



Annual Report 2012

Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments

Our Region, Your COG

Leading the Field to Empower Communities & Move the
Region

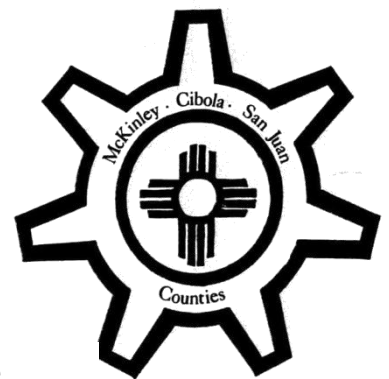


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NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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APPOINTEE AT LARGE
McKinley County

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City of Aztec

TOM ORTEGA
MAYOR
Village of Milan

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City of Farmington

SCOTT ECKSTEIN
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City of Bloomfield

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TREASURER

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DAN DIBLE
CITY MANAGER
City of Gallup

DOUG DECKER
COUNTY ATTORNEY
McKinley County

RUBEN SANDOVAL
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City of Grants

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CITY MANAGER
City of Aztec

BOB HORACEK
CITY MANAGER
City of Grants

T. WALTER JARAMILLO
COUNTY COMMISSIONER
Cibola County

DAVID FUQUA
CITY MANAGER
City of Bloomfield

BILL STANDLEY
FORMER MAYOR
City of Farmington

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JACKIE MCKINNEY
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ELLEN BACA
VILLAGE TRUSTEE
Village of Milan

KIM CARPENTER
COUNTY MANAGER
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MEMBER GOVERNMENTS

CIBOLA COUNTY
MCKINLEY COUNTY
SAN JUAN COUNTY

CITY OF GALLUP
CITY OF GRANTS
VILLAGE OF MILAN

CITY OF FARMINGTON
CITY OF AZTEC
CITY OF BLOOMFIELD

AFFILIATES

NORTHWEST NEW MEXICO REGIONAL SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY

NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RPO) COMMITTEE

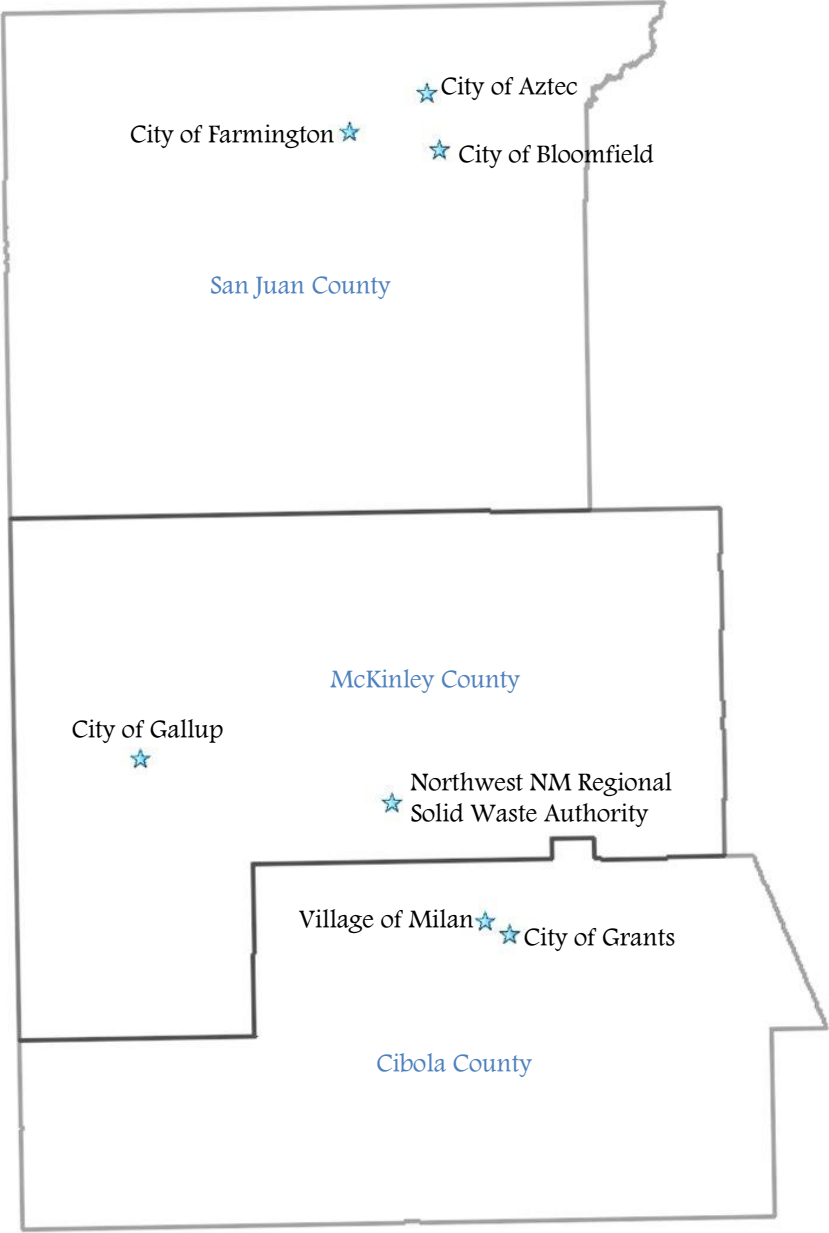
CHAIRMAN OF NORTHWEST RPO

ROYCE GCHACHU
PUEBLO OF ZUNI

PUEBLO OF ACOMA
PUEBLO OF LAGUNA
PUEBLO OF ZUNI
THE NAVAJO NATION
CITY OF GRANTS

CITY OF GALLUP
VILLAGE OF MILAN
CIBOLA COUNTY
MCKINLEY COUNTY
SAN JUAN COUNTY

Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments





For 40 years, the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG) has played an integral role in advancing the economy, infrastructure, and policies of Northwest New Mexico. Originally created as the McKinley Area Council of Governments (MACOG, for short), MACOG joined together McKinley County, the City of Gallup, Gallup-McKinley County School District, the Navajo Nation, the Pueblo of Zuni, and the University of New Mexico-Gallup. Presently, the COG is now comprised of 9 member governments (Cibola County, McKinley County, San Juan County, City of Aztec, City of Bloomfield, City of Farmington, City of Gallup, City of Grants, and the Village of Milan) and an affiliate, the Northwest New Mexico Regional Solid Waste Authority.

Today as it has been from the beginning over 40 years ago, the Council of Governments continues to help, guide, measure, report, support, and lead the region in:

- Securing a sustainable, safe, and affordable long-term water supply
- Competing as a region in a global market place
- Retaining and training a “ready-to-work” workforce
- Creating sustainable and place-based communities where people love to live, work, play, and retire.
- Providing relevant educational opportunities at all levels
- Supporting regional transportation and an intermodal approach to the transport of people and goods
- Working toward a sustainable balance of energy, economy, and environment
- Providing regional advocacy, innovation, and leadership at the local, State, and Federal levels
- Creating venues for regional dialogue and broad-based partnerships to move the region
- Navigating programmatic silos and “connecting the dots.”

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

First, I wish to thank the Board for the honor of serving as its Chairman for the last two years. Acting as Chairman has given me a chance to connect to and understand the issues and needs facing each of our members, as well as the region as a whole.

It is my pleasure to present this FY2011-2012 Annual Report for the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (COG). The last two years embody a very significant period for our organization and I believe this report serves to provide the broader regional community a small glimpse into the big picture of the COG's work.



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

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our “Regional Champions”, who are being recognized at this year’s 40th Anniversary COG Gala. Special thanks to Warren Mathers and Bill “Doc” Hall, who served as the backbone and spinal cord of this organization forming it into what it is today. And shik’is Jackson Gibson for his regional leadership, dedication, and ethic of service to our region and our communities.

Our 40th year in service to the region causes me to reflect on our history - from our early days as the McKinley Area Council of Governments and the many Board members who went on to dedicate their entire lives to public work and service, all the way forward to our expansion into the regional entity we are today and growing our “center of innovation” to advance our region – including leading one of the largest infrastructure projects our region has seen: the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project (NGWSP). The groundbreaking for this project earlier this summer offers a wonderful bookend to the celebration of the past 40 years and the start of 40 more.

The COG has always offered an outlet and a forum for those who want to work collectively to improve the lives of our citizens. I believe the COG and its staff will continue to remain relevant and responsive to the region’s needs, issues, and opportunities.

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

Billy

Billy W. Moore
Chairman of the Board (2011-2012)

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We're pleased to provide this Annual Report for Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, in this the COG's 40th Anniversary.

But first ... a shout-out to the COG's history, which we celebrate at this time.

Northwest New Mexico COG began operation in July 1972, known then as "MACOG," the McKinley Area Council of Governments, whose founders were the City of Gallup, McKinley County, Gallup-McKinley County School District, the Navajo Tribe, UNM-Gallup and the Pueblo of Zuni. Board leadership included prominent names in our region's history, such as George Hight; David Dallago, Sr.; Gloria Howes; Doc Livingston; and Marshall Plummer.



Early COG Directors included Jeff Meyer, Gallup's own Elizabeth DiGregorio, David Carter and Keith Landolt. In 1985, a young leader with a Public Administration Master's from NMSU took the helm: Patty Lundstrom, who remained as COG Director for 25 years. In her tenure, she helped build the organization into the three-county planning agency it is today, bringing in members from Cibola and San Juan Counties, with the help of her Chairman Ron Morsbach. To this day, the COG includes all the cities and counties in this three-county region.

Patty worked with a great Board, led by a succession of strong and supportive Chairmen, including David Dallago, Sr., Tom "Speedy" Trujillo and Charlie Chavez of Gallup, Ron Morsbach of Ramah, Warren Mathers of Milan, and our longest-serving Chairman, Dr. Bill Hall of Farmington.

Under this executive and Board leadership, the COG grew in its range and capacity. In 1990, as Gallup and the region rose up against the scourge of alcoholism, the COG was tasked to manage a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant under its national program, "Fighting Back: Community Initiatives to Reduce the Demand for Illegal Drugs and Alcohol." Patty invited me to join the COG and help her lead this project. By 1993, we had received a 5-year implementation grant from the Foundation to carry out the strategies developed during the planning phase, and "Fighting Back" spun off as its own nonprofit corporation. Patty and Dr. Hall asked me to stay with the COG as Deputy Director, and I accepted.

Under Patty's leadership the COG took on many challenges in its mission to "make a difference" in the region, while maintaining a high level of responsive service to our local members. With help by the Ford Foundation, the COG started the nonprofit Northwest New Mexico Community Development Corporation and brought in new initiatives, including Adventure Gallup & Beyond and the Enterprise Loan Fund. For 17 years, Patty was Steering Committee Chair for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, which in 2009 achieved Federal authorization – a huge achievement!

In 2010, Patty retired from the COG in order to maintain her political career as a member of the New Mexico House of Representatives. I was invited by the Board to take the torch at that point and for two years I have been privileged to serve as the COG's Director.

Now, back to 2012 ... This Report will tell a number of stories that attest to the wide range of projects, partnerships and initiatives the COG was involved in this year.

We learned first-hand about managing federal "Stimulus" grants. We evaluated brownfields properties across the region for potential cleanup and re-use, and we got involved in energy efficiency work. We wrote a number of successful grants. We presented at, and learned from, conferences and trainings at the state, regional and national levels. We helped lead regional initiatives that caught national attention, including Zuni Mountain Trails Partnership, National Geographic's "Four Corners Geotourism MapGuide" initiative and the High Desert Trail, recently federally recognized as one of America's top trails. We worked with the region's economic development organizations and witnessed the "birth" of new entities in McKinley and San Juan Counties, as well as the inauguration of Zuni MainStreet, the first Native community in history to achieve that national designation.

Enjoy the report, and I look forward to your support and friendship in the coming year!

