



## New Mexico Watershed and Dam Owners Coalition

2026 Conference & Business Meeting

*"Connecting the Dots: Water quality and quantity"*

May 6-8, 2026

Crowne Plaza, Albuquerque, NM

### CONFERENCE AGENDA

#### Wednesday, May 6, 2026

7:30 **Registration** (*Room: Foyer*)

7:30 **Breakfast** (*Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado*)

8:45 **Welcome!** (*Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado*)

9:00 **Workshop**

*Embankment Maintenance Workshop – Focus on Woody Vegetation (2.5-hrs; 09:00-11:30)*

**Facilitators:** Chuck Caruso, PE – Owner, Agrimex

10:30 **15-min Break** (*Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado*)

10:45 **Workshop continued** (*Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado*)

11:30 **Free Resources for Dam Owners**

*Sushil Chaudhary, D.Eng., PE – Dam Safety Bureau Chief, Office of the State Engineer*

12:00 **Lunch & Networking** (*Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado*)

1:00 **WATERSHED TOUR – Rio Rancho Water Quality and Regional Flood Control**

*Andres Sanchez, PE – Design Services Director, SCAFCA*

Tour will meet and leave from Crowne Plaza. Transportation will be via carpooling, private vehicle caravan

Snacks provided

**END OF DAY 1**



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### Thursday, May 7, 2026

7:00 **Breakfast** (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

7:45 **Welcome!** (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

8:00 **State of New Mexico Dams Address**

Sushil Chaudhary, D.Eng., PE – *Dam Safety Bureau Chief, Office of the State Engineer*

8:30 **New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts – Update**

Josh Smith – *President, NMACD; Executive Board, NACD; Chairman, Dona Ana SWCD; Manager, EBID*

9:00 **National Watershed Coalition Update**

Gene Saurborn – *Executive Director, National Watershed Coalition*

9:30 **NRCS Watershed Programs Update**

Merceidez Fabok – *NRCS NM Watershed Program Manager*

10:00 **Risk-Informed Decision Making in Dam Safety**

Christina Bennetts, PE – *Geotechnical Engineer – Dams and Reservoirs Group, AECOM*

10:30 30-min Break (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

#### Tract One (Room: Arizona)

11:00 **Lower Rio Grande Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) Opportunities**

Ryan Serrano – *Lower Rio Grande Bureau Chief, NM Interstate Streams Commission*

11:30 **Watershed Based Planning for the Greater Middle Rio Grande**

Steve Glass – *Chair, Ciudad SWCD*

Kali Bronson – *Stormwater Compliance Program Lead, Bernalillo County*

Bobby Mulin – *Natural Resources Scientist, Bernalillo County*

#### Tract Two (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

11:00 **Update on Guidelines for Hydrologic Analysis for Dams**

Sushil Chaudhary, D.Eng., PE - *Dam Safety Bureau Chief, Office of the State Engineer*

Juan Solis, Ph.D, EI, *Engineer Intern, Dam Safety Bureau*

11:30 **Where Compliance Meets Community: Rosevale Road Drainage Improvements**

Rifka Wine, PE – *Vice President, BHI*

12:00 Lunch (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

**Current and Future Stormwater Quality Issues: Technical and Institutional Challenges in New Mexico**

Bruce Thomson, Ph.D., PE – *UNM Professor Emeritus*

#### Panel:

Patrick Chavez, PE – *Storm Water Quality Engineer, AMAFCA*

Jason Casuga, PE – *Chief Engineering and CEO, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District*



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### Thursday, May 7, 2026 (cont)

#### Tract One (Room: Arizona)

- 1:30 **Understanding Watershed Effects on Irrigation Water Supply**  
Antoinette Ramos, PE, PMP – *Engineer II, MRGCD*  
Angelina Jimenez, EI, – *Engineer I, MRGCD*  
Angel Madera, EI, – *Engineer I, MRGCD*
- 2:00 **Monitoring Efforts in the Gallinas Creek Watershed Post Hermit Peak-Calf Canyon Wildfire**  
Justin R. Nichols, Ph.D. – *USGS Hydrologist*
- 2:30 **Drought and Fire: Understanding Impacts on Quality and Quantity of Groundwater in NM**  
Kate Zeigler, Ph.D., CPG – *Zeigler Geologic Consulting, LLC*

#### Tract Two (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

- 1:30 **ASDSO Dam Owner Academy**  
Amanda Lopez, PE – *Senior Associate, Hazen-Sawyer*
- 2:00 **Marc Brandt Bio Infiltration Park: From Flood Control to Community Asset. A Functional Approach to Urban Stormwater Management**  
Chris Naidu, PE – *West Region Surface Water Practice Leader/Senior Vice President, WSP*  
LeAndra Nelson, PE – *Assistant Vice President, Water Resources Engineering, WSP*
- 2:30 **The Invisible Threat: Delineating Under-slab Voids in Concrete Spillways**  
Clinton J. Forsha, PE, PMP – *Principal, Dams and Levees-West Discipline Leader, CDM Smith*

3:00 30-min Break (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

- 3:30 **Inspect, Assess Risk, and Prioritize Improvement – so your dam thrives**  
Vicki Scharnhorst – *Regional Manager, Tetra Tech*
- 4:00 **Soil Health and Water Quality after the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon fire**  
Gerald Romero – *District Manager, Tierra y Montez SWCD*
- 4:30 **Updates to Watershed District Act**  
Debbie Hughes – *Executive Director, NMACD*  
Rebecca Dow – *NM State Representative – District 38, NMACD*

#### END OF DAY 2

#### Many Thanks to our Loyal Sponsors!!!

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### Friday, May 8, 2026

7:00 **Breakfast** (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

8:00 **Rio Grande Water Fund Update, Upcoming Activities, and Lessons Learned** (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

AJ Jones – Rio Grande Water Fund Lead The Nature Conservancy New Mexico

8:30 **General Membership Meeting** (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

Zack Libbin, PE – Vice Chair, NMWDOC

9:30 30-min Break (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

10:00 **EWP Program Updates**

David Griego – NRCS EWP Program Manager

10:30 **Dam Watch Overview and Demo**

Elias Gnann, PE – NM NRCS State Conservation Engineer

11:00 **NMISC/EBID Dam and Drain Project**

Ryan Serrano – Lower Rio Grande Bureau Chief, NM Interstate Streams Commission

Joah Franzoy – Assistant Manager, CFO, Elephant Butte Irrigation District

11:30 **Flood Mitigation after a Wildfire**

Ethan Seaver – Forestry Division, Energy, Minerals, Natural Resources Division

12:00 Lunch (Room: Nevada/Texas/Colorado)

**Luncheon Speaker:** Update from the State Engineer

Elizabeth K. Anderson, PE – New Mexico State Engineer

1:30 **Further Membership Discussion and Adjournment Conference**

**END OF CONFERENCE**

*Travel Safe! – We'll see you next year!!*