

NEW MEXICO SENATE DEMOCRATS

For immediate release

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Senate Bill Would Help Breathe Life Back Into State's Historic Acequias

A bill awaiting review by the Senate Finance Committee would provide nearly \$11 million to provide more than 60 acequia associations throughout the state with much-needed funds to renovate and improve the historical and cultural water systems unique to New Mexico.

Senate Bill 546, sponsored by Senator Pete Campos, would provide a onetime influx of \$10.88 million from the New Mexico Works Construction Irrigation Fund to small-town farms in the Land of Enchantment. *Acequia* is the Spanish word for ditch, and Spanish settlers expanded upon the acequia systems already in place by Native Americans during the Colonial period, which began in 1598 upon the arrival of Don Juan de Oñate.

"The acequias running through our state have historically been the lifeblood of this region, just like the veins circulate life-sustaining blood through our bodies," Senator Campos said. "Many of the small-farmers who struggle to keep these cultural treