

Socorro Soil & Water Conservation District

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Nyleen H. Troxel Stowe, Program Manager & Noxious Weed Coordinator

R. Brent Bason, Range Technician & Noxious Weed Specialist

The Socorro SWCD'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 our District. The following is a summary of the available programs and the combined benefits of the Socorro SWCD's and USDA's multifaceted program.

- Socorro SWCD Irrigation Works Loan Program-This program is funded by money borrowed from the ISC and continues to grow. One loan was made for \$19,500 to install 1,223 feet of concrete ditch lining.
- Socorro SWCD Cost Share Program-This fiscal year \$27,388 has been dispersed throughout the District to assist in applying different conservation measures. Practices applied included 4,086 feet of irrigation pipeline, 13,427 cubic yards of dirt moved for land leveling, 61.2 acres of brush control, 100 foot livestock well drilled, one windmill replacement, and 85 field ditch turnouts. Two hundred and one acres benefited from these practices.
- Urban Conservation Program-This program is part of the Socorro SWCD cost share program. Two urban drip systems have been installed. This program continues to grow and several more applications have been approved for the next fiscal year.
- EQIP-This USDA program is being widely utilized by cooperators in the District. Practices applied this fiscal year include 150 acres of land leveling, 14,187 feet of concrete ditch lining, 5,356 feet of irrigation pipeline, 10,000 lineal feet of livestock pipeline, and over 500 water control structures.
- Conservation Technical Assistance with numerous other individuals resulted in numerous other practices being applied including 59,264 acres of prescribed grazing, 1,318 acres of wetland enhancement, 1 ag-waste management system, and 59,226 acres of wildlife upland habitat management.

These practices resulted in 37,525 acre-inches of water being saved on 2,022 acres of land. 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 Socorro SWCD's Noxious Weed Program continues to grow. Approximately eighty percent of the County has been mapped for the presence of noxious weeds. Work continues to finish the mapping in the County. Species found to date include Perennial pepperweed, Russian knapweed, Camelthorn, Bull thistle, Malta starthistle, Yellow toadflax, Hoary cress, and Parrotfeather. A strategic plan for the County has been written, along with an Integrated Pest Management Plan. The Socorro SWCD coordinates the eradication and management of these non-native, invasive species between Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies. The Socorro SWCD also works closely with the citizens in Socorro County to help identify noxious weed species present on their land and the treatment options available. The Noxious Weed MOU now includes twenty signatures, including the SWCDs in Catron County. The Socorro County Noxious Weed Committee is co-chaired by the Socorro SWCD and they are working with the Districts in Catron County to help them start a noxious weed program in that County.

The Program Manager received an award from New Mexico Department of Agriculture. The award was in appreciation for the tremendous time and energy devoted to killing weeds and spreading awareness in New Mexico and without her efforts and tireless commitment the New Mexico noxious weed program would not be where it is today.

The Socorro SWCD received an award from the New Mexico Vegetation Management Association and the Interagency Weed Action Group for Exemplary Leadership in Noxious Weed Management-Recognition Award 2000.



Coordination between the Bureau of Reclamation and Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge resulted in two acres of perennial pepperweed being treated prior to a project beginning in that area. Coordination of mowing and herbicide application is being done by the Federal agencies with input from the Socorro SWCD. All agencies continue with management of these invasive species on a daily basis. The Socorro SWCD received \$2000 in Farm and Range Improvement Funds for the purchase of herbicide to control noxious weeds. Herbicide will be applied in the fall and early spring. The Program Manager attended the "Collecting, Sharing, and Using Information" Western Rangeland Noxious Weeds Workshop in Phoenix, AZ. She gave a presentation on "Obstacles to Collecting Data".

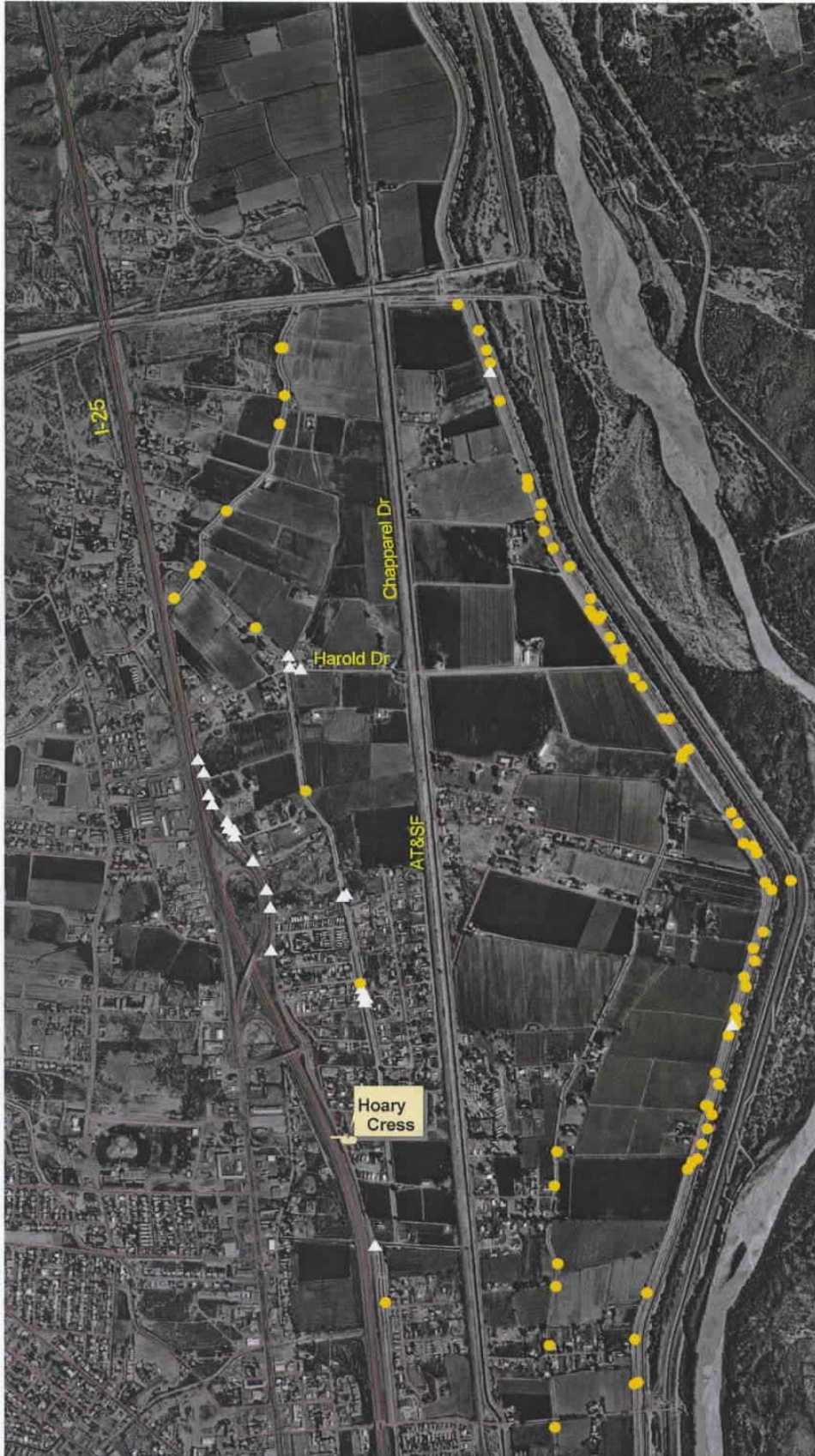
The Program Manager attended National Invasive Weed Awareness Week in Washington DC, representing the Socorro SWCD, the Socorro County Noxious Weed Management Area, and the New Mexico Noxious Weed Program. The Program Manager displayed the Noxious Weed maps that had been completed to date in the Main Interior Building. Those attending Invasive Weed Awareness Week thought the Socorro SWCD's mapping efforts were fantastic. The Program Manager networked with other attendees and met several people that have helped to enhance our program including both co-chairs of FICMNEW (Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious Weeds). The Program Manager also rubbed elbows with 'Woody the Weed' who is currently touring the Country and will end his tour in New Mexico.



Brent Bason has been hired on an emergency basis as the Socorro SWCD's Range Technician/Noxious Weed Specialist. He is mapping noxious weed infestations for the Sierra SWCD and the Socorro SWCD thus showing the good results that come from shared resources in noxious weed programs.

The Socorro SWCD had their noxious weed maps displayed at the Socorro County Fair, along with live specimens of the most common invasive weeds in our area. This allowed the public to see the extent of the infestations. Many handouts on noxious weeds were handed out at this event.

The Socorro SWCD co-sponsored a National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant-Pulling Together Initiative with Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. The project was funded and the money will be used for an aerial application of herbicide to treat Salt cedar on the Refuge and to hire a temporary employee to treat some of the infestations of Russian knapweed, Perennial pepperweed, and Camelthorn.



NOXIOUS WEEDS

Northern Socorro Area

N





0.1 0 0.1 0.2 Miles



SOCORRO
SWCD



Legend

-  Perennial Pepperweed
-  Russian Knapweed

No warranty is made by BLM as to the accuracy of the data.

October 2000

The Socorro SWCD under the direction of the Socorro/Sierra Regional Water Plan Steering Committee hired Daniel B. Stephens & Associates, Hydrosphere, and Sites SW to complete Phase I of the Regional Water Plan. The contractors have completed the following reports for Phase I: Future Water Demand, Water Rights, Population Projections, Groundwater Supply, and Historic and Current Water Demand. Contract negotiations are currently underway for Phase II, which will include the Rio Grande Water Supply and Alternatives along with Public meetings to complete the Socorro/Sierra Regional Water Plan.

The Socorro SWCD sponsored one grant for a drip irrigation system to the Parkview Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization. The grant totaled \$ 1137.55. The drip system will water the newly planted shade trees and wind break around the school.



The Socorro SWCD attended Food, Land & People facilitator training in October, Career Day for 7th Graders at Sevilleta in May, Bosque Days for 5th Graders in October, the Sevilleta/La Joya Open House in La Joya in October, and Ag-Day at the Coil Ranch in Sierra County in April with the Midway and San Antonio kindergartners. The Socorro SWCD used the Rolling Rivers Water Trailer at these functions and also at the Socorro County Fair. The Socorro SWCD provided soil stewardship materials for all the K-5 grades in Socorro County. The Socorro SWCD also sponsored three savings bonds for science fair projects dealing with 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 Socorro SWCD has helped the Save Our Bosque Task Force complete several projects. The Socorro SWCD 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 Socorro SWCD helped the Save Our Bosque Task Force achieve 501(c)3 status. The Socorro SWCD is also the fiscal agent for a Fuel Breaks Project to treat Salt cedar in the mouths of several arroyos. This will enable the runoff in the arroyos to reach the Rio Grande.

The Socorro SWCD had seven signs installed by the NM State Highway and Transportation Department on the major highways crossing the District borders.



The Socorro SWCD continued with its Bureau of Reclamation Water Conservation Field Services Demonstration Project for Drip Irrigation on Alfalfa. A professional injection system was installed. Several types of chemical are being tried to eliminate the problem with the gophers chewing holes in the drip tape. A volunteer has been found and she is currently doing the day-to-day maintenance on the system. Last year, 31.45 acre-inches of water per acre was applied with the drip system. This indicates a water savings when compared to the average consumptive use of alfalfa in this area.



The Socorro SWCD also helped Socorro County replace sixty Arizona cypress trees at the northern Senior Citizens Center in Veguita. The Socorro SWCD purchased the trees for the County to aid in their compliance with their Releaf Grant.

The Socorro SWCD staff, partners, and cooperators also received several awards this year. Jim Farmer, Soil Conservationist with the NRCS, received the Professional Service Award at the Region III meeting last year for his conservation filming efforts. Bill Chavez received the Conservation Service Award for his efforts in promoting the Socorro SWCD and handing out information on conservation programs to the general public. Nyleen Stowe, Program Manger for the Socorro SWCD also received the Outstanding District Employee Award at the Region III meeting for her ongoing work for the District. Nyleen also received a pine tree "cookie" Recognition Award in appreciation for her hard work, support and dedication from the NM State Forestry-Socorro Division.



FY 2001

Item	Amount
Income	
Grants	35,180.71
State funding	9,807.60
Mill levy	68,070.25
Valve/PVC sales	7,192.08
Miscellaneous	1,542.94
Total	121,793.58
Expenditures	
BOR grant	10,933.00
Program Manager	33,541.55
Noxious weed specialist	7,600.08
Cost share program	23,788.55
Office supplies, postage, meetings, dues, telephone, travel	16,308.51
Equipment	2,832.78
Auto-including vehicle replacement CD	11,929.50
Conservation activities	2,454.27
Valve/PVC purchases	7,012.77
CD-Noxious weed program matching funds	35,000.00
Total	151,401.01