



*District Manager Carolyn Kennedy and Supervisor Patricia Bolton near the Placitas Open Space*

## **ANNUAL REPORT FY15**

**(July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015)**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**To conserve, protect and enhance our soil, water and agriculture and to prevent floodwater and sediment damage**

## **VISION STATEMENT**

**To be the “eyes on the ground” to protect our natural resources**

## **BOARD of SUPERVISORS**

**Lynn Montgomery, *Chair***

**Al Baca, *Vice-Chair***

**Patricia Bolton, *Secretary-Treasurer***

**Gary Miles, *Supervisor***

**Marvin Mendelow, *Supervisor***

## **STAFF**

**Carolyn Kennedy, *District Manager***

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# **CORONADO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

## **ANNUAL REPORT—FY 15**

Coronado SWCD continued its quest to improve and provide more conservation to the District. The District expanded its relationships with its communities and individuals, along with other local governments throughout the Middle Rio Grande Region. Workshops were attended and many skills were improved. A formal public election was conducted successfully. Grants for watershed projects were applied for and approved, giving the District valuable experience. Future initiatives became clear and a path laid toward restoring our lands and controlling erosion significantly. The community of Algodones is now represented by two supervisors and is getting more attention. Many articles were published in the Sandoval Signpost. Coronado now has a formal agreement with the Cibola National Forest in order to assist the public in drawing up an update to the 1984 Plan and joined the Rio Grande Fund, a consortium of a broad spectrum of groups to enable the treatment of forested areas for fire control and ecosystem health. Coronado represented conservation districts on the Steering Committee of the MRCOG to work on the update to the Middle Rio Grande Regional Water Plan. It also facilitated the Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly in having a voice on the Steering Committee.

It was an active, productive year.

### **District Financials**

Coronado SWCD met all its financial obligations, requirements, and deadlines. District Manager Kennedy and Secretary-Treasurer Bolton kept the books together and improved their skills. There was much more to do this year as an election had to be funded, preparing for an upcoming audit of capital outlay funds, a problem with the IRS had to be dealt with, as well as a push from the state for small local agencies like acequias and conservation districts to become more adept at meeting requirements. Considerable miles were driven to attend financial skills and other workshops.

During FY 15 the District received \$15,084 in income and spent \$15,615, which meant that to cover expenses some funds had to be transferred from the District's savings account. These figures do not include the capital outlay funds received and expended during FY 15.

### **Board of Supervisors**

The Board managed to keep its ranks complete through the year. At its annual meeting on July 17, 2014, Mr. Montgomery was reelected Chair of the Board, Mr. Couch was reelected Vice-Chair, and Ms. Bolton was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

On August 20, 2014, Vice-Chair Couch resigned for health reasons. He had been a dynamic supervisor and added lots of energy to the Board. On September 18, Judith Hurley was appointed to fill Mr. Couch's position, and Mr. Baca was elected Vice-Chair. On February 1, 2015, Mrs. Hurley resigned for time-constraint reasons. On February 23, Marvin Mendelow was appointed to fill the position vacated by Ms. Hurley.

Coronado had to have an election because our incumbents, Alfred Baca, Patricia Bolton, and Marvin Mendelow, had challengers. The election, held on May 5, 2015, resulted in all the incumbents being reelected.

The Board has become more efficient and congenial. There is a real commitment to make Coronado work.

### **Meetings**

The District held twelve regular monthly meetings during the year, as well as three special meetings—on January 28, 2015, to approve a proposal for a Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance grant, on March 12, 2015, to approve a Canvassing Board for the election, and on April 23, 2014, to approve the WQ&C grant proposal.

## **Piedra Liza Dam**

The Piedra Liza Flood Control Dam is co-sponsored by the District (which owns the easement to the Dam property), the Town of Bernalillo and Sandoval County. These entities share maintenance and emergency response responsibilities. NRCS provides engineers and other assistance and the Office of the State Engineer Dam Safety Bureau conducts inspections and also provides advice.

On July 2, 2014, a site visit was conducted with NRCS engineers to discuss removal of sediment and other maintenance tasks. On July 21 there was another visit to the dam with NRCS engineers to clarify necessary tasks. It was determined that the dam didn't need sediment removed for 80 years, but that it would be better to do this incrementally.

There were no significant events and water made it to the dam only once. The dam was visited several times by first responder Mr. Montgomery along with District Manager Kennedy when storms raised the possibility of a spill. The dam never spilled. There is some maintenance work to be done. Coronado supervisors and staff attended the NM Watershed and Dam Owners Association, of which Coronado is a member, to keep abreast of current developments.

