



27 December 2016

Re: 2016 NPSNM Grant Award Report

On behalf of Wetwater Environmental Services, I would like to extend our gratitude for the \$1000.00 grant that was awarded in 2016 by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. I am a science teacher with Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools where our students have directly benefited from the materials and equipment purchased by the grant funds. These include a LaMotte educational water quality kit, which was used by students to conduct a two-week, comparative water quality study this past fall of local area lakes. Students got first-hand field experience using the water quality kit, and practiced the scientific method in investigating the lakes they frequent.

Santa Rosa is home to one of the more unique and rare wetland habitats in New Mexico and is a sanctuary for the Pecos Sunflower. Students were introduced to this endangered flower during the peak bloom in September where they also were able to use field guides purchased with grant funds to identify other plants and conduct transects to measure density and distribution of plants. We plan on returning in the spring to conduct additional surveys and monitor steam flow during the spring runoff.

The spring is also peak time for students to understand the health of streams. Benthic macroinvertebrate kick nets, viewing trays, and associated gear were purchased with grant funds. This has given students valuable experiences that have allowed them to analyze streams according to the presence and identification of macroinvertebrates.

Support from the grant has allowed students to use field journals, hand held weather meters, soil sieves, Munsell soil color charts, and ground water monitoring equipment, all which are valuable resources in studying the ecosystem of the Pecos Sunflower. Your contribution has provided essential tools needed to support quality field experience for students to engage and learn among the plants and ecology of the Blue Hole Cienega Nature Preserve.

Once again, I thank you for your generosity in supporting the environmental education of our students and in helping to foster future environmental leaders of New Mexico.

Yours in Science Education,

Estela T. Thompson

Santa Rosa High School Science Department