Sincerely,

Jeff

Jeffrey G. Kiely
Executive Director

REGIONAL CHAMPIONS 2012



JACKSON GIBSON—MCKINLEY COUNTY

Jackson Gibson recently retired; however, retirement hasn't stopped or even slowed him down - not one bit! Always running at full-speed, his days are often full of trips and meetings here and there advocating on behalf of Veterans, Native Americans, and of course, Northwest New Mexico.

But, perhaps above all that he has done or will do, Jackson is most proud of his service in the military, which has fueled his dedication to improving the lives of and services to all Veterans. Currently, he serves as Northwest New Mexico's District 6 Transportation Commissioner. It is in this capacity that Jackson has dedicated himself to bringing proper and overdue recognition to Northwest New Mexico and the many proud Veterans and servicemen and women of this area. A Vietnam Veteran who served two tours, Jackson worked to have a bridge on I-40, in Cibola County, dedicated as Khe Sanh Bridge, in memory of those who fought in that battle. Not to be outdone, Jackson also worked with the Commission on establishing New Mexico Highway 264, in McKinley County, as the "Navajo Code Talkers Highway". He was also instrumental in helping leverage \$75 million in funding for US 491, which continues to undergo construction.

Jackson worked for the Navajo Nation in a variety of positions over a 30-year period, including Staff Assistant to former President and Chairman Peter MacDonald, but his most cherished work was as the Community Services Coordinator at Smith Lake Chapter. While there, he worked to bring a \$1.8 million Veterans Hall to this small remote Navajo community, for which the project received the "Best Practice Award" by the State of New Mexico.

In these various public leadership roles, Jackson has been a strong supporter and partner of the COG – a "brother in the cause" whose service to the people of the region will long be remembered.



DR. BILL HALL—SAN JUAN COUNTY

Dr. William Hall has served on the COG Board of Directors continuously since 1989, when he was an elected member of the Farmington City Council. In the lead-up to this service, the San Juan County communities were not members of this Northwest New Mexico COG. "Doc" was initially among the skeptics, but was soon won over by then Executive Director Patty Lundstrom and Board Chair Ron Morsbach.

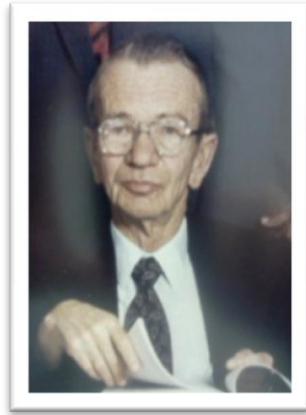
For various stretches of time totaling over 10 years cumulatively, "Doc" served as Chairman of the Board. It was in that capacity, in 1992, that he was featured at the National Press Club in Washington to accept on the COG's behalf one of only 12 national Implementation Grant awards from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation under its "Fighting Back" initiative to reduce demand for illegal drugs and alcohol. This prestigious award helped put the Northwest New Mexico COG "on the map" as a leader in regional strategy and development.

During his tenure on the COG Board, Doc has attended over a dozen national events. Always recognizable by his tall frame, his dapper 10-gallon western hat and his open, generous and congenial demeanor, Doc was always a favorite at national gatherings. Although a staunch conservative, he was equally welcomed in the offices of Senator Jeff Bingaman and then-Congressman Tom Udall as he was in the offices of Senator Pete Domenici or the late Congressman Joe Skeen.

And although he had little time for some of the more liberal offerings of the Federal government, he was able to see the good in many of the efforts supported by the COGs. To this day, Dr. Bill Hall continues to be a policy leader and great supporter of the COG.

REGIONAL CHAMPIONS 2012

IN MEMORIAM



WARREN MATHERS
1927-2012

To our great sadness, Warren passed away on November 14, 2012 at the age of 85. We cannot adequately express how grateful we are for Warren's leadership and service to the Council of Governments and also to Northwest New Mexico. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Faye and his family and friends.

WARREN MATHERS—CIBOLA COUNTY

Warren Mathers was an educator and administrator in rural communities early in his career. He was Principal in Quemado, New Mexico, and later he was Finance Director for Grants Municipal School District. Warren retired from his career in Education in the 1980's and turned to a new career in Politics.

He was elected Mayor of the Village of Milan and became one of the most beloved and effective Mayors for the small community. Soon after Cibola County transferred its membership from the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments to the newly expanded Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments, Warren became an active member and leader on the COG's Board of Director.

Warren served as the Chairman of the Board for two different terms in the 1990s and early 2000s, and he was always an eloquent and principled supporter of the COG and its mission. He would often remind its members that, "What's good for Gallup is good for Grants and Milan; what's good for Cibola County is good for San Juan County; and what's good for the region as a whole, is good for all of us locally."

It is remarkable that the region's COG Board members held Warren in such esteem that, as Mayor of the region's smallest municipality he would be elected as the COG Chairman.

History will portray the Village of Milan's *Mayor Emeritus* Warren Mathers as an important figure in the early history of the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments.

JEFF BINGAMAN
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United States Senate

August 23, 2012

Dear Friends:

I would like to congratulate the Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments for your 40 years serving San Juan, McKinley and Cibola Counties. Over the past four decades the COG has been instrumental in improving communities and fostering economic development.

Within a month, nearly two dozen workers will begin construction on the first 4 mile reach of the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project. These are newly created high paying jobs and we can expect many more to follow with an estimated 650 skilled workers at peak construction. For nearly 20 years, the COG chaired the Navajo Gallup Steering Committee and your perseverance helped make this extremely important civil works project a reality. When it is completed, Gallup and 43 Navajo Chapters will finally have access to a long term water supply.

It's been a long road from conception to construction but one made possible through the leadership of State Representative and former COG CEO Patty Lundstrom and current CEO Jeff Kiely. Communities rely on the COG's experienced staff for municipal planning and navigating the complexities of state and federal funding. In combination with federal stimulus funding, your determination to improve Hwy 491 serves as one example of your ability to improve aging infrastructure and enhance commerce.

I commend the COG's efforts in promoting the area's natural beauty and rich cultural assets. Your active role in developing the National Geographic Four Corners Geotourism Map will bring visitors worldwide to this area. The COG's participation in the Zuni Mountain Trails Partnership and Trail of the Ancients will continue to attract outdoor enthusiasts and vacationers to the magnificent McKinley County and Cibola County landscape. All will bring additional tourism dollars to Northwest New Mexico and sustained critical jobs needed to support the local economy. The NWNMCOG also has an admirable track record addressing social issues including alcoholism and reducing recidivism.

I would like to congratulate your three Regional Champions honored this evening. Dr. Bill Hall, Warren Mathers and Jackson Gibson all worked tirelessly to support their communities. I wish you continued success and thank you for your hard work and many contributions to San Juan, McKinley and Cibola counties. Please feel free to call upon me if I can be of service.

Sincerely



Jeff Bingaman
United States Senator

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REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



SECURING OUR WATER COMMONS

Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project

In the midst of its sixth decade of study, planning, and collaboration, 2012 saw the first phases of construction of one of the largest federally funded projects in the western United States in recent history.

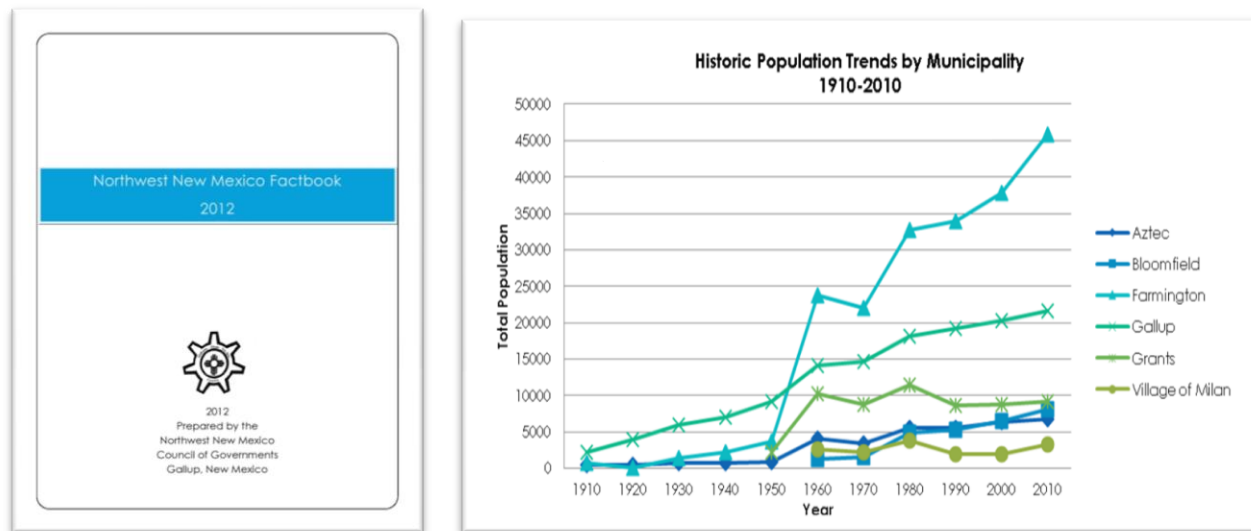
In October 2011, U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman stopped in Gallup to check-in with the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project's (NGWSP) technical team and its partners (NWNMCOG has chaired the Steering Committee for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project for more than 20 years) to discuss progress on the project and to gauge any new assistance that would be needed by the Senator.

The major news came from President Obama's office that named NGWSP as one of 14 projects in the United States to be expedited through permitting and environmental review processes as part of his Administration's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness. Through the Presidential Memorandum, the President directed agencies to expedite environmental reviews and permit decisions for a selection of high priority infrastructure projects that will create a significant number of jobs, have already identified necessary funding, and where the significant steps remaining before construction are within the control and jurisdiction of the federal government and can be completed within 18 months. As the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness has highlighted, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of federal permit decisions and environmental reviews is one critical step the federal government can take to accelerate job creation.

In January, the City of Gallup and McKinley County went to bat when they placed the NGWSP as a top priority during McKinley County-Gallup Day at the Roundhouse during the 2012 Legislative Session.

Thanks again to Senator Bingaman, his staff, and New Mexico's Congressional delegation for making this cooperative, synergistic effort to provide long-term municipal and industrial water supply for the benefit of the Navajo Nation, the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry and the City of Gallup. This is a true American priority. And our great appreciation also to former Senator Pete Domenici; he's truly a "legacy champion" of the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY

2012 Northwest New Mexico Factbook

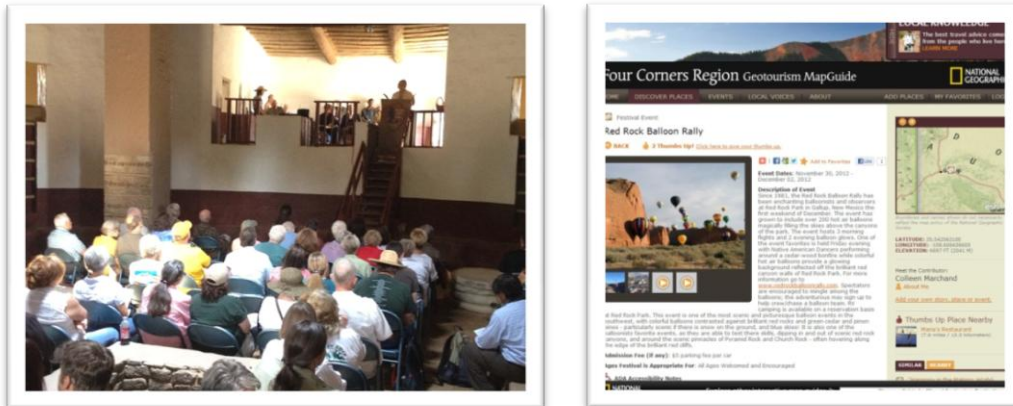
The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments has updated the Northwest New Mexico Factbook which is now available on the COG website. The last formal update of the Factbook was in 2003, and was primarily based on data from the 2000 Census. The 2012 Northwest New Mexico Factbook is primarily based on information gleaned from the recent 2010 Census. The Factbook was produced as part of the COG's work as a federally-designated "Economic Development District" under funding from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The purpose of the Factbook is to provide a demographic "snapshot" of the Northwest New Mexico region for a diverse audience, such as students conducting research, grantwriters or economic developers seeking key demographics that provide support for new development. It is designed to be a useful and valuable document for many users inside and outside the region.

The majority of the information is derived from the 2010 Census and from other sources such as the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department, New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, and the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of New Mexico. As such, it is intended as a broad-based regional platform of Census-based data. In itself, it is not meant as a deeper drill-down into each political, demographic or categorical unit. The COG will continue forward with an on-going, dynamic data site which can be amended, "drilled down" and enriched as specific data analysis is done in future months and years.

This latest update of the Northwest New Mexico Factbook 2012 is now available. If you're interested in obtaining a copy, please visit our website (www.nwnmco.org) and click on the "Regional Data" link. A pdf version of the Factbook may be downloaded.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY

Four Corners MapGuide and Geotourism Initiative

At the invitation of National Geographic Magazine and the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway, the COG became involved in this remarkable multi-state regional project.

This project involves collaboration with public and private sector leaders in the tourism field, with representatives from all Four Corners states – Arizona, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico – and from the Navajo Nation and many Pueblo tribes in the Southwest. The project's mission: to establish the Four Corners as a world-class geotourism destination.

The Geotourism MapGuide highlights the enchanted landscapes and enduring people of our region by showcasing numerous natural, cultural, historic, event, and adventure attractions in and around our Four Corners area to audiences around the world. Furthermore, it is only one of 17 Geo-tourism locations world-wide.

On June 2, 2012, supporters, local community leaders, regional and state tourism managers, and geotourism site nominees joined together at historic Aztec Ruins National Monument for the official launch of the Four Corners Geotourism website and National Geographic's Geotourism MapGuide. This was a significant launch for not only the National Monument, but for the entire Four Corners region. Many state and national dignitaries from all four states, along with local, tribal and regional leaders attended this event, which was co-hosted by the City of Aztec and keyed by Aztec Mayor Sally Burbridge. COG Planner Bob Kuipers, who sits on the Four Corners Geotourism Stewardship Council, provided a keynote speech in the Great Kiva as part of the ceremonies.

The COG and tourism stakeholders across the region have collaborated tirelessly and diligently on the project from its inception in hopes of leveraging a stronger presence in both national and international tourism arenas. The website and MapGuide are great resources that will entice the adventurous tourist in seeking out a deeper and more authentic experience of culture and history in our region. It is estimated there is a niche market of 65 million geo-tourists around the globe.

The website is a "growing" website, also supported by National Geographic, which allows local contributors to add places, events, and other information to the website. Secondly, it also gives the local, small business, artisan, or organization a boost in promoting their services, craft, or event. This translates to expansion and improvement of our local, rural economy.

For more information check out the website at: www.fourcornersgeotourism.com

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY

Trail of the Ancients Byway

The Trail of the Ancients (TOTA) Scenic Byway has been in development since 2005; it is supported by a broad association constituency of both public and private stakeholders from San Juan, Cibola, and McKinley Counties and Native Nations (Navajo Nation, Zuni, Acoma, and Laguna Pueblos) of Northwest New Mexico. Beyond COG boundaries, the New Mexico portion of the TOTA is collaborating with the states of Arizona, Utah, and Colorado to designate the Four Corners region Four-state corridor as a national Scenic-Byway. Additionally, the TOTA collaborative is working with National Geographic to develop a National Geographic Four Corners Region Trail of the Ancients “Destination Map”. The destination map is expected to greatly elevate the profile of the Four Corners region as a premier tourist and visitor destination.

More recently, the Trail of the Ancients Byway was selected for a federal grant to develop “Gateway Interpretive Kiosks.” A \$15,000 grant by the National Scenic Byway Project (NSBP) will help to bring these “Gateway Interpretive Kiosks” at the Northwest Visitors Center in Grants (along Interstate-40) and the Visitors Center in Manuelito, New Mexico, also along Interstate-40. This project will contribute toward marketing and promoting the entire three-county region (the TOTA corridors), and provide interpretive guidance to visitors, so they can make informed travel choices, and gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the historic, archaeological and cultural sites and attractions.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S ECONOMY

Four Corners Economic Development—4CED

In this past year, Executive Director Jeff Kiely enjoyed working with the private sector study group "E>P" and then with the Transition Steering Committee for Four Corners Economic Development. E>P was composed of private sector leaders who self-invested in economic development expertise and technical economic studies in order to better understand current and future economic forces affecting Farmington and the San Juan Basin, and then to recommend bold strategies going forward. It then passed the torch by merging its members with leadership on the Board of the San Juan Economic Development Service in order to start processing and implementing the E>P recommendations. Aztec Mayor Sally Burbidge was unanimously welcomed as Chair of this transition committee, whose members also include State Representative Tom Taylor; San Juan County Commission Chair (and COG Board member) Dr. Jim Henderson; Steve Dunn of Merrion Oil & Gas; John Byrom of D.J. Simmons; Ken Hare from the San Juan College Board; and Dave Eppich, San Juan College Vice-President.

All of this led to the decision to expand upon the SJEDS model and form a private sector-led 501(c)(6) economic development organization: Four Corners Economic Development, Inc. Jeff joined consultant Mark Lautman in helping the group to start translating the studies and recommendations into an aggressive plan of proactive economic development, including creating the new and expanded organization. The COG contracted with former Enterprise Center Director Jasper Welch, also an E>P member, to assist with this transition work. The 4CED group has now been formed and its Board leadership appointed. Longtime COG colleague Julie Rasor (formerly the COG Board Treasurer, back in the 1990s) was hired as professional staff to help the new entity get established, expand its leadership and investment base, and get its services moving. Longtime SJEDS Director Margaret McDaniel, who most recently staffed 4CED's business retention and expansion function, recently announced her retirement from the organization. We wish her well in her leadership work as a San Juan County Commissioner!

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



STEWARDING OUR ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCES

Brownfields: Building Sustainable Communities & Revitalizing Our Region

Some have called New Mexico “the sustainability state,” because it has brought together federal funding to join businesses, national laboratories, investors, economic developers, educational facilities, workforce development agencies, and governmental departments to increase the quality of life in New Mexico, with the common goal of ensuring all New Mexicans a first-class education with high-quality well-paying jobs. While many communities in New Mexico have a rich past, over time, these communities have experienced a decline in population and jobs, leaving behind an increase in vacant and/or abandoned residential, commercial, and industrial properties.

So, in order to rebuild communities in a sustainable manner that would attract entrepreneurs and creative talent, the COG applied for and was awarded a 3-year, \$1 million Brownfields Assessment grant in 2009 under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Since 2009, the COG has successfully administered this Brownfields program by working with COG member governments and tribes in the region. The program has flourished over the last three years as a result of intensive COG outreach efforts, including partnering with the National Brownfields Association to conduct a successful day-long Community Revitalization workshop in Albuquerque in Fall 2011.

The COG successfully completed the ARRA Brownfields Assessment program in the first quarter of FY 13, working hard to finalize environmental assessments on brownfields sites throughout the region and to close out the three-year grant. We anticipate that the COG collaboration with the EPA and New Mexico Environment Department will continue well into the future, as we work to help transform “brown to green” with cost-effective and sustainable re-development in our communities.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



HARNESSING OUR ENERGY ADVANTAGE

Northwest New Mexico Regional Energy Program

In 2010, the COG received a grant through the U.S. Department of Energy’s “Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant” (EECBG) Program to assist McKinley County with the implementation of an energy efficiency project on County buildings.

The COG has since built upon and expanded this opportunity to develop energy planning and coordination experience. To date, several energy efficiency projects have been worked on:

- A McKinley County Facility Audits & Lighting Retrofit project was conducted under the EECBG program, in which the COG partnered with Eaton Energy Solutions to perform audits on 42 County facilities and implement a lighting retro-fit at the County’s Adult Detention Center.
- A McKinley County Strategic Energy Action Plan was produced in tandem with the County’s EECBG grant, in which the COG produced a comprehensive plan for the County that made recommendations to improve energy efficiency and resource management.
- The Milan Energy and Community Outreach (ECO) Project coordinated an outreach plan to provide pre-weatherization services to residents in the Village of Milan. COG established a partnership with Tohatchi YouthBuild to provide energy upgrades and small efficiency repairs.
- For the City of Gallup, a pre-program consultation, recommendations, reports, and a recommended Gallup Energy Efficiency & Conservation (GEEC) Implementation plan. The implementation plan focused on data management, low-and no-cost efficiency measures, financing options, audit strategy based on base-level assessments, retrofit strategy, renewable energy strategy, and options for a permanent energy program.

In 2012, the COG executed a contract with Eaton Energy Solutions, Inc., a full service and turnkey energy services company (ESCO). The COG created a comprehensive energy services and solutions contract which would allow our members to piggyback for any and all energy management and efficiency needs. There are 5 key services: (1) audits; (2) commissioning; (3) retro-commissioning; and (4) retrofits. The fifth is a specific one that will support upfront hard costs for capitalizing energy efficiency projects. This financing mechanism is *performance contracting*. The Performance Contracting Model allows the ESCO to identify and evaluate energy-saving opportunities and then recommend a package of improvements to be paid for through savings. The ESCO guarantees that savings will meet or exceed annual payments to cover all project costs—usually over a contract term of 7 to 10 years. If savings don’t materialize, the ESCO pays the difference, not you.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



ADVANCING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES

Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership

The COG has been helping lead the Zuni Mountains Trail Partnership (ZMTP) between Cibola and McKinley Counties as regional economic development strategy. In the past, McKinley County joined with Cibola County to obtain funding through the Northern New Mexico Resource Advisory Committee for \$250,000 of Secure Rural Schools-Title II monies. These funds will provide NEPA clearance for over 200+ miles on the proposed trail system – one of the largest trail projects in the country.

The ZMTP and its partners contracted with International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) Trail Solutions to provide community training and review of “on-the-ground” routes on the eastern side of the Zuni Mountains. In June 2011, the Hilso Trailhead & McGaffey Trail System Dedication was held with 110 people attending to celebrate the past achievements and open the trails for public use.

The McGaffey trail system was initially funded through a \$187,000 Recreation Trails Program (RTP) grant and now plays host to the new “24 Hours in the Enchanted Forest” mountain bike race. This event is New Mexico’s first and only 24 hour mountain bike race. It drew 350 participants, plus spectators in its 2nd year, and on March 29 2012, USA Cycling announced that this race would play host to the 2013 and 2014 National 24-Hour Mountain Bike Championships. COG estimates the economic impact will be well over \$2M.

Furthermore, the U.S. Forest Service desires to continue the ZMTP and add more milestones and strategic partners including Cibola County and Future Foundations/Grants Youth Conservation Corps to extend work and focus to the whole mountain range. There was a signing ceremony of the ZMTP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The Northern Area Resource Advisory Committee awarded a proposal for \$44,221 to provide funding for the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) to perform trail maintenance.

And earlier this year, the Zuni Mountains Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration project (CFLRP) was awarded a \$6.75 million grant over a 10-year period for the restoration of 56,000 acres of forest land. The project will bring more than 90 jobs to the area. Outreach efforts with local non-profits and Youth Conservation crews will be conducted as well.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



...Building the Adventure Capital of New Mexico Since 1999...

ADVANCING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES

Adventure Gallup & Beyond

Thirteen years ago, this COG initiative originated from our role as a regional district for the US Economic Development Administration and under our regional Comprehensive Economic Strategy Plan (CEDs). The concept was to create an economic driver through adventure tourism. By planning, developing, and marketing outdoor venues and trails in and around Gallup, we could use our existing assets to create business opportunities and generate revenues. Today, Adventure Gallup & Beyond is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization representing key entities and stakeholders that drive its success.

Success breeds success. Gallup is becoming a destination for outdoor enthusiasts of all types. In 2011, the New Mexico Legislature recognized Gallup's efforts by proclaiming it as New Mexico's "Adventure Capital". Adventure Gallup & Beyond took instant advantage of this branding opportunity and through the COG has leveraged local City Lodgers' Tax and County investments to obtain funding through the New Mexico Tourism Department for a marketing campaign. AGB worked with a local advertising and publishing firm Gallup Journey to produce over 10,000 maps that have been selectively distributed in major markets. This centerpiece is married to print ads, an interactive website, billboards, an Adventure Guide, and other collateral pieces.

Adventure Gallup & Beyond is an integral part of new trails being developed near Ramah Lake and in the Zuni Mountains. AGB also celebrates and promotes Gallup's new ATV/OTV/Motocross Park, which has been an outstanding venue for a series of events throughout the year.

2012 has been filled with more recognition:

The High Desert Trail System, a 26 mile single track, stacked loop system built entirely on private land, received a National Recreation Trail designation from Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis as one of America's top trails.

USA Cycling awarded the "24 Hours in the Enchanted Forest" mountain bike race, held on the McGaffey Trail System, to be host to the National 24-Hour Championships in 2013 and 2014. AGB has worked with the private race promoter to develop a promotional video and place advertisements in national magazines including Bike Magazine, Mountain Flyer, and Dirt Rage, as well as online.

In October, the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) is holding its World Summit in Santa Fé and has invited AGB to be a keynote presenter to tell the "Gallup Story" to the world.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES, COLLABORATIONS, & SOLUTIONS



IMPROVING OUR TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Regional Transportation Planning

“GETTING FROM RIGHT-OF-WAY TO GROUNDBREAKING”

After last May’s highly successful County Road Forum, the McKinley County Commissioners received input that a technical assistance day and follow-up forum was needed. The County requested COG’s service in organizing and facilitating “Road Forum II,” for which the COG produced a County Road Resource Guide to help community and Navajo Nation Chapter leaders meet their road improvement goals and wade through some of the jurisdictional and bureaucratic hurdles of transportation funding.

The Road Forum II, was held at the Best Western Inn & Suites in Gallup, COG staff walked through a training and orientation program that assisted 56 participants in using the Resource Guide and filling out the Road Application. In the afternoon, Technical Teams and Peer Coaches reviewed and provided feedback on Road Applications and Road Projects for communities.

These Forums have proven to be helpful in informing McKinley County Commissioners of priority projects in their rural constituency areas and helpful to the communities in getting projects ready for construction. Its success has prompted questions from other communities like Navajo DOT’s Northern Agency and interest from San Juan County Commissioners.

Further, as a way of streamlining policy-making and the planning and execution of transportation related projects and activities in the region, the Regional Planning Organization (RPO) combined the Policy Committee and the Technical Committee. Bylaws of the RPO were developed and the name changed to the “Regional Transportation Planning Organization” or “RTPO.” The RTPO continues to function as an inter-agency regional collaborative to assist the State of New Mexico in meeting federal requirements for consultation and cooperation with local and tribal elected officials and their communities in planning, prioritizing and funding transportation projects and initiatives. The RTPO has frequent meetings with Cibola County, McKinley County, San Juan County, City of Grants, Village of Milan, City of Gallup, the Navajo Nation’s Eastern and Northern Agencies, Ramah Navajo, Pueblo of Zuni, Pueblo of Acoma, and Pueblo of Laguna and New Mexico Department of Transportation Districts 5 and 6.

THINK REGIONAL ... ACT LOCAL!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT & VICTORIES—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS



Over the past few years Community Development Block Grant funding has decreased from \$16,041,000 in 2011 to \$10,107,981.00 in 2012 and is projected to decrease further to about \$8.4 million in the new Fiscal Year 2013 (a 37% reduction for the State of New Mexico – the most severe cut of any state in the country). This past year, only 23 out of 42 CDBG applicants were awarded CDBG funding. The opportunity to utilize CDBG funding has become more competitive, particularly, in light of less and less funding. The Council of Governments noted this disturbing trend of shifting CDBG funds away from Non-Entitlement or Small Cities to Entitlement or Large Cities in early 2012. But, Northwest New Mexico continues to prevail and in 2012 two COG member governments received either full funding (\$500,000) or near full-funding (\$450,000) for local projects.

Village of Milan

The Village of Milan was successful in its bid to obtain the maximum amount of CDBG funding, \$500,000, this past year (it was the only applicant awarded the maximum!). The funds help with Phase III of the Uranium Avenue Street and Drainage Improvement Project; a project that represents more than 7 years of hard work, collaboration, and more than \$2 million to create a safer neighborhood.

The neighborhood along Uranium Avenue was long overdue for improvements. The neighborhood was subdivided in the 1950's. The water and wastewater lines were more than 50 years old. Street paving last occurred in the 1970's and there are no curbs, gutters, sidewalks, nor storm water drainage. Street lighting, as in many rural small towns of Northwest New Mexico is non-existent. But, with funding through the Community Development Block Grant program and other contributions from local funds, Uranium Avenue will soon have new water and wastewater lines and new water meters. The streets will be repaved complete with the addition of curbs, gutters and sidewalks. A most needed safety element—storm water drains to accommodate Spring run-off and Summer monsoon rains.

Phase I began in 2005 and was then followed by Phase II in 2009, all with the goal to reconstruct Uranium Avenue. Today only 1,300 Linear Feet (LF) remain from connecting Phase I & II street improvements to the newly constructed Milan Elementary School (school population: 550) that was built in 2010.

THINK REGIONAL ... ACT LOCAL!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT & VICTORIES—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS



City of Gallup

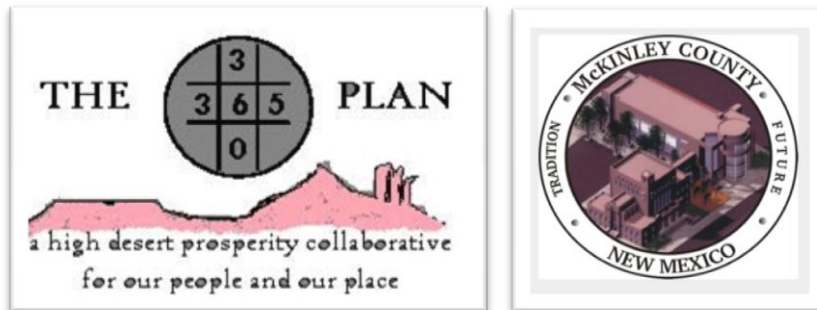
The City of Gallup was also successful in obtaining CDBG funds, the second largest amount awarded in the state at \$450,000, to complete Phase III of Sky City Public Housing Improvement Project (La Loma Addition). The project is part of a larger four-phased project that is expected to improve pedestrian safety for residents and students, improve access and mobility for the disabled, improve aesthetics and mitigate blight conditions. The City of Gallup and the Gallup Housing Authority collaborated to insure feasibility and appropriateness of the project. The City has listed rehabilitation of the sidewalks, curbs, and gutters as a top priority in the City of Gallup's Growth Management Master Plan and the project was highly ranked in the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP).

Specifically, the project will improve pavement, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters in the Sky City Public Housing Project, as these are either significantly deteriorated or do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act for access and travel. Further, these conditions pose a threat to public safety. This concern is exacerbated by the frequent use of these facilities by young children attending the Juan de Oñate Elementary School that is located adjacent to Sky City Public Housing area. This decaying infrastructure also contributes to conditions of blight in the area, which compromises more than 300 local residents' quality of life. The streets in this neighborhood are over 50 years old and have never been reconstructed, and some of the plumbing under the streets are estimated to be as much as 60 years old!

The project will reconstruct the street, remove and replace deteriorated concrete curbs, gutters, and sidewalks on the west side of Cliff Drive, the east side of Strong Drive, Vista Avenue, Curtis Avenue, and Vega Avenue. There will also be an upgrade and update to ADA requirements and proper drainage. The City of Gallup applied additional funding to match and will replace and upgrade the water and sewer lines under the streets.

THINK REGIONAL ... ACT LOCAL!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT & VICTORIES—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS



McKinley County

Working in conjunction with McKinley County, the Council of Governments staff updated the County's 2003 Comprehensive Plan – Phase I and 2005 Comprehensive Plan – Phase II. The basic direction and format of the updated Comprehensive Plan followed the '360-365' Plan. The '360-365' Plan takes a "360 Degrees, 365 Days" approach to catalyzing prosperity for families and communities in McKinley County. It is an "Asset-based" approach to creating livable communities and brings people and ideas together in a creative partnership and furthers working networks. Everyone contributes and is accountable for prosperity in the County.

This comprehensive plan is a 20-year vision of where the County envisions itself and it creates a systemic roadmap of what it will take to get you there. The Comprehensive Plan is broken into about a dozen key elements like Land Use, Water, Transportation, Economic Development, etc. The project updated the socioeconomic data (based for the most part on the 2010 Census) and aligned the former plan with present day reality. The COG worked with the County's Smart Growth Commission to guide the process, and held several 'reality check' sessions with the County staff and community leaders who are knowledgeable about each element section.

One of the overarching goals of the plan is to best utilize our assets and target our investments to create opportunities for "prosperity" for all citizens. The update was adopted in September 2012, which signifies the start and continuation of public involvement. The COG envisions an unprecedented public involvement process and dissemination of the updated plan, including a website that is under construction that will assist to involve interested citizens, www.theprosperitycollaborative.com

This project was funded by New Mexico Local Government Division through a Community Development Block Grant planning award of \$50,000.

TEAM CHANGES

It was with great regret that we said “good-bye” to a vital member of our team last year. In early May 2011, Finance Manager **Theresa Lee** announced her resignation from the Council of Governments. Theresa was instrumental in helping the COG in the Finance Department, leadership, and quite importantly, in earning a clean audit. After her departure, Finance Assistant **Teresa Mecale** stepped up to the plate and was the Acting Finance Manager for nearly 6 months. She was tremendously supportive in helping the COG earn another clean audit in the Fall of 2011. Shortly thereafter, in November 2011, Teresa was promoted to Finance Manager.

Also earlier that Fall of 2011, the COG was joined by new Associate Planner **Prestene Garnenez**. She has since taken on the development of the quarterly “Connecting the Dots” publication, research and authorship of the 2012 Factbook, helping to develop the COG’s GIS capabilities, and of course, learning about and displaying the great legacy of the COG.

Also, earlier this year, Executive Director Jeff Kiely announced, with the consensus and encouragement of the Board of Directors, his appointment of Senior Planner **Evan Williams** to the position of Deputy Director, effective March 1, 2012. This promotion reflects 10 years of excellent work with the COG organization and only serves to enhance both the Council of Governments and the quality of its services to regional communities. Indeed, we look forward to many more years of excellence under Evan’s leadership.

On a sadder note for the COG, this past summer our Regional Planner **Michael Sage** announced his resignation, in order to take on a new career opportunity in the community. While Michael was with the COG, he worked on a number of projects but in particular, his work and service to COG member governments Cibola County, City of Grants, and the Village of Milan will be remembered for years to come. Together, these local governments and Michael worked to bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for many infrastructure projects. It was through this work that Michael also became the COG’s CDBG master, often advising other planners about the CDBG process. We wish Michael the very best, and look forward to many collaborations with him, as he takes on the deputy directorship at Great Gallup Economic Development Corporation.

**LEADING THE FIELD
TO EMPOWER COMMUNITIES
& MOVE THE REGION ...
FOR 40 YEARS!**



YOUR COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS STAFF

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Jeffrey G. Kiely, Executive Director
Evan Williams, Deputy Director

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Bebe Sarmiento, Executive Secretary
Teresa Mecale, Finance Manager
Martina Whitmore, Administrative/Finance Assistant

PLANNING TEAM

Michael Sage, Regional Planner
Robert Kuipers, Regional Planner
Prestene Garnenez, Associate Planner