

# OTERO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

**Current SWCD Board of Supervisors:**

- Bob Nichols, Chairman
- Rick Baish, Vice Chairman
- Jeff Rabon, Secretary/Treasurer
- Eddie Vigil, Supervisor
- Wacey Cochise, Supervisor
- Colt Howland, Supervisor
- James Evrage, Supervisor

3501 Mesa Village Dr. Alamogordo, NM 88310

**District Employee:**

Victoria Milne, District Manager

**NRCS Staff:**

- Kristi Wright, District Conservationist
- Katie Pritchett, Soil Conservationist
- Erika Rodriguez, Range Management Specialist
- Morgan Smith, Civil Engineering Technician
- Amalia Montoya, Area Range Conservationist

**FSA Staff:**

- Cheyanna Reyes, County Executive Director
- Amanda Wylie-Largeteau, Program Technician

*District board meetings are generally, the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 am. The meetings are held in the same building, in the Forest Service's Smokey Bear conference room located at 3463 Las Palomas Dr.*

The USDA Alamogordo Service Center will be closed:

February 20th, Presidents Day, May 29th - Memorial Day and July 4th - Independence Day



# OTERO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

3501 Mesa Village Drive, Alamogordo, NM 88310 (575) 437-3100 x 3



Winter 2022/2023

The Otero SWCD hosted its Annual Luncheon on December 7th. We were pleased to have the following legislators in attendance: Vickie Marquardt, John Block and Gabe Vasquez.



The district's annual report was presented by Rick Baish. He highlighted the condition of our three watershed dams and their need for repairs and improvements. These dams are classified high hazard due to their age and the threat to life and property should they fail. We are seeking capital outlay funding to complete the work.

Laila Sturgis and Ethan Mamer from the NM Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources updated us on the regional water levels and the results of the Hydrogeology Study of the Salt Basin.



Bob Nichols presented Charles & Thelma Walker with the Outstanding Land Stewardship award. Their family has been ranching in Otero County since 1887. The Walkers have worked diligently to apply conservation practices such as brush management, erosion control, and improving livestock and wildlife distribution with fences, pipelines, and drinkers. They are the epitome of hard work, dedication and stewardship.



Katie Pritchett received the Making a Difference award for her outreach efforts to the youth in Otero County.

In conclusion, Bob Nichols stressed the importance of understanding our water resources, and thanked everyone for their continued support.

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### WUI Thinning Program!

\$\$ Tree Thinning Money Available\$\$

Do you own property in Otero County?

- ◆ Are you concerned with fire mitigation and forest health on your property?
- ◆ Would you like technical or financial assistance to thin your forest or create defensible space around your home?

There are state grant programs that can provide landowners with technical and financial assistance to thin privately owned forested land and/or create defensible space around homes. The main objectives of the Otero County WUI Program is to mitigate fire risk while improving forest health. Programs may become available to assist private landowners to thin their properties.

If you are interested in the Cost Share Program and would like an application or additional information about available grants for fuel reduction, please call the South Central Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council at (575) 937-1789 or New Mexico State Forestry 354-2231 send emails to [tmacsaw@gmail.com](mailto:tmacsaw@gmail.com).



The 2023 Noxious Weed Control Program on private lands begins April 17th targeting noxious weeds in the lower elevations. In June we will begin work in the higher elevations. Sign-up forms are available on the website programs and projects page or in the office located at 3501 Mesa Village Drive.

#### Otero SWCD Noxious Weed Program Guidelines

*Requirements for participation are:*

1. Resident of Otero County
2. Current Private Applicators License
3. Presence of an Otero County Noxious Weed
4. Approval to map noxious weeds
5. Coordinate plan for treatment
6. Follow-up after treatment

#### Otero County

#### Noxious Weed List

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| African Rue         | Musk Thistle         |
| Hoary Cress         | Russian Knapweed     |
| Leafy Spurge        | Spotted Knapweed     |
| Malta Star-thistle  | Diffuse Knapweed     |
| Yellow Toadflax     | Scotch Thistle       |
| Yellow Star-thistle | Canada Thistle       |
| Dalmatian Toadflax  | Teasel               |
| Purple Star-thistle | Perennial Pepperweed |
| Camelthorn          | Halogeton            |

### ***EDUCATING TOMORROW'S LEADERS IN RANCH MANAGEMENT, TODAY.***

June 11-16, 2023

CS Ranch | Cimarron, New Mexico

Youth Age 15-19 | \$300



A total of 30 participants will be invited to this year's camp with three of those openings reserved for out-of-state youth, age 15-19.

Completed applications will be reviewed by the NMYRMC committee and applicants notified of acceptance by May 12th. Payment of \$300 or sponsorship arrangement is due on or before June 2, 2023. "Helps youth appreciate the 'why' behind ranching."

Deadline  
May 5, 2023

Going to camp was a life-changing experience for 27 New Mexico youth. They didn't participate in recreational activities and crafts, but received college-level instruction in managing a ranch. During New Mexico Youth Ranch Management Camp, high school-age students will be introduced to the many aspects of running a ranch, from financial statements and marketing strategies to producing quality beef and managing natural resources and wildlife. College-level hands-on curriculum provided participants with information to develop a ranch management plan for a scenario similar to the host ranch.

The collaboration between Extension specialists, County Extension agents and members of the ranching industry provides an opportunity for youth to learn about the many aspects of ranching.

For the third time in seven years, the camp will be held on the CS Cattle Company's 130,000-acre ranch at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo mountain range near Cimarron, New Mexico.

**More than 180 youth who have participated in past ranch camps gain a greater appreciation of the science and opportunities in agriculture. It is also a win-win for our aging agricultural industry with more young people having interest in going into this type of work.**