenic Byways in 28 states. This increases the number of America's Byways® to 184 in 48 states. [highways.dot.gov/newsroom/usdot...](https://highways.dot.gov/newsroom/usdot...)

11:38 AM · Feb 16, 2021 · Twitter Web App







**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Feb 17

Drum roll...and the winner is: Michael Sage, Developer of the Year. Read the impressive accomplishments that drove NM IDEA, the Statewide Association of Economic Developers to make this selection:  
[nwnmco.com/uploads/1/2/8/...](http://nwnmco.com/uploads/1/2/8/...)



**EDA** @US\_EDA · Feb 17

Success Story: Revitalizing New Mexico's Coal Communities through EDA partnerships: [bit.ly/2LYjNSr](https://bit.ly/2LYjNSr) @NWNMCOG #EconDev



NWNMCOG



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Jan 8

NWNMCOG thanks Tri-State for the economic impact of Escalante Station and the generous community assistance. Press Release:  
[nwnmco.com/uploads/1/2/8/...](http://nwnmco.com/uploads/1/2/8/...)  
U.S. Economic Development Administration New Mexico Economic Development Department #POWER #ACC #HB8



**NWNMCOG** @NWNMCOG · Apr 19

Blue Hydrogen targeted to reuse Escalante coal power plant in Prewitt, NM.




Clean energy project proposed for retired New Mexico coal-fired power...  
/PRNewswire/ -- Newpoint Gas, LLC, and Brooks Energy Company announce Escalante H2 Power, a technology collaboration that convert...  
[prnewswire.com](https://prnewswire.com)

# Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program Recap


The Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program was developed to address the critical issues and needs of a limited and strained workforce industry within our region. The development of the Greater Gallup Industrial Workforce Program (GGIWP) was made possible with a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant.

The GGIWP is a grueling industrial training program that allows students to obtain stackable credentials that provide a pathway to a new career.


The following are successes to date:

 **104 APPLICANTS**

- Engaged the program as marketed (17,300)
- Signed up to participate (194)
- Interviewed and screened (97)
- Showcases the need in McKinley County

 **32 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
- Class 1 [12] & Class 2 [15] & Class 3 [5]

 **27 GRADUATES**

- 27 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



The GGIWP is currently in its second year, and has graduated two classes. Class 3 is currently in progress.

## MEET THE CLASS 3 GRADUATES



Marcelia Lee



Russell Boardman



Jerian Jones

Art Jones – Not Pictured

Tyler Jones – Not Pictured

# ZMTP Update

In September 2020, the United States District Court in Arizona issued an injunction for the Mexican Spotted Owl species, putting a cease to all U.S. Forest Service (USFS) timber management operations, including trail work on Milk Ranch and McGaffey Trails, in the Cibola National Forest.

**Milk Ranch Trailhead:** In final completion with installed cattleguard, signage, and kiosk.

**Quartz Hill Trail System:** Design for Priority #1 completed. Groundtruthing in progress. Other challenges due to closure of two-track roadways and designing a sustainable system.

**Quartz Hill Trailhead:** Road crews from both McKinley and Cibola Counties to conduct walkthroughs to determine \_\_\_\_.

**McKenzie Ridge Trail Connector:** Trail design currently in progress. McKinley County grant agreement pending.

**Milk Ranch & McGaffey Trail Systems:** QA/QC for Trail C and Trail D are completed. USFS approved Trail A, and Trail B. Approval for Trail 4 in progress. All other trail segments have yet to begin. USFS to provide evidence for the need of an extension, due to counties.



## Milestones:

- 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



# Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments