



Native Plant Society of New Mexico
PO Box 35388
Albuquerque, NM 87176-5388

June 9, 2021

Shelly Lemon, Bureau Chief
Surface Water Quality Bureau
New Mexico Environment Department
1190 St. Francis Drive, Rm N2050
P.O. Box 5469
Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469

RE: Support for Wetlands Program Development Grants 2021-2022

Dear Ms. Lemon:

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico (NPSNM) thanks you for the opportunity to voice our support of the four New Mexico Environment Department Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) Wetlands Program grant proposals to EPA Region 6 Wetlands Program Development Grants Request for Applications under Clean Water Act Section 104(b)3.

The mission of our organization is predominantly research, education, protection and restoration of the New Mexico native flora and its habitats. Our interest in wetlands is keen as they are an essential repository, and an endangered one, of the diverse plant species of our concern. We have greatly appreciated and have been represented at every SWQB Wetlands Roundtable over the past several years, learning much and offering our own information at several of them. We are pleased to have supported past grant proposals of the SWQB concerning mapping of wetlands. As an NGO, we have endeavored to promote awareness of the importance of wetlands and their proper treatment among landowners and the general public.

Consistent with our history and continuing goals, we affirm that the SWQB is the proper entity to carry out the work described in the following proposals:

- “Integrating Linear Features and Mapping and Classification Data Gaps in Northern New Mexico”
- “Integrating Linear Features and Mapping and Classification Data Gaps in New Mexico Wilderness Areas”

Accurate mapping of wetlands is important to NPSNM botanists and lay members who regularly observe and take note of environmental and botanical conditions year to year.

- “Understanding Depressional Wetlands and Mineral Soil Flats Wetlands in New Mexico”

This is an area that has been poorly investigated and NPSNM welcomes the Wetlands Action Plans and the Rapid Assessment Method that will be developed. We are confident that the SWCB is positioned to achieve the best outcomes.

- “Restoring Degraded Fen Wetlands on US Forest Service Lands.”

As long-term observers of our National Forests, we have sadly witnessed the gradual decline of water quality and floral diversity in fens as they have not received sufficient official attention. The SWQB proposal is exciting not only in its objectives but in its emphasis on the use of locally available, natural materials and volunteer energy.

Native Plant Society of New Mexico members and chapters may be useful in the execution of the proposed projects, including in such activities as documentation of baseline conditions and changes in plant populations, monitoring and removal of invasive species, participation in technical advisory meetings, and educating the public as to the nature and importance the ongoing efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of these worthwhile projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Stewart", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Tom Stewart,
President