## **Water**

When it comes down to it, water is part of everything Coronado does. How we take care of the water determines our future. Coronado takes water issues seriously and its supervisors and staff are members of public and private water organizations.

Mr. Mendelow is on the Board of the Algodones Community Water System and is Coronado's alternate delegate to the Water Resources Board of the Mid Region Council of Governments. Mr. Baca assists the MRG Conservancy District in maintaining its ditches. Ms. Kennedy is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of the Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly and a parciante of Las Acequias de Placitas. Ms. Bolton is also a Board member of the Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly and a

parciante of Las Acequias de Placitas. Mr. Montgomery is Coronado's delegate to the Water Resources Board, represents Coronado on that Board's Steering Committee to update the MRG Regional Water Plan, represents Coronado at the MRG Water Assembly, is Coronado's delegate to the Rio Grande Fund, is the alternate to the Congreso de las Acequias of the NM Acequia Association for the Placitas Acequia Region, and is the Mayordomo of Acequia la Rosa de Castilla.

Because of the overriding need for strategic planning for the future in the face of this dwindling resource, Coronado Supervisors and the District Manager attended numerous meetings and conferences concerning water, some of which were:

- 07/01/14 Water and Natural Resources Interim Legislative Committee at the UNM Rotunda.
- 07/11/14 New Mexico First Town Hall on Water Policy Implementation Kickoff meeting at US Army Corp of Engineers office.
- 08/06/14 NM First water policy implementation meeting.
- 08/15/14 Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance meeting, NRCS Service Center, Santa Fe.
- 08/29/14 Water Trust Board application process training.
- 09/03/14 Meeting with Adrian Oglesby, Chair, Water Resources Board, at the UNM Law School.
- 09/04/14 Presentation on Gila River Diversion, Domingo Baca Multigenerational Center: talks by Michael Berman and Norm Gaume.
- 09/05/14 MRG Water Assembly Executive Committee meeting.
- 09/07/14 Meeting with Las Acequias de Placitas re reservoir renovation capital outlay.
- 09/11/14 MRCOG Board Meeting to approve MRG Steering Committee to update the MRG Regional Water Plan.
- 10/01/14 Water Assembly Executive Committee Meeting.
- 10/14/14 Water Innovation Summit (with Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham), UNM Student Union.
- 10/16/14 MRG Water Assembly Board meeting, UNM Law School.
- 10/29/14 Water Resources Board Meeting. Mr. Montgomery was elected to the Steering Committee representing Coronado SWCD.

11/07/14 MRG Water Assembly Executive Committee Meeting, Union Square Building.

11/10/14 Interstate Stream Commission Meeting re Gila diversion project and water planning, OSE offices, Albuquerque.

11/12/14 Quivira Coalition workshop on wetlands.

11/12/14 Quivira Coalition dinner with Peter Byck.

11/15/14 Congreso de las Acequias, Taos.

11/18/-11/19/14 Water Resources Research Institute bi-annual meeting, La Fonda, Santa Fe.

11/25/14 NM First Webinar on water policy initiatives.

12/04/14 MRG Water Assembly Executive Committee Meeting, Union Square Building.

12/22/14 Meeting with Sen. John Sapien on capital outlay, Range Café, Bernalillo.

01/07/15 Water Resources Board meeting, MRCOG.

01/08/15 Annual meeting, NM Water Dialogue, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

01//09/15 MRG Water Assembly Executive Committee Meeting, Union Square Building.

01/15/15 Effective date of Coronado SWCD becoming a signatory to the Rio Grande Wildfire and Water Source Protection Collaborative Charter.

01/20/15 Signatory, Rio Grande Fund Charter.

01/23/15 Water Resources Board Steering Committee.

02/11//15 Senate Finance Committee meeting on water issues. Capital Building, Santa Fe.

02/17/15 WRB Steering Committee.

02/18/15 MRG Water Assembly Executive Committee meeting, Union Square Building.

02/19-02/20/15 Xeriscape Council Annual Conference

02/27/15 MRG Water Assembly Executive Committee meeting, Union Square Building.

03/13/15 MRG Water Assembly Executive Committee meeting, Union Square Building.

03/17/15 WRB Steering Committee meeting.

