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## from the Executive Director



**JEFF KIELY**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
NWNMCOG

Dear Friends of the Region, “Energy” is this year’s watchword. The economic foundations of the Four Corners region continued to rumble and buckle this past year, as the coal-reliant mining and power generation industry adapted to market and regulatory forces impacting decision-making on power plant closures and threatening job and revenues losses not seen in recent memory.

In the face of the economic turbulence, and while both government and industry reacted to the intensifying pressure, our region also looked to new opportunities to be pursued and continued its proactive work in assessing our economic situation, convening regional stakeholders from across the Four Corners mega-region, and outlining new strategies and investments going forward.

In February of this year, the COG received the much-awaited Final Report from our consultants at Highland Economics LLC (which we’ve nicknamed “The POWER Report”) giving us their assessment of the status of our coal-reliant economy and putting forward a number of promising strategies for stabilizing, diversifying and sustaining the regional economy with a new and different mix of industrial, commercial and job-creation activity.

Soon after the release of this report, we went into “Implementa-

tion” mode, banding together with our POWER partners to take all of this detailed information and move it into strategic action. In parallel with this, we joined forces with our regional partners on specific initiatives, such as the Four Corners Regional Economic Consortium, which is emerging as a regional vehicle for broad-based collaboration on strategies and investments that will uplift the Four Corners region as a whole and give it a strong and unified voice to the outside world.

With Farmington-based Four Corners Economic Development and Arizona Public Service/Four Corners Power Plant, we co-chaired a robust planning team and contracted with a highly qualified consulting firm to work toward holding a Four Corners regional forum in Farmington in early November. This regional collaboration event will build on the growing collective knowledge base shared by many stakeholders in the four states, and will be action-oriented – laying out actions, responsibilities and timelines for building a momentum of positive of change.

We also partnered with Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation on its “SoloWorks” Job Creation Center pilot project, which works to train local out-of-work citizens in online services skills and then place them in jobs with national em-

ployers – while being able to do the work locally without relocating to corporate headquarters in other states.

And in partnership with TriState Generation & Transmission Association, the Escalante Generating Station, Cibola Communities EDF, Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation, Continental Divide Electric Co-op and the State of New Mexico, the COG helped lead and facilitate collaborative work in fulfillment of House Memorial 72, which mandates a study of economic “cluster” activities that could be proactively pursued and invested in to capitalize on the Escalante industrial asset, while diversifying economic activities and employment opportunities for the citizens of Cibola and McKinley Counties.

A trying time, as we know, for many households in our region, and for our state and local government agencies who struggle with contracting budgets and escalating demands, while still seeking to serve their citizens. Trying times for the COG as well, as we “feel the pain” of our governmental and business partners, and of the region’s citizens – challenging us to stay strong, proactive and responsive through it all.

continue..

**Much thanks to:**

- Our Board of Directors, now led by a triumvirate of strong Navajo women public servants: GloJean Todacheene (San Juan County) as Chair; Genevieve Jackson (McKinley County) as 1st Vice-Chair; and Martha Garcia (Cibola County) as 2nd Vice-Chair.
- Our partners throughout the region – you know who you are, and where to find us!
- Our great staff, co-led by our Deputy Director Evan Williams, and carried on by Transportation Program Manager Bob Kuipers, Planning Assistant Carrie House and Administrative Assistant Martina Whitmore.

Heading into the new fiscal year, we say a fond farewell to three of our “great staff” who have moved on to new opportunities: Planner Brandon Howe; Economic Development Program Manager Jeff Condrey; and Finance Manager Teresa Mecale. Thank you for traveling this challenging road with us, and best wishes in your next adventures,

Forward, then, and stronger! We’ll see you soon and often.

Sincerely,  
*Jeff Kiely*



**GLOJEAN B. TODACHEENE**  
BOARD CHAIR  
SAN JUAN COUNTY

*We are already in the first quarter of 2017. New leadership brings some areas of uncertainty because decisions have to be made that impacts local government, citizens and organizations. Facing everyone is the economic situation where funding is limited and citizens are moving out of New Mexico for job opportunities in other states.*

*Revenue was plentiful when business, jobs and industry was productive. Furloughs, layoffs, business closings and changes are occurring within the state of New Mexico and tribal nations. Yet, we will prevail.*

*Despite the challenges facing cities, counties and tribal communities, local leaders are confident and able to find solutions to meet the needs of their respective communities.*

*The Northwest region is blessed with a great climate, awesome leaders and numerous possibilities to address the present economic situation. Collaboration, teamwork, regional support and decision making along with the sharing of ideas are vital to addressing needs and wants for our region.*

*We need to become creative and innovative in meeting the challenges ahead.*

*Sincerely,*

*GloJean Todacheene*

## MEMBER GOVERNMENTS

### COUNTIES

Cibola County

McKinley County

San Juan County

### MUNICIPALITIES

City of Gallup

City of Grants

Village of Milan

### MUNICIPALITIES

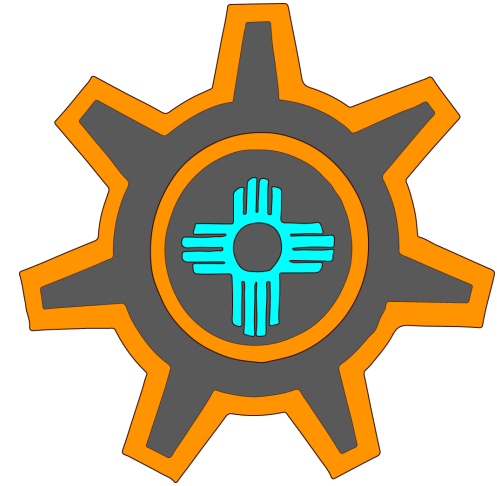
City of Farmington

City of Aztec

City of Bloomfield

### AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Northwest New Mexico Regional  
Solid Waste Authority



## REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

*JOINT POLICY & TECHNICAL COMMITTEE*

### COUNTIES

Cibola County

McKinley County

San Juan County

### MUNICIPALITIES

City of Gallup

City of Grants

Village of Milan

### TRIBAL ENTITIES

Pueblo of Acoma

Pueblo of Laguna

Pueblo of Zuni

Navajo Nation

### CHAIRMAN

Jeff Irving  
McKinley County



## **CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**

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NWNMCOG

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**Austin Randall**  
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**Scott Eckstein**  
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**Jackie McKinney**  
City of Gallup

**Laura Jaramillo**  
City of Grants

**Helen Dayan**  
Village of Milan

## **VOTING REPRESENTATIVES**

**Robert Armijilo**  
Cibola County

**Anthony Dimas**  
McKinley County

**Carol Bowman-Muskett**  
McKinley County

**Larry Hathaway**  
San Juan County

**Joshua W. Ray**  
City of Aztec

**Dorothy Nobis**  
City of Bloomfield

**Dr. Bill Hall**  
City of Farmington

**Yogash Kumar**  
City of Gallup

**Allan Landavazo**  
City of Gallup

**Maryann Ustick**  
City of Gallup

**Michael Lewis**  
City of Grants

**Modey Hicks**  
City of Grants

**Robert Gallegos**  
Village of Milan

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORK

N. A. D. O.

## COG Executive Director presides over National Conference in San Antonio



Deputy Director Evan Williams is recognized by EDA-Austin Regional Director Jorge Ayala as an "Emerging Leader" at the annual NADO Conference in San Antonio.



Executive Director Jeff Kiely hosts longtime COG Board member Dr. Bill Hall and his wife Suzanne at the annual NADO Conference in San Antonio.

Executive Director Jeff Kiely continued his leadership this past year at the helm of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), presiding over NADO's annual training conference in San Antonio in October 2016, and passing the torch to incoming President Lynne Keller-Forbes of the South Eastern Council of Governments headquartered in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

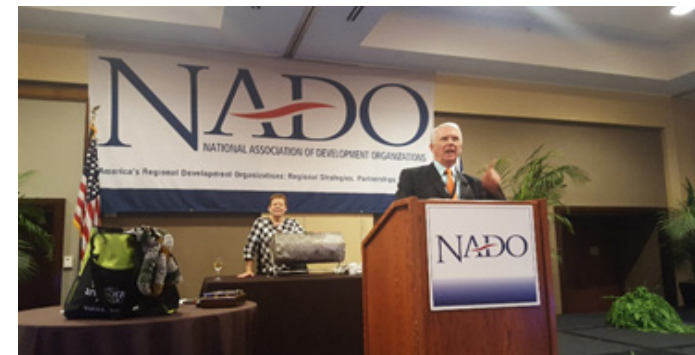
The San Antonio conference included a historic meeting between the NADO Executive Committee and the "full brass" of the Economic Development Administration, including outgoing EDA Assistant Secretary Jay Williams and his staff, as well as the Regional Directors from all six of EDA's regional offices. The Northwest COG also hosted New Mexico economic developer Mark Lautman as one of the conference's keynote speakers.

Also at the San Antonio conference, COG Deputy Director Evan Williams was recognized by EDA-Austin Regional Director Jorge Ayala as an "Emerging Leader" – one of only 10 COG professionals selected from EDA's 5-state region to participate in the year-long economic development training program for up-and-coming COG leaders. It was clear at the post-conference meeting of the Southwest Region Executive Directors Association (SWREDA) that Evan was a "go-to" spokesman for the Emerging Leaders graduating class.

With the changing of the guard in the White

House in November, NADO maintained its strong and positive presence as a non-partisan advocate and policy advisor in Washington, resulting in consultation with White House Intergovernmental Relations staff at both the NADO Washington Policy Conference in March and the Executive Committee Fly-In in early May. NADO also played a significant role in building awareness throughout Congress and the incoming administration of the impactful role of EDA as the federal government's only agency solely focused on the economic development mission.

Mr. Kiely will step off the NADO Executive Committee during this year's NADO Annual Training Conference to be held in September in Anchorage, Alaska, but will retain a seat on the Board of Directors for the duration of his active COG career.



Executive Director Jeff Kiely chairs an award ceremony at the annual NADO Conference in San Antonio.

## NM Legislative Regular Session

The regular session ended with the Governor's controversial line-item vetoes within the State Budget Bill (HB2) that eliminated the entire Higher Education and Legislative budgets. She stated in a veto message, that this was in retaliation of the Senate refusing to hold a hearing for nominated Regents for several institutions and a mechanism to balance the budget without tax increases. Even though, the Governor technically signed House Bill 2, she vetoed its two companion bills, including a comprehensive revenue package (HB202) and a tax reform light bill (HB191), which is an attempt to begin tax reform with delayed repeals of 36 of the State's 108 credits, exemptions, and deductions. The Governor encourages, "bipartisan collaboration on a tax reform bill during the upcoming Special Session." The Governor vetoed the Capital Outlay Bill (SB462) because "with a special session looming, and the state experiencing a serious cash shortage, it is imperative that we keep our severance tax bond capacity open to address the current shortfall". She did sign the Capital Outlay Reauthorization Bill (SB362). **Other key measures included:**

**SB46: E911 Surcharges on Communication Services** - Provides parity to enact \$.51 surcharge on all technologies for the E911 Fund.

**Status: Passed Both Houses, Governor signed.**

**SB46: Installment Loan Fee Limits & Literacy Funds** - Provides consumer protections on all small loan products throughout N.M.

**Status: Passed Both Houses, Governor signed.**

**SB254 & HB266: Short-term Rental Occupancy Tax** - Known as the "AirBNB Bill" would have provided a similar taxing structure on businesses like AirBNB to level the field with traditional hotels and motels.

**Status: Passed Both Houses, Governor vetoed.**

**SB247: Liquor Tax & County Definition** - Would have allowed McKinley County citizens to increase the local liquor excise tax from 6% to 9% from up to eight year periods.

**Status: Passed Both Houses, Governor pocket-vetoed.**

**HB63: Local Option Fuel Tax** - Would have allowed local entities to raise local option fuel tax for road & transportation improvements.

**Status: Passed Both Houses, Governor pocket-vetoed.**

**HB174: Local Election Act** - Would have consolidated the conduct of local elections to be held on a single day & create uniform processes for these elections. **Passed Both Houses, Gov. pocket-vetoed.**

**In the 2018 Session, we forecast (1) deeper cuts, (2) GRT Reset Legislation (Rep. Harper), (3) increased unfunded mandates to cities & counties, (4) another capital outlay clawback round, & (5) proposed capital outlay reform.**

Your Council of Governments participates & maintains a presence for the entire Session, as a service to our members, our rural & tribal communities, and our Legislators. We are here to serve your needs & track items of interest for our members. COG does not lobby but we understand our region & communities, making us valuable to Legislators, staff, and your hired Lobbyists as an informational resource.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORK



### NM Legislative ~ Special Session

The Governor acted on several pieces of legislation on May 26th that basically reflected the strings of compromise and contention.

**HB 2** - A revenue bill that includes creating a "rainy day" fund with excess severance taxes, moving some legislative retirement funds temporarily to the general fund & to the underfunded judicial retirement fund, a limited gross receipts tax for nonprofit and governmental hospitals, an internet sales tax, and some tax deduction reporting requirements. This bill would raise over \$143 million dollars. Passed the House along party line votes (37-29), & the Senate by 32-7.

**Governor signed this bill, but line-vetoed the hospital and internet sales tax, as well as the reporting, as written. She directed that she wants bipartisan tax reform not piecemeal solutions.**

**HB 1** - A supplemental budget bill that, for the most part, replaced those budget items the Governor vetoed in April. The bill was passed on a bipartisan basis.

**Governor signed this with line-item vetoes.**

**SB 1** - A bill that turns severance tax bonds into general fund revenues (about \$85 million dollars), then "sweeps" money from several state agencies, including \$8 million from the NM Finance Authority (\$1,400 dollars was swept from the nurses "insurance examination fund"). The total amount of money that moves into the general fund is roughly \$100 million dollars. This bill passed the House unanimously, and the Senate by a vote of 38-3.

**Governor signed with some line-item vetoes.**

**SB 2** - The final revenue bill, which is very similar to HB 202 from the regular session, includes the gas and diesel taxes, motor vehicle excise taxes, and a trucker's "weight-distance identification permit tax." The bill would raise between \$72 and \$93 million dollars. The Senate vote was 25-16, and the House 37-28.

**Governor vetoed this bill as it raises taxes.**



# REGIONAL INITIATIVES

## Transportation



McKinley County Road Forum pre-session attendees.

Under contract and in collaboration with the NM Department of Transportation, the COG continued to administer the North-west Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NWRTPO), which coordinates transportation planning in the rural, small town and tribal areas of Cibola, McKinley and San Juan Counties. The region's local and tribal governments serve as members of the RTPO, and its representatives comprise the organization's Policy & Technical Committee, which meets monthly to share information, vet projects and plans, consult with the DOT, engage public stakeholders, and provide input from local elected officials.

The RTPO is a sister agency to the Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (FMPO), which serves the urbanized planning area of the Farmington MSA. The COG provides program and administrative staffing in support of the RTPO, guided by annual work programs that are aligned with federal and state guidelines. The work is carried out under the umbrella of the Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan produced last year, which in turn is aligned with the State's Long-Range Plan. This year's RTPO work and accomplishments are summarized here;

### Regional - Long Range Planning

- Contributions to local and regional multimodal plans incl. 4CITE\*, ZMTP recreational trails, and other local plans.
- Real time, transparent project development representation through our Panoramic Website.
- Updated our NWRTPO Regional Transportation Plan.



### General Support

- Coordinated and announced training & professional development opportunities for staff & RTPO members.
- Sought and announced alternative funding and technical assistance resources to RTPO members.
- Worked with DOT staff to advise RTPO members of various deadlines and resolve project issues.
- Updated a variety of annual governing documents incl. RTPO bylaws, open meetings act resolution, public participation plan, Title VI & ADA Compliance plans, Regional Transportation Plan, member roster, and published a new annual meeting schedule in area newspapers.
- Provided RTPO orientations to 8 of our 11 member governments' elected and department leaders.
- Support Road Safety Audits for NM118, NM53 & NM602
- Ongoing facilitation of RTPO membership, meetings, and maintenance of the COG RTPO website. Quarterly and annual reporting. Participation in statewide Quarterly Roundtables



### Project Development

- Developed a new biennial RTIPR(Regional Transportation Improvement Program Recommendations) that reduced 99 projects at \$350 million to a fiscally constrained and prioritized list of 36 projects at \$65 million, all of which qualify for federal funding through the NM DOT.
- Prioritized Public Transportation funding requests for our regional 5310 (elderly/handicapped) and 5311(transit) providers, and prioritized regional safety projects.
- Between the RTPO and Farmington MPO brought in a total of \$3,726,639.00 for multimodal and recreational trails development in our region!
- Provided leadership for a Road Forum in McKinley County which trained local and Chapter leaders and staff on transportation financing and project development.
- Assisted McKinley County in leading the "4-Corners Counties Collaborative" meetings, engaging all the counties from Utah, Arizona, and N.M. that include Navajo Nation lands to consider standardizing a process through IGA's or MOU's that enables cross-jurisdictional transportation maintenance or development to become more cost and time efficient and effective.





**NWNMCOG**  
@NWNMCOG

Follow

Love seeing a plan come together for the youth by our youth. Special Thanks to @tonyhawk, @GallupRealTrue, #SWIF, Rep Lundstrom, #SBIM  
3:40 PM - 19 Jan 2017



NADO  
@NADOWeb

Congratulations to the 10 graduates of the pilot EDD Training Program in the @US\_EDA Austin region! Learn more: [nado.org/economic-devel...](http://nado.org/economic-devel...)

11:39 AM - 3 Nov 2016



**NWNMCOG**  
@NWNMCOG

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@NWNMCOG is talking tribal transportation all week with our partners and the BIA. [youtu.be/RSc-R6Fg6Q4](https://youtu.be/RSc-R6Fg6Q4) #RTPO  
4:08 PM - 11 Jun 2017

**NWNMCOG**  
@NWNMCOG

Follow

Speaker highlights efforts to diversify economy [daily-times.com/story/news/loc...](http://daily-times.com/story/news/loc...) via @TheDailyTimes  
1:14 PM - 5 Aug 2016



Speaker highlights efforts to diversify economy

The keynote speaker at the regional planning agency meeting highlighted work to diversify the Four Corners economy. [daily-times.com](http://daily-times.com)



**NWNMCOG**  
@NWNMCOG

Follow

BNSF certifies Gallup, NM as a Premier Site for transloading & rail service. Locate here to gain a logistics edge. [ow.ly/d/5Qfo](http://ow.ly/d/5Qfo)  
8:56 AM - 30 Jan 2017

## TWEETS



**NWNMCOG**  
@NWNMCOG

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@NWNMCOG ended Roads Week with a Johnson Road groundbreaking re-confirming that when we all work together, we can get out of the mud. #RTPO  
4:50 PM - 15 Jun 2017

**NWNMCOG**  
@NWNMCOG

Follow

Report: Rural Areas' Roads, Bridges Need Improvements, Suffer Higher Crash Rates [ow.ly/hpMA30dhw7A](http://ow.ly/hpMA30dhw7A) #RTPO  
9:54 AM - 3 Jul 2017



NADO  
@NADOWeb

Follow

Materials from last week's #coal #diversification forum in Denver are now posted online at: [diversifyeconomies.org/2017/04/streng...](http://diversifyeconomies.org/2017/04/streng...) @NACoTweets @US\_EDA  
3:27 PM - 28 Apr 2017



**NWNMCOG**  
@NWNMCOG

Follow

Jeff Kiely, @NWNMCOG Executive Director serving our region proud as NADO President.  
3:30 PM - 21 Oct 2016



# REGIONAL CHAMPIONS



Each year, the COG selects individuals from each of the COG's three county areas for the annual award of "Regional Champion". These are civic leaders who demonstrate outstanding regional vision, engagement, and commitment to processes of cross-boundary collaboration and dedication to the goals and values of the COG, as we work together – collectively – to "lead the field and move the region". This year's awards reflect our Champions' recent and ongoing commitment to two large COG initiatives: POWER—the EDA-funded initiative helping coal-reliant communities transition their economies; and ZMTP: the Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership.

Our champions are current City of Grants Manager and co-Chair of the ZMTP Laura Jaramillo; long-time partner and co-Chair of the ZMTP Larry Winn; and tribal and private sector leader of the POWER initiative Arvin Trujillo. This is also a special year, in that the COG has selected an agency partner and friend of the COG to receive the "at-large" Regional Champion award ... and that goes to Arnold Wilson from the US Forest Service-Mt. Taylor Ranger District for his work and service to the ZMTP.



**Arnold Wilson** has served the United States Forest Service for over 20 years in many capacities and with many hats. From timber to recreation; from fires to restoration, Arnold has managed our Forest and its resources with distinction and with a light touch.

As a forester, the region is his backyard. Arnold lives in Grants, NM and works in McKinley and Cibola counties with the only boundary being made of pinon-juniper and ponderosa pines. Arnold has made regional impacts throughout the years, like a stone thrown into a lake that ripples and creates waves for miles. With this award, we wanted to lift up his work behind the scenes and out in the woods on the Zuni Mountains Trail Project and associated Partnership. He was the main and lasting "cog" in a much bigger wheel working on all fronts. From local user groups and disgruntled landowners all the way to inter-governmental discussions and convincing

higher-ups that our grassroots folks could handle one of the largest trails project in the country.

While the Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership (ZMTP) has spanned the tenure of at least four (4) District Rangers at the Mount Taylor Ranger District of the Cibola National Forest and Grasslands, Arnold has been the backbone working on this project behind the scenes and keeping it on track moving forward. The legend of this project is that it died and was killed several times, but it was always Arnold capturing that last ember - cuddling it, breathing air to create smoke, and providing the kindling to get it hot again.

Bob Crane, a co-worker and old buddy of Arnold, describes him well:

**"Arnold was the guy in my crew that was as good at his job as I thought I was, in fact he was better; though he held back a bit so as not to let Matt (the boss)**

**know that he was the best. Arnold was quiet, modest and never wanted to be a boss or to be in the spotlight, but others recognized his talent and pushed him toward higher places."**

The COG is honoring Arnold Wilson with this award to shine a spotlight on his humble and unsung service to our region and for helping the Partnership navigate the US Forest Service system for decades. His low-key approach to complex and challenging situations and ability to bring people along together are both qualities that have made the Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership successful. In May 2017, District Ranger Alvin Whitehair signed the decision notice and the Partnership learned that almost \$1.7M would be invested to the start the 200+ non-motorized, multi-use trail system. While many of us dreamed that this day would happen; Arnold made it happen day in and day out.

## Agency Partner / At-Large

- USFS Forester & Key Partner on Zuni Mountain Trail Partnership ~ Cibola NF, Mt. Taylor Ranger District
- Regional Tribal Relations Program Manager (TRPM)
- Resource Management, NAU & Recreation, Clemson University
- Very proud father of 3 sons

**Larry Winn** has served the region with distinction for over 30+ years through an impressive portfolio that can be tied together under the theme of stewardship and resource management. From counseling human talent to restoring riparian habitats, Dr. Winn has provided vision, leadership, and passionate service to the human and natural continuum of our area.

His self-guided objective and life ambition is in restoring health to the landscape of the Colorado Plateau and enhancing quality of life in and between its communities, utilizing both public and private resources in the service of science, vision, and practicality. This pledge is the only calling card that Dr. Winn wields, which has placed him at the front of many regional projects, committees, and programs.

Larry has shown no shyness or fear in facilitating tense community conversations and finding middle ground towards the common good. In service to the region, Dr. Winn has lead on local and region-

al water issues; counseled youth and families; helped to form the Gallup Youth Conservation Corps program; restored riparian areas and ranches; and been a steward of our valuable high desert resources from a holistic and practical framework.

From the beginning and for nearly a decade, Larry Winn co-chaired the Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership (ZMTP), which was formed to advance the vision of creating the Southwest's crown jewel of singletrack trail systems for multiple uses. Under his direction, Dr. Winn convened organizations in the bi-county area, including the US Forest Service, National Parks Service, and various user groups.

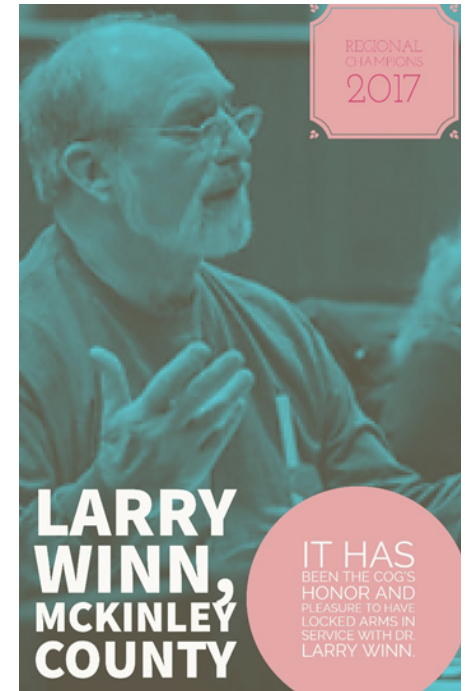
Through his firm, Connections, Inc., he was able to train and deploy youth crews to support trail development in the Zuni Mountains and throughout the region. The Gallup Youth Conservation Corps remains one of most successful programs in the State and a model of excellence in youth workforce development.

Bob Rosebrough, former Gallup Mayor and regionalist in his own right, describes Dr. Winn well:

*"For the 15 years that I have known him, Larry Winn has been a consistent and tireless advocate for our extended community. He has championed the health and wellbeing of both our people and our environment and he has done it while always trying to bring people together."*

The COG is bestowing Dr. Larry Winn with this award to cement his leadership in this critical project and on many successful regional initiatives. Without his vision and leadership, the Zuni Mountains Trail Project would not have been possible and the dream of restoring Mount Taylor and the Zuni Mountains to a world-class model of stewardship, sustainable recreation, and resiliency would only be just that.

It has been the COG's honor and pleasure to have locked arms in service with Dr. Larry Winn.



## McKinley County

- Executive Director, Connections, Inc.
- Co-Chair, Zuni Mountain Trail Partnership
- Chairman, Mount Taylor/Zuni Mountains Collaborative and McKinley Soil and Water Conservation District
- Chair, Gallup and McKinley County Water Boards
- Member, Region 6 Water Plan

# REGIONAL CHAMPIONS



## **Cibola County**

- Elementary Teacher and School Administrator
- Executive Director, Future Foundations Family Center
- Co-Chair, Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership
- Member, Mount Taylor/Zuni Mountains Collaborative
- Manager, City of Grants
- Mother and Grandmother

While **Laura Jaramillo** started her professional journey as a teacher for 15 years in Las Cruces and later Grants, she has grown from improving children's futures to revitalizing the communities in Cibola County and the region.

After teaching, Laura decided to get a Master's in School Administration which lead her to be a school principal at Mesa View Elementary for 3 years. After that she became the Director at Future Foundations Family Center, where I stayed for 14 years. The Family Center was funded primarily through grants and donations. Over the years, she was responsible for bringing in well over \$3,000,000 in funding that supported programs in the community and at the center. The Family Center provides services and programs to support the positive development of individuals and families in the entire County area.

Mrs. Jaramillo has currently been the City Manager for the City of Grants for 3 years. She has served

on numerous boards and civic organizations throughout the years including: Kiwanis, Rotary, DWI Taskforce, Cibola County Health Council, Robert's Place Domestic Violence Shelter, St. Teresa School Board, Cibola Arts Council, Grants Chamber of Commerce, Delta Kappa Gamma, Youth Visions, Juvenile Justice Advisory Council, Mt. Taylor Collaborative and the Zuni Mountain Trail Partnership.

It is that ethic of service and community connections that made Laura the perfect co-chair to represent Cibola County interests. Under her direction, Laura Jaramillo convened organizations in the bi-county area, including the US Forest Service, National Parks Service, and various user groups. She is no doubt the most diligent member of the Partnership highlighted in her willingness to go the extra mile. The Partnership depending on the fact that when Laura gave her word, things got done. Laura Jaramillo is still willing to support the project by offering the City of Grants to provide fiscal

agent services to the County for its upcoming Recreational Trails Program grant to build-out the Quartz Hill trail system.

The COG is bestowing Laura Jaramillo with this award to cement her leadership in this critical project and on many successful regional initiatives. She never lost sight of the bigger picture that this regional project would raise all boats and provide an economic driver for the region. Without her vision and leadership, the Zuni Mountains Trail Project would not have been possible and Cibola County might not have been positioned to take advantage of this bi-county project. While the COG realizes this is merely another milestone on her journey, we wanted to acknowledge her role and dedication to the Partnership.

Laura is married and has three grown children and two grandchildren.



In the COG's line of work, we look for partners who know how to "think regionally and act locally," and also how to "think locally and act regionally." There are few in our big circle who better demonstrate this mentality than **Arvin Trujillo**.

For the past 7 years, Arvin has served as Manager of Government Relations for the Four Corners Power Plant in Fruitland, New Mexico – a position formerly occupied by a dear friend and brilliant Navajo Nation leader before him, the late Marshall Plummer. In this role, Arvin works to develop strong working relationships with agencies, communities, nonprofits and colleagues at all levels – local, tribal, state and federal. And in recent years his #1 focus has been on helping to diversify and empower local economies through working with and building capacity in local Navajo Chapter communities surrounding the power plant – in anticipation of impending downsizing and closings of the Four Corners Power Plant and San Juan Generating Station.

Prior to this private sector leadership, Arvin served for over a decade as Executive Director of the Navajo Nation's Division of Natural Resources, overseeing the work of 450 employees in 11 departments, and serving in the Presidential administrations of both Joe Shirley and Kelsey Begaye. His executive responsibilities included policy development and advisement, as well as high-level negotiations, on all matters related to natural resource

and mineral development on the Navajo Nation.

Building on his academic preparations in biochemistry at Oral Roberts University and mineral processing at Penn State University, Arvin's professional career included 12 years as a mining engineer in service to Mobil Coal Producing, Inc. in Gillette, Wyoming and BHP-Billiton in Farmington, New Mexico, where he held a variety of engineering, production and management positions with both companies.

In recognition of the quality of Arvin's leadership throughout his multi-faceted career, he has been the recipient of numerous awards, most prominently the Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Award, the Arizona Public Service Chairman's Award, the Mary G. Ross Award from the Council of Energy Resource Tribes, and USDA Cooperator of the Year. He has also received letters of commendation from the US Bureau of Reclamation, Governor of New Mexico, President of the Navajo Nation and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society.

Among Arvin's many accomplishments, one of the greatest was his leadership in the late 1990s and early 2000s as part of the inter-governmental collaboration chaired by our Council of Governments, which achieved a major settlement of Navajo water rights in the San Juan River and resulted in authorization and funding in 2009 of the

\$1-billion "Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project," which at this very moment is under construction and which promises to bring sustainable water supply to 43 Chapter communities of the Navajo Nation, to the City of Gallup and to a portion of the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

More recently, Arvin's leadership from the private sector side has included his work with the 6 Navajo Chapter communities bordering on the Four Corners Power Plant in an initiative known as "6CEO" (6 Chapters Economic Opportunity), partnering with Capacity Builders, Inc. to bring in resources for community economic development planning and training.

And as a powerful partner with the COG, Arvin is co-chairing our regional collaborative under the "POWER" grant to plan for and carry out a multi-state regional economic summit, called the Four Corners Future Forum, to be held in Farmington in early November. It is Arvin's vision, commitment to regionalism, perseverance and superb relationship-building that has enabled this effort to move forward, gain steam and attract high-level interest from all over the region, and across a number of private companies and state and federal agencies.

The COG is proud to have Arvin Trujillo as a partner, and proud to award him this year's Regional Champion award representing the COG's San Juan County sub-region.



## San Juan County

- Government Relations Manager, Arizona Public Service (APS), Four Corners Power Plant
- Executive Director, Division of Natural Resources, Navajo Nation
- Mining Engineer, BHP, NM Operations
- Penn State University







In the Fall of 2015, the COG was awarded a \$327,300 grant from the US Economic Development Administration under the federal "POWER" initiative, joining San Juan College and its \$1.4 million energy workforce grant as two of the first POWER grantees west of the Mississippi River. The COG's grant supported a major consultant contract with Highland Economics LLC of Portland, Oregon, to produce a full-bodied assessment of the regional economy, along with a set of strategic recommendations for economic investment going forward into the future. The grant also provided support for a full-time economic development manager position, initially filled by David Hinkle and then in September 2016 by Jeff Condrey.

In this past year, the COG achieved a major POWER milestone with the release in February 2017 of Highland's excellent work product, the Final Report for the "Regional Economic Assessment & Strategy for the Coal-impacted Four Corners Region". The report acknowledged that coal mining and associated power production industries have historically been key economic engines in the Four Corners region, and in Northwest New Mexico specifically. Changes in regional, national, and international energy markets, as well as changes in state and federal energy policy, have resulted in a decline of investment in these industries in the region. In turn, the region has suffered a reduction of employment, income, and taxes supported by the energy sector. In response to these changes, a growing coalition of public and private sector leaders and stakeholders in the counties of the Four Corners region are proactively seeking economic development strategies to strengthen and diversify the regional economy and stabilize the financial base of the region's communities and governments.

### POWER report findings in 5 areas of study:

1. Type & Magnitude of Adverse Economic Impact.
2. Regional & Community Strategies for Mitigating Economic Impact.
3. Energy Sector Opportunities for Coal & Other Energy Assets.
4. Other Sector Economic Diversification Opportunities.
5. Recommended Priority Actions & Next Steps

Building on past and current economic development efforts in the region, the COG augmented Highland's regional study by convening a strong coalition of public and private sector partners, which began collaborative work on identifying key economic sectors/clusters, including those in the retail, health care, energy, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, logistics/transportation, and construction sectors. Local education institutions have developed training programs to provide the local population a means to develop the necessary skills for jobs in these sectors. This planning process ties together efforts throughout the region and identifies regional strategies to promote this wide spectrum of industries, as well as identify target growth businesses for each county in the region. McKinley County in leading the "4-Corners Counties Collaborative" meetings, engaging all the counties from Utah, Arizona, and N.M. that include Navajo Nation lands to consider standardizing a process through IGA's or MOU's that enables cross-jurisdictional

transportation maintenance or development to become more cost and time efficient and effective.

***"The completion of this report is very timely given the recent announcement by the investors in the Navajo Generating Station in Page, Arizona, of their plan to close this coal fired power plant, the largest in the western US, in 2019, as well as similar discussions affecting other coal-related operations throughout the region. This will mean the loss of approximately 1,000 high paying jobs at the plant and coal mine that supplies the facility, not to mention the indirect adverse economic impact to suppliers, support staff, and revenues into the Navajo and Hopi Nations. Similar scenarios has been repeated many times in the Four Corners region during the last few decades, due to the cyclical nature of energy resource markets. But this time, the scope of change and impact is different. Everyone from the economic development community working on the Colorado Plateau is dedicated to restructuring the economy in this region."** ~ Jeff Kiely COG Executive Director*

To build on the **POWER** report recommendations & to harness the emerging collaborative energy across the quadrants of the Four Corners region, the COG is partnering with Four Corners Economic Development & Arizona Public Service/Four Corners Power Plant to co-chair a strong regional team to plan and carry out a regional economic summit on November 1 & 2, 2017 in Farmington, referred to as **"Four Corners Future Forum."** COG has contracted with Cota Holdings LLC as primary consultant in shaping & implementing this conference.

Additionally, implementation activities are taking place in parallel with this Forum, including development of funding applications to state & federal agencies for projects & initiatives being prioritized by the regional POWER team. This work is feeding into the establishment of the **Four Corners Regional Economic Consortium** as a multi-state, multi-sector organization for sustaining collaboration, innovation & new development across the region – including oversight, coordination of actions and strategies coming out of the Four Corners Future Forum.

Interested parties can access the entire final **POWER** report & supporting appendix at the following two links to the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments website:

[http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/final\\_highland\\_economics\\_report\\_2017.pdf](http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/final_highland_economics_report_2017.pdf)

[http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/final\\_report\\_-\\_appendix\\_a.pdf](http://www.nwnmcog.com/uploads/1/2/8/7/12873976/final_report_-_appendix_a.pdf)

# LOCAL INITIATIVES

## *Downtown Redevelopment*

### **City of Gallup - Mayors' Institute on City Design**

In the fall of 2016, the City of Gallup's Mayor was requested to participate in the nationally recognized West Regional Session of the Mayors' Institute on City Design in Albuquerque, NM. The Mayor's Institute on City Design provided the opportunity for mayors to present, discuss and share best practices to address city design and development issues. With consultation from downtown partners, the Mayor accepted the invitation and provided the institute with the issue of developing the northside of the MRA district. Once the issue was identified, the Mayor contacted the COG to assist in developing a presentation on the issues facing development of the northside of the MRA district. The Mayor presented this presentations to representatives from the University of New Mexico's School of Architecture and Planning and mayors from the western regional district.

### **City of Gallup - Downtown Walkway Project**

In 2016 – 2017, the COG assisted the City of Gallup in developing and submitting a grant application to the New Mexico Tourism Department's Clean & Beautiful program. The grant, which was awarded \$20,000, was used to conduct activities aimed towards beautification of the downtown walkway. Activities included the installation of new string and wall lighting, installation of new xeriscaping material, the planting of additional trees and plants, the installation of a recycling bin, painting of the general walkway features and the installation of a mural designed by a local artist and painted by local youth. The project was completed in the spring -summer of 2017.

### **City of Gallup - Alpine Lumber Reuse Concept**

The COG assisted the Gallup Mainstreet in developing a reuse concept for the former Alpine Lumber Yard just north of the rail tracks in downtown Gallup. With little notice, the COG was able to develop a 3D rendering which was including into an application for financial resources. Mainstreet Director Liz Hannum has since partnered with New Mexico Mainstreet Architect Will Powell to further develop the COG's initial adaptive reuse concept.



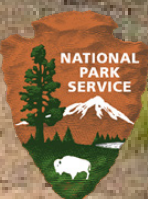


### **Mount Taylor | Zuni Mountains Collaborative**

The COG continues its efforts to develop and promote outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of Northwest New Mexico. At the request of the City of Grants, the COG has participated in the Mount Taylor-Zuni Mountains Collaborative; a group divided into task forces dedicated to outdoor recreational opportunities. The collaborative has been planning the development of four key projects. The first and most important is the development of the City of Grants' Trails and Connectivity Master Plan. This plan is crucial to meet the desires of the community to become an outdoor recreational hub for Northwest New Mexico. The second project is the development of Equestrian Campsites in the Zuni Mountains. With upcoming trail and trailhead development in the Cibola portion of the Zuni Mountains, the group identified the need to provide this amenity. The next project is the development of the Lobo Canyon Trail. Initial discussions indicated that this is likely to be the first project completed after the development of the Trails and Connectivity Master Plan. With close proximity to Mount Taylor and the Continental Divide Trail, community members have expressed the desire to provide better connectivity to these resources for both residents and visitors. The last and probably most expensive and lengthy project is the paving of the forest service road to La Mosca lookout on top of Mount Taylor. In an effort to increase tourism and economic prosperity, community members have identified this project as a potential economic resource. City officials have begun preliminary discussions with the local tribes and are continuing to vet the project's feasibility.

### **City of Grants | Trails & Connectivity Master Plan**

In partnership with the City of Grants and the Future Foundations Family Center, the COG developed and submitted a technical assistance grant to the National Parks Service for the completion of the Trails and Connectivity Master Plan. The grant calls for technical assistance to plan, design and facilitate community input and plan development processes related to the completion of this plan. The City of Grants is still awaiting notification of award and in the meantime, will continue its efforts to promote and develop outdoor recreational opportunities.



## LOCAL INITIATIVES

### *Environmental Health*

#### **McKinley County - Wildfire Protection Plan**

With direction from the McKinley County Manager, the COG, with assistance from the Fire Chief and the Emergency Management Manager, developed and submitted a grant application to the New Mexico Association of Counties for the update of their County Wildfire Protection Plan. The grant was awarded \$15,000 and will officially begin during the first quarter of the 2018 fiscal year. The COG has been identified as a potential lead consultant agency to complete the protection plan.

#### **McKinley & Cibola County - Clean & Beautiful**

The COG continued its ongoing efforts to preserve the environmental health of the region by assisting McKinley and Cibola County with applications to New Mexico Tourism Department's Clean & Beautiful Program. Both applications requested financial assistance to conduct activities related to illegal dumping and general cleanliness of non-motorized trails. Cibola County was awarded \$4,100 and McKinley County was awarded \$2,050. If accepted, both Counties will begin work immediately.

#### **NWNMRSWA - Recycling Infrastructure**

During the 2017 fiscal year, the Northwest New Mexico Regional Solid Waste Authority continued its mission to provide the highest quality solid waste services to the residents of both McKinley and Cibola Counties. As an affiliate partner of the COG, the solid waste authority called on the COG for technical assistance. The COG developed and submitted a grant application on behalf of the solid waste authority to the New Mexico Environment Department's Recycling and Illegal Dumping program. The application requested \$122,877.91 to construct a recycling facility at the regional landfill in Thoreau, New Mexico. With COG assistance, the solid waste authority was awarded the full request amount.





### Planning for the Future of Northwest New Mexico

Throughout the 2017 fiscal year, the COG has developed, co-developed and participated in various plan development initiatives throughout the region. From comprehensive planning to technical studies, the COG has been a key partner in planning for the future of Northwest New Mexico. With decades of valuable expertise, the COG is more than prepared to move the region forward. With requests from various local governments, affiliated members and outside organizations the COG was able to contribute to or obtain funding for the development of the following plans:

#### Comprehensive Plan

- McKinley County Comprehensive Plan Update
- City of Grants Comprehensive Plan Update
- Village of Milan Comprehensive Plan Update

#### Transportation Plans

- Northwest New Mexico Long Range Transportation Plan Update
- Four Corners Intermodal Transportation Equinox

#### Economic Development Plans

- *Northwest Ristra*: The Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- POWER – Regional Economic Assessment
- Thoreau Economic Feasibility & Community Complex Master Plan

#### Environmental Plans

- McKinley County Wildfire Protection Plan
- McKinley County Drainage Management Plan

### Mirabal Park Multi-Purpose Flood Control Facility

For years, the Village of Milan and the Council of Governments have been searching and applying for funding to implement one of the more innovative projects in the Northwest region of New Mexico. After failed attempts at obtaining New Mexico Finance Authority's Water Trust Board Funds, both parties agreed to utilize the highly competitive Community Development Block Grant Program. The Mirabal Park Multi-Purpose Flood Control Facility project is an innovative project that incorporates flood prevention and recreation into one seamless design. After months of consultation and deliberation, the trustees approved to move forward with the grant. The COG assisted the Village in hosting and facilitating public hearings, and developing, assembling and submitting the application. The application requested \$681,800 to complete phase I: the construction of the retention pond component. Phase II will incorporate the recreational components including a baseball field, basketball courts, walking paths, and a playground. The Village of Milan is waiting notification of award which is scheduled for September 2018.






# NWNMCOG BUILDING





# NWNMCOG STAFF

A photograph of Jeffrey G. Kiely, Executive Director, standing with two other men in an office setting, looking at a large document.

Jeffrey G. Kiely  
Executive Director

A photograph of Evan Williams, Deputy Director, standing with two other men in an office setting, looking at a large document.

Evan Williams  
Deputy Director

A photograph of Teresa Mecale, Finance Manager, standing in front of a desert canyon background.


Teresa Mecale  
Finance Manager

A portrait photograph of Jeff Condrey, POWER Program Manager.


Jeff Condrey  
POWER Program Manager

A photograph of Martina Whitmore, Administrative Assistant, standing in front of a desert canyon background with an American flag to the right.

Martina Whitmore  
Administrative Assistant

A photograph of Robert Kuipers, Planning Assistant, standing in front of a desert canyon background.

Robert Kuipers  
Planning Assistant

A photograph of Carrie House, Planning Assistant, standing in front of a desert canyon background.

Carrie House  
Planning Assistant

A photograph of Brandon Howe, Regional Planner, standing in front of a desert canyon background.

Brandon  
Howe  
Regional Planner