

Socorro Soil & Water Conservation District
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Annual Report FY 2000

The Socorro SWCD created a Noxious Weed MOU. To date seventeen partners have signed this MOU. The District also created a Noxious Weed Committee. The District is co-chair of this Committee. The Committee meets once a month. The District wrote the noxious weed list for Socorro County. The District hired a Noxious Weed Specialist to map the noxious weed population in Socorro County. He is doing this using a GPS unit and creating a database in ARC INFO. Maps can then be created from this database showing specific weed population over property ownership and roads for example. The District also co-sponsored noxious weed training with Dr. Richard Lee. Eighty people attended this training.

The District under the direction of the Socorro/Sierra Regional Water Plan Steering Committee hired Daniel B. Stephens & Associates to complete Phase I of the Regional Water Plan. They are currently working on water demand of the two counties and the groundwater analysis. They will also be coordinating with the Middle Rio Grande Water study and incorporating this data into our plan.

The District's Conservation Works Program continues to expand. It has been designed to compliment and enhance existing USDA programs that are available to Socorro SWCD cooperators throughout the District. The following is a summary of the available programs and the combined benefits of the District and USDA's multifaceted program.

- Socorro SWCD Irrigation Works Loan Program-This program that is funded by money borrowed from the ISC has been revitalized during this fiscal year. Two loans totaling \$32,000 were made that assisted in the installation of 5700 feet of irrigation pipeline. Two more applications are pending for another \$25,000. The District has also met with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District to form a partnership to expand the loan program. The MRGCD will use their mill levy as collateral to borrow more money from the ISC. The Socorro SWCD will administer this money. The Valencia, Coronado, Ciudad, and Socorro SWCDs will administer loans in each of their areas that are serviced by the MRGCD. This will benefit the MRGCD and each of these Districts. The Socorro SWCD will be meeting soon with each of these Districts to get this expansion of the loan program started.
- Socorro SWCD Cost Share Program-To date, \$27,050 has been dispersed throughout the District to assist in applying different conservation measures. Practices applied included 1400 feet of concrete ditch, 1300 feet of irrigation pipeline, 60 acres of land leveling, 85 acres of brush control, 6000 feet of livestock pipeline, 20 field ditch turnouts, 2 irrigation canal turnouts, and 1 trough.

- Urban Conservation Program-This program is part of the Socorro SWCD cost share program. Two urban drip systems have been applied. Several more have been funded and are in various stages of installation.
- EQIP-This USDA program is being widely utilized by cooperators in the District. Practices applied this fiscal year include 4300 acres of brush control, 2500 feet of concrete ditch, 8200 feet of irrigation pipeline, and one dairy waste management system.
- WHIP-This program funded a wildlife habitat improvement project in the northern part of Socorro County. A pond was lined with native clay creating open water and approximately one acre of wetlands.
- Conservation Technical Assistance with numerous other individuals resulting in numerous other practices being applied including 1200 feet of concrete ditch and 100 acres of land leveling.

The application of resource management systems in conjunction with the combined benefits of this multifaceted program is estimated to have saved 23,000 acre-inches of water and 153,000 tons of soil in the Socorro SWCD this fiscal year. Other benefits derived from the application of these conservation systems include improved water quality in the irrigated valley as well as the grazing lands in the District, improved wildlife habitat, and an overall improvement in the quality of life for all of the residents in our area.

The District gave two grants for drip irrigation systems to Socorro Senior Citizens Center and the Socorro Mental Health Foundation. The grants totaled \$1907.02. The District also received 125 tree seedlings from Tree NM, Inc. The seedlings were planted at the Senior Center, the Mental Health Building, and at one of the Socorro Riverine parks. Students from Sarracino Middle School planted the trees at the Riverine Park as a riparian restoration project. The District also helped Socorro County replant trees at the Las Nutrias Senior Center for a windbreak.

The District helped plan Project WET training in Albuquerque. The District has been using Project WET with the Socorro School system. The District purchased field guides for Sarracino Middle School Students working at the Socorro Nature Area. The District participated in Earth Day at Midway Elementary School by making a presentation with the Rolling Rivers water trailer. The District provided soil stewardship materials for all the K-5 grades in Socorro County. The District also sponsored two savings bonds for science fair projects on conservation at the Sarracino Middle School and two savings bonds for Socorro County residents for the Junior Duck Stamp program at Bosque del Apache.

The District has completed its 319 project on groundwater this year. The District has a four-minute and a twelve-minute video on groundwater pollution that is being used to educate the public on non-point source pollution in our area.

The District is currently making short films on water conservation practices such as juniper cabling, concrete ditch lining, turnout installation, irrigation pipeline installation, etc. These are available to the public. The District has also put together presentation

books showing photos of the installation of these practices and general information about the installation. Both of these tools are used to educate the District's cooperators.

The District has helped the Save Our Bosque Task Force complete several projects. The District wrote a brochure and installed eleven stations at the Escondida Lake Park. The brochure discusses the native species of plants and animals, the formation of the lake, the geology, etc. The District is continuing to help the Save Our Bosque Task Force in its efforts to start a conservation easement and restoration program for residents that currently reside on the east side of the Rio Grande in the Bosquecito area. The District also helped the Task Force complete its non-profit status application for the IRS.

The District applied for another Bureau of Reclamation Water Conservation Field Services Conservation grant. The District will be installing another twenty acres of alfalfa into drip irrigation this fall with this grant money. The District continues to give presentations on the current alfalfa drip irrigation project.

FY 2000

Item	Amount
Income	
Grants	43,890
State funding	5,808
Mill levy	74,469
Valve/PVC sales	27,396
Miscellaneous	2,174
Total	153,737
Expenditures	
319 and BOR grants	28,022
Program manager	27,066
Noxious weed specialist	6,086
Cost share program	27,049
Office supplies, postage, meetings, dues, telephone, travel	17,244
Equipment	4,990
Auto	2,567
Conservation activities	4,842
Valve/PVC purchases	26,138
Total	144,044