03/21/15 MRG Water Assembly Annual Conference, Dane Smith Hall, UNM. Ms. Kennedy was reelected Secretary-Treasurer of the MRG Water Assembly, Mr. Montgomery was elected alternate from the



Cultural, Historical, and Traditional Advocacy Group, and Ms. Bolton was elected to the Residential Water Use Advocacy Group.  
04/10/15 MRGWA Executive Committee Meeting, Union Square Building.  
04/10/15 NM Rio Grande Water Fund meeting with signatories.  
04/14/15 WRB Steering Committee meeting.  
04/20/15 MRG Water Assembly Board meeting, UNM Law School.  
04/28/15 WRB Steering Committee.  
05/26/15 WRB Steering Committee.  
06/03/15 MRG Water Assembly Board meeting, UNM Law School.  
06/10/15 Water Resources Board meeting, MRCOG.

### **Soils and Watershed**

There were several significant events this year. One was Coronado being reinstated to the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance. This consortium of conservation districts pools resources to facilitate watershed projects. Coronado was able to gain a project to treat private land at the confluence of Las Huertas Creek and the Rio Grande for exotic tree removal. This will allow the return of native grasses and other natural vegetation to this beautiful area, and the bosque will be restored to a productive state. Coronado also sponsored projects this year for the Pueblo of Sandia through the Alliance.

Another project is funded by a Water Quality and Conservation grant from the NM Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The project proposal, written by Ms. Bolton, was successful. Ms. Bolton will administer the project. A two-acre pilot project on the Placitas Open Space to prevent further erosion, allow precipitation to sink into the soil, build wildlife habitat, address the EPA declared impairment of water quality in Las Huertas Creek, and control flooding is in the works. Local volunteers will carry this out. Only hand tools will be used. This is a research project to explore methods to achieve these goals.

There was a flooding event in Algodones this year. Mr. Baca has been working with others to try and address the problem.





Students create a berm on the Placitas Open Space

## **Acequias**

Acequias, even though they are few and small, are an important element for Coronado SWCD. They keep small upland agriculture alive and preserve an ancient culture still alive in Northern NM. Coronado was awarded a capital outlay grant to restore all the reservoirs of the Placitas Acequias in FY14. The money was spent on engineering and

design. The three Placitas Acequias now have complete plans, which make most of the reservoirs "shovel ready". This turned out to be important since this project was inadvertently dropped from the capital outlay bill this year. Alternate funding was sought through the new NRCS RCPP grants, which deal directly with acequia associations.

Coronado conducted a tour of the reservoirs for an NM Association of Conservation Districts expert who is assisting acequias to apply for the funds. Shovel-ready projects were preferred. One acequia, la Rosa de Castilla, applied for a grant. Coronado has an ICIP on file with the State for 2017-2021, and next year we are hopeful that capital outlay funds will be granted and the projects can continue.

### **Fire**

Fortunately, there were no significant fire events in the District during the past fiscal year. The District sponsored two chipper days in Placitas to assist residents in removing brush, which is an ongoing fire hazard.

### **Publicity**

There were eight articles by or about Coronado in the Sandoval Signpost:

August, 2014

*Piedra Lisa Dam Exercise Held*, by Jon Couch

<http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/aug14/html/eco-beat.html#b>

September, 2014

*District and Natural Resources Conservation Service host local work group meeting*, by Carolyn Kennedy

<http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/sep14/html/eco-beat.html>



Winterfat

December, 2014

*Winterfat*, by Lynn Montgomery

<http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/dec14/html/gauntlet.html>

February, 2015

*Watershed Dynamics*, by Lynn Montgomery

<http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/feb15/html/eco-beat.html>

March, 2015

*A Tour Down the Las Huertas Watershed*, by Lynn Montgomery

<http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/mar15/html/eco-beat.html>

April, 2015

*Coronado*, by Lynn Montgomery

<http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/apr15/html/eco-beat.html>

May, 2015

*Free-roaming horses in background of conservation election*, by Bill Diven

[http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/may15/html/up\\_front.html#f](http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/may15/html/up_front.html#f)

June, 2015

*Voters stick with conservation district incumbents*, by Bill Diven

<http://www.sandovalsignpost.com/jun15/html/eco-beat.html>



## **The Election**

District Manager Kennedy was appointed Election Superintendent and attended an NMDA-sponsored election workshop held at the Edgewood Soil and Water Conservation District office in Moriarty, NM. She followed all the required procedures, and the election was held without incident. All three of Coronado's incumbents were reelected by wide margins.

## **NMACD**

Mr. Montgomery, as Vice Chair of Region 1, participated in monthly conference calls of the NMACD Board.

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Coronado SWCD continued to improve through FY15. A lot of know-how was gained by applying for projects, expanding relations with conservation community members, and listening to good advisors. The public has started to be more engaged and Coronado is beginning to do more outreach to community organizations.

Coronado aspires to be a moving force in resource management and preservation. A lot of progress was made this year.

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