

OVERVIEW OF BLM LAS CRUCES DISTRICT GRAZING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Little Americas Allotment, L.Phillips,
4/14/2009

A large metal windmill on a tall tower against a blue sky and mountain range. The windmill has many blades and a long tail. The tower is made of metal lattice. The background shows a range of mountains under a clear blue sky.

Range Staff

- ▣ 1 Supervisory RMS
- ▣ 9 Professional RMSs
- ▣ 2 Range Technicians
- ▣ 1 Range Assistant
- ▣ 2 STEP Students
- ▣ Range Improvement Coordinator

Legislative Authorities:

Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. 315-316)

-orderly use, improvement and development of the range

Federal Land Policy and Management Act 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1752(e))

-requires BLM to conduct land use planning process

-authorizes BLM to reexamine the condition of the range and make necessary adjustments in grazing use

Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978, as amended (43 U.S.C. 1901-1908)

-allows for discontinuing grazing uses either temporarily or permanently on certain public lands to improve range conditions consistent with land use plan objectives

Land Use Plans:

- required by FLPMA
- establishes allowable uses, management guidance, constraints and desired outcomes

Grazing Permits/Leases:

- modified with terms and conditions or cancelled to ensure consistency with land use plan decisions

Rules and regulations promulgated to guide implementation of enacted laws.

Grazing Regulations (43 CFR 4100) (1995):

-contain the regulatory authority for grazing administration, use authorizations, permit terms and condition for achieving resource condition objectives

Grazing Regulations:

-require that terms and conditions ensure conformance with standards and guidelines.

Terms and Conditions:

-kind and number of livestock, period(s) of use, the allotment to be used, amount of use described in Animal Unit Months (AUM)

Grazing regulations require appropriate changes in grazing use to ensure significant progress toward or attainment of basic **Fundamentals of Rangeland Health** :

- watersheds are in proper functioning condition
- ecological processes (hydrologic cycle, nutrient cycle, energy flow) are maintained to support healthy biotic communities
- water quality complies with State water quality standards
- habitat for special status species is maintained or restored

NM Public Land Health Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing (EIS approved in 2001)

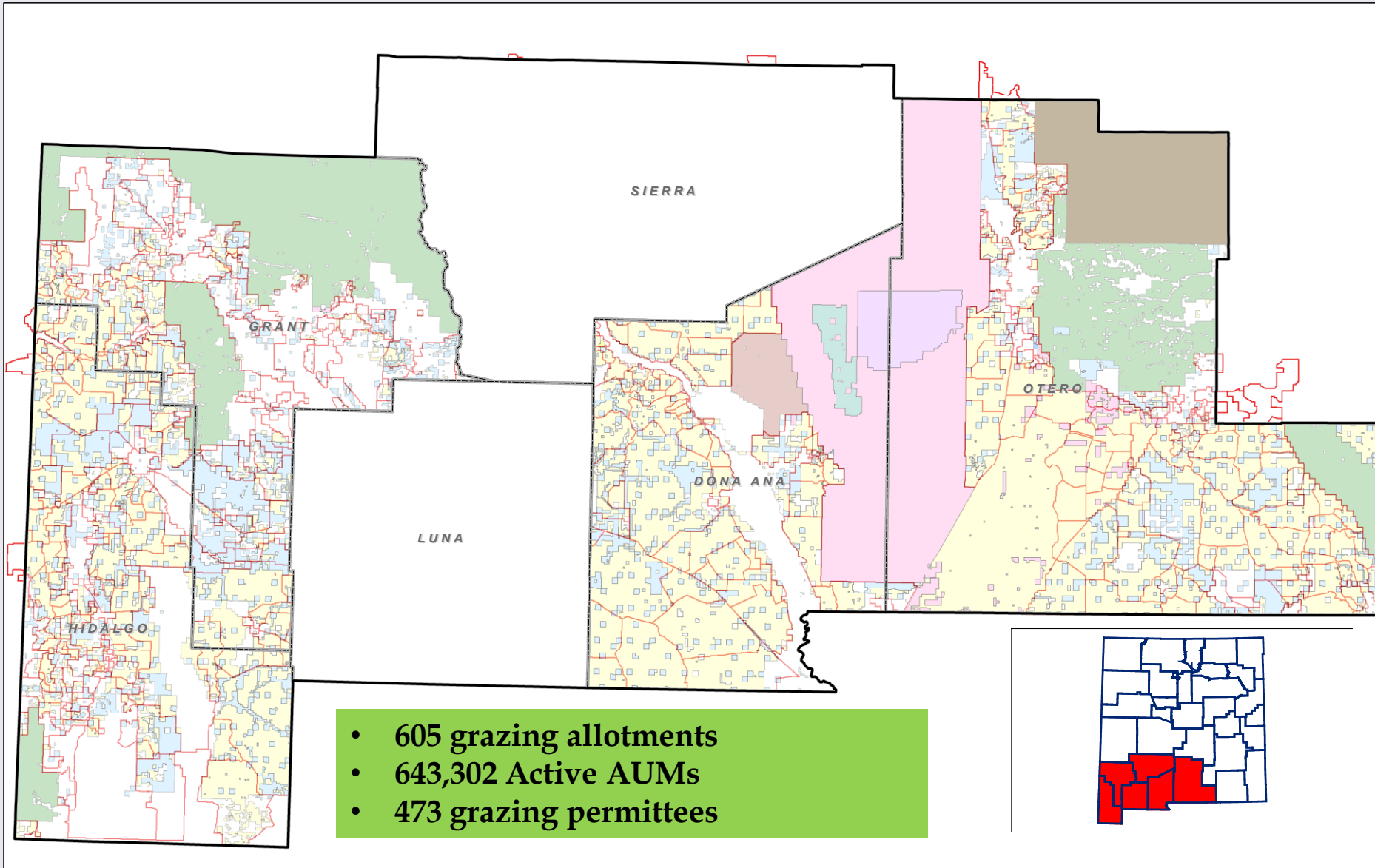
Grazing Regulations required development of Standards for Public Land Health in consultation with Resource Advisory Councils

- Upland Sites Standard

- Biotic Communities, Special Status Species Standard

- Riparian Sites Standard

Grazing Allotments



Grazing Allotment Categorization

PREFERENCE CODE

- ▣ Section 3 Permits = 393
- ▣ Section 15 Leases = 212

SELECTIVE MANAGEMENT CATEGORY

- ▣ I "Improve" = 203
- ▣ M "Maintain" = 332
- ▣ C "Custodial" = 70

81 AMPs or functional equivalents

Range Program Management Responsibilities

- ▣ Grazing Administration
- ▣ Grazing Permit Renewals
- ▣ Support Restore NM Initiative
- ▣ Support Other Programs
- ▣ Customer Support

Grazing Administration

- ▣ Issue over 130 grazing permits/leases annually.
- ▣ Generate over 1,000 authorizations annually
- ▣ Fully process over 30 grazing transfers annually.

(Note: We currently have over 100 on-going grazing transfers on the books.)

Grazing Permit Renewals

First Generation NEPA completed = 351 (58%)

Second Generation NEPA needed = 180

First Generation NEPA still needed = 254 (42%)

		Allots	AA*	Allot w/o NEPA
LCDO	030	605	434	254
RPFO	110	244	108	58
SFO	120	261	167	71
FFO	210	350	254	11
TFO	220	222	0	0
RFO	510	352	116	5
CFO	520	261	0	1
	NM	2295	1079	400
AA* Appropriations Act rider				

Complexity of the Grazing Permit Renewal Process:

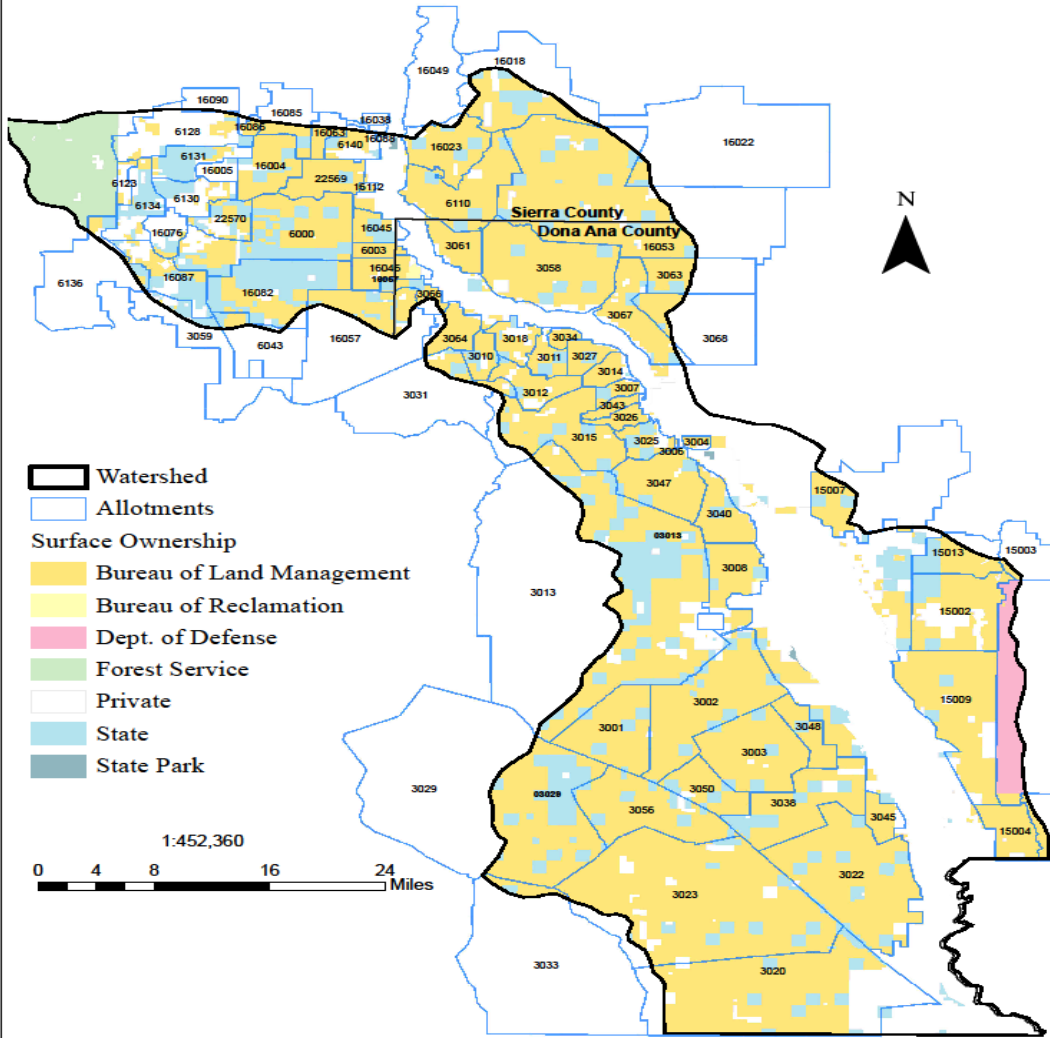
Completing rangeland health assessments and determinations of the public land health standards as part of the process.

Collection of long-term monitoring data as necessary.

Section 7 Consultation requirements.

Broad Interested Public Mailing List.

Lower Rio Grande Watershed Grazing Allotments



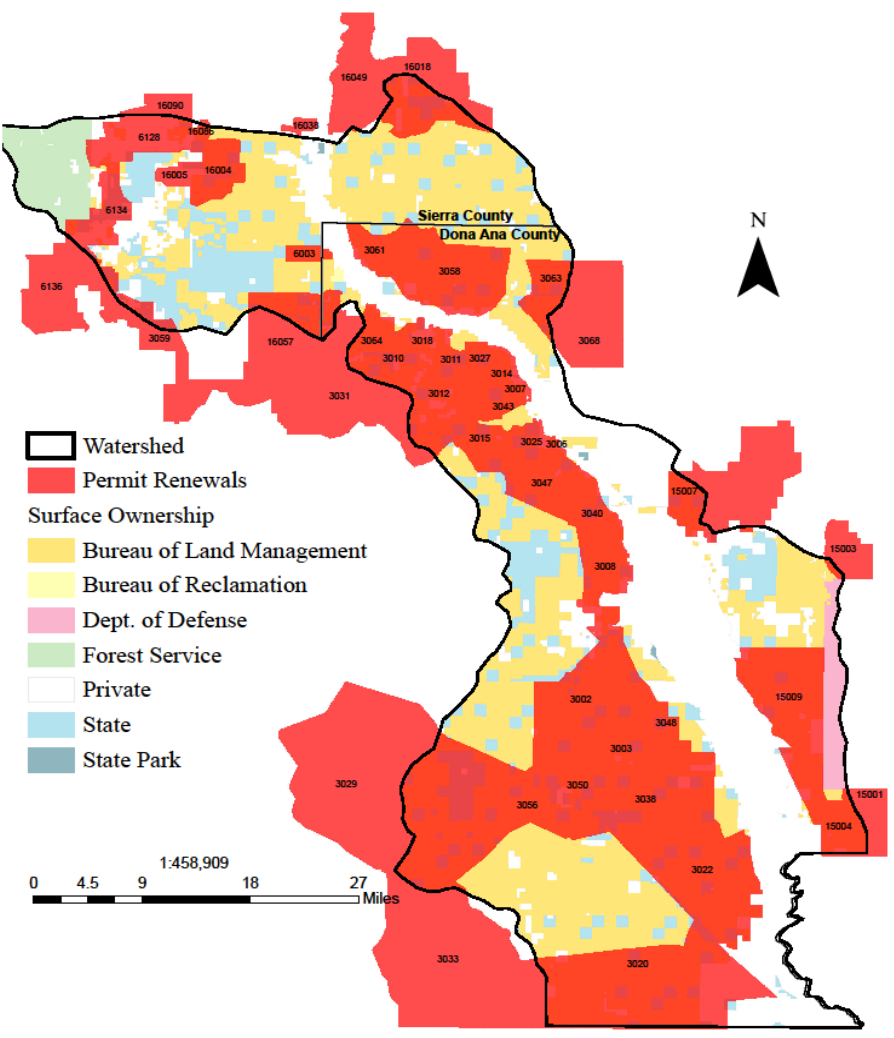
80 Grazing Allotments in the Lower Rio Grande Watershed



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Lower Rio Grande Watershed Permit Renewals



49 Grazing
Permits
Renewed
Meeting
Fundamentals
of Rangeland
Health



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Las Cruces District



What is Restore New Mexico?

- An aggressive **partnership** to restore woodlands, grasslands and riparian areas to a healthy and productive condition
- Impact lands, regardless of ownership, across a landscape



Restore New Mexico Initiative Goals and Objectives

- Reverse expansion of invasive and noxious species and establish desirable forage species
- Restore habitat for fish, wildlife and endangered species
- Stabilize soil, improve water quality and watershed function
- reduce impacts from catastrophic wildfire
- reverse habitat fragmentation (historic energy development)

Four Target Species



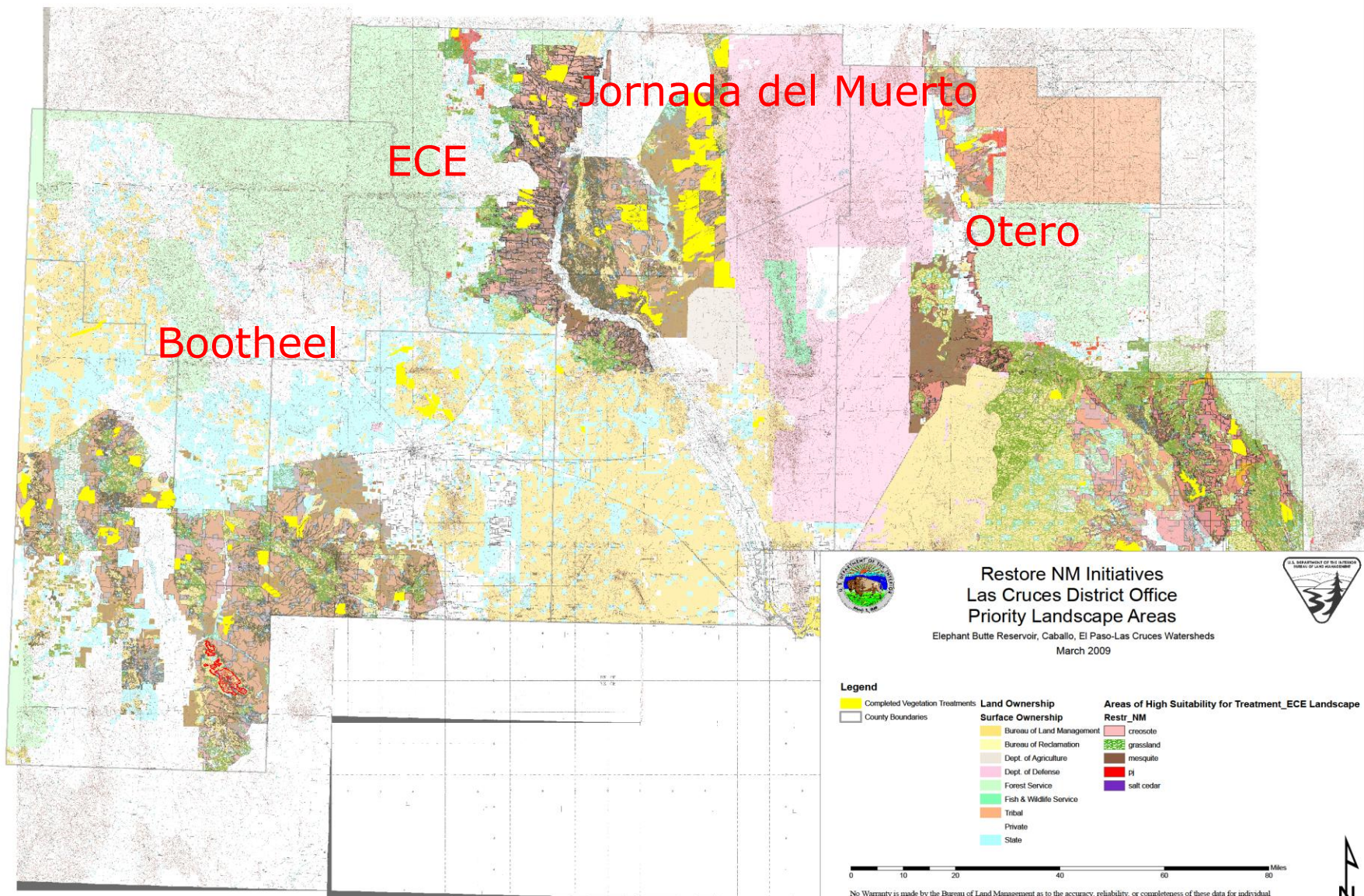
FEDERAL EQIP PROGRAM NRCS/BLM COLLABORATION 2006 TO PRESENT

Acres treated in Las Cruces District

1981-2005 220,174 acres

2006-2011 341,096 acres

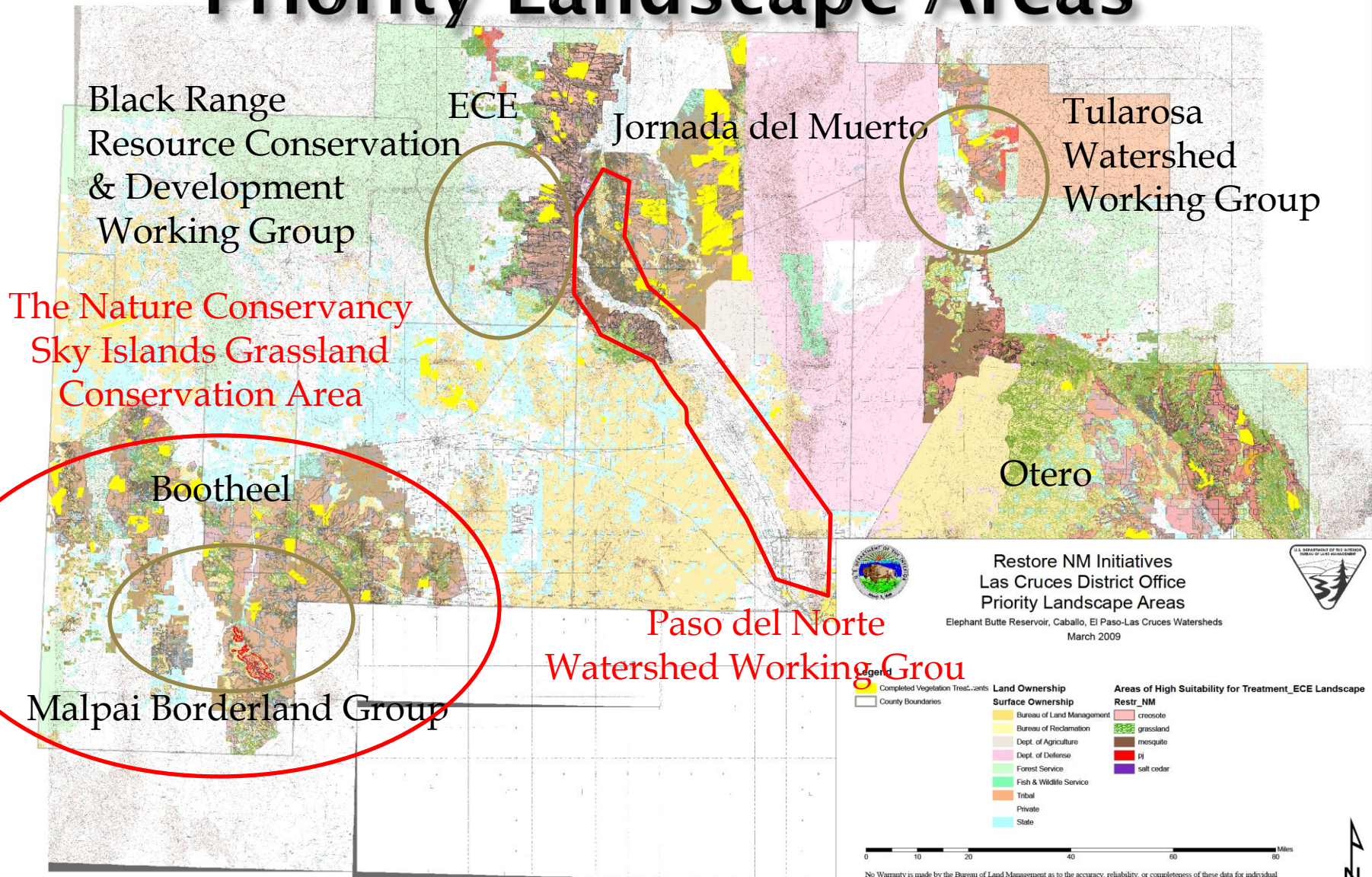
USDI/BLM and USDA/NRCS EQIP Partnership Areas



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Las Cruces District Priority Landscape Areas



Restore NM Initiatives
Las Cruces District Office
Priority Landscape Areas

Elephant Butte Reservoir, Caballo, El Paso-Las Cruces Watersheds
March 2009



Legend		Land Ownership	Areas of High Suitability for Treatment_ECE Landscape
	Completed Vegetation Treatments	Surface Ownership	
	County Boundaries		Bureau of Land Management
			Bureau of Reclamation
			Dept. of Agriculture
			Dept. of Defense
			Forest Service
			Fish & Wildlife Service
			Tribal
			Private
			State
			crosscote
			grassland
			mesquite
			pi
			salt cedar



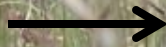
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Overview of projects prior to Restore NM Initiative:

Projects Initiated between 2000-2005:

2000	=	27
2001	=	26
2002	=	23
2003	=	30
2004	=	25
2005	=	16
Total	=	147



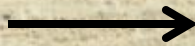
Types of Projects between 2000-2005:

Cattleguards	=	5
Fences	=	29
Pipelines	=	49
Brush Control	=	64
Total	=	147

Overview of ongoing projects since the start of the Restore NM Initiative:

Projects Initiated between 2006-2011:

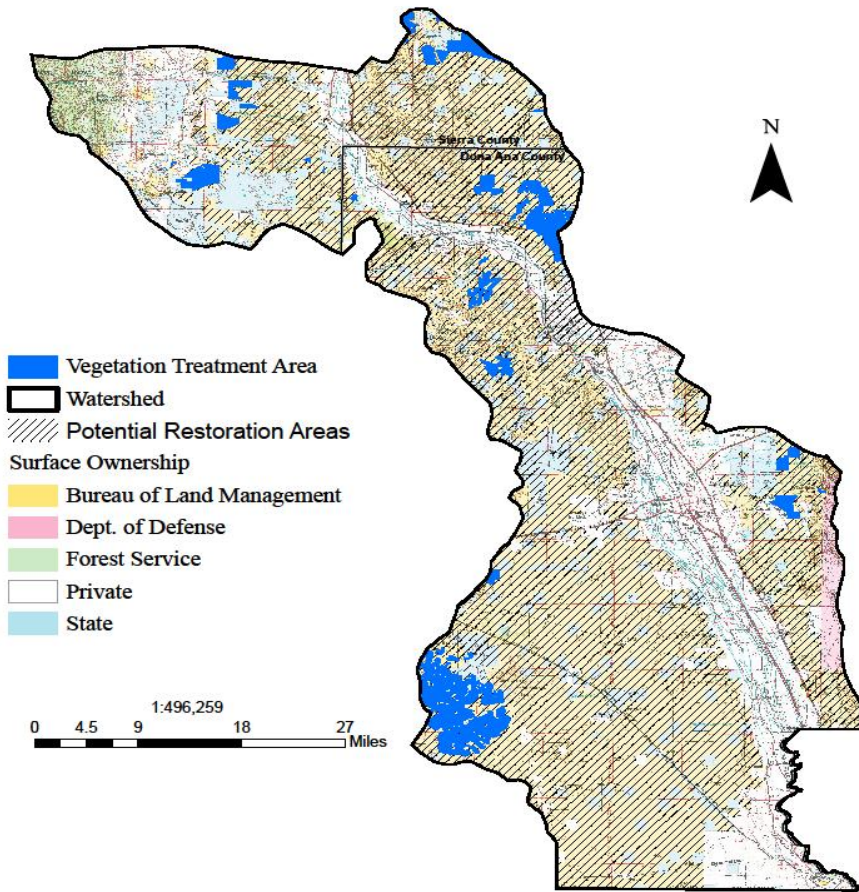
2006	=	20
2007	=	51
2008	=	62
2009	=	55
2010	=	88
2011	=	<u>65</u>
Total	=	341



Types of Projects between 2006-2011:

Cattleguards	=	9
Fences	=	62
Pipelines	=	159
<u>Brush Control</u>	=	<u>111</u>
Total	=	341

Lower Rio Grande Watershed Restoration Potential



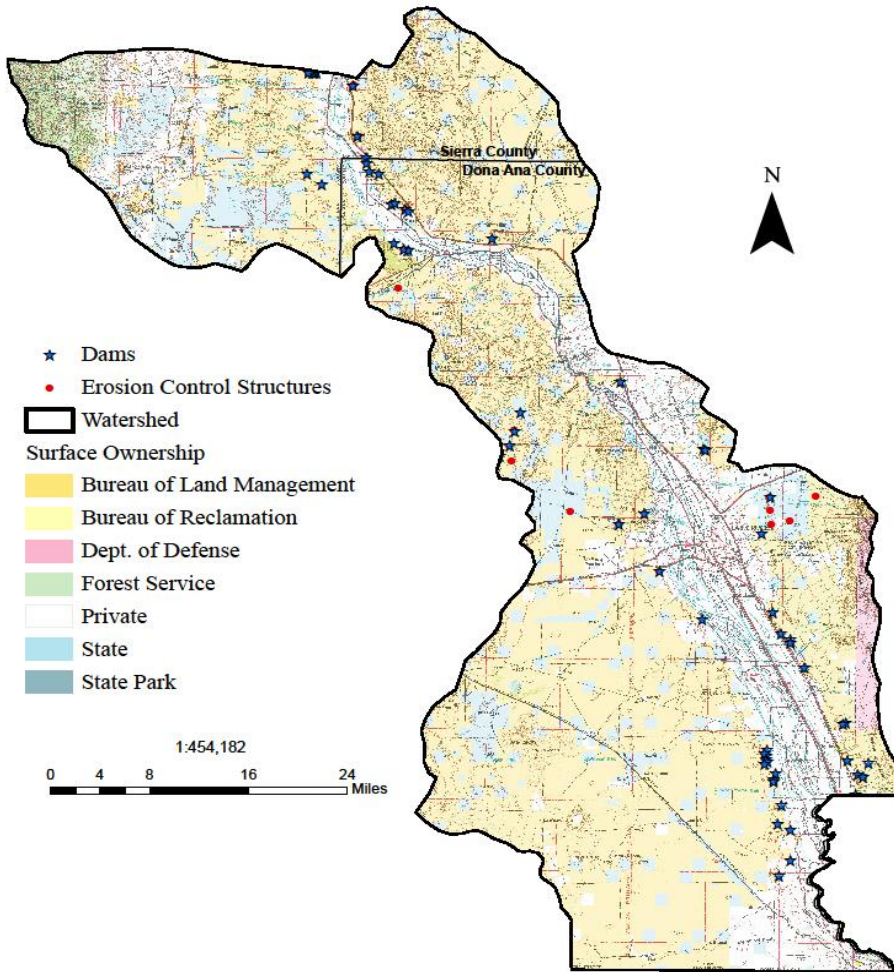
Grassland Restoration Efforts



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Lower Rio Grande Watershed Dams and Erosion Control Structures



Dams and Erosion Control Structures

2,600
District
Wide



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Before



After



Jornada Landscape Area Antelope Tank Treatment (before)



Jornada Landscape Area Antelope Tank Treatment (after)



Jornada Landscape Area Rhodes Treatment (before)



Jornada Landscape Area Rhodes Treatment (after)



Jornada Landscape treatment Fence/line Contrast



Jornada Landscape Treatment Untreated



Jornada Landscape Treatment Treated



Grassland Restoration Project North of Deming, NM



Restore New Mexico Partners

Natural Resource Conservation Service

Sierra Soil Water Conservation District

New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Quail Unlimited

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Livestock Operators

New Mexico Habitat Stamp Program

Jornada Agricultural Research Service

US Fish and Wildlife Service

The Nature Conservancy

New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

New Mexico State Land Office

Keys to Successful Collaboration

- Similar Management Goals and Objectives
- Landscape approach
vs. administrative boundaries
- Mutual benefits to all parties
- Shared resources
- Working together to achieve common goals

Keys to Successful Collaboration

Funding:

Federal Agency Programs (Cost Share)

- NRCS
- BLM

Private Land Owner (Cost Share)

State Land Office

State Game and Fish

Habitat Stamp Program

Sportsman Groups

Environmental Groups

Keys to Successful Collaboration

Agency Program Coordination

Project Planning Documents

Project survey and design

Private and Federal Contracts

Contract Administration

Agency contract supervision (Agency Standards)

Post treatment monitoring

NRCS

BLM

USDA ARS Jornada Experimental Range

NMSU Graduate Studies Program

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

Land Use Planning Watershed Prioritization

Management required by law, policy, or directives :

- Endangered Species Act (ESA)

- Clean Water Act (303(d) listed streams).

Land Use Planning Watershed Prioritization

Management based on resource conditions:

- areas currently in “reference states”
- areas transitioning to a non-reference (degraded) state
- areas within non-reference states with opportunities for restoration potential
- areas with erosive soils

Land Use Planning Watershed Prioritization

Other criteria:

- Areas within non-reference states and limited (economical and/or ecological) restoration potential.
- Availability of monitoring data
- “risk criteria” (e.g. special status species, flood risk, noxious weeds)
- Management opportunities (e.g. activity management plan area, special designations, special initiatives, and/or cooperative funding programs)

Questions?



View from Granite Gap,
M. Whitney, 8/2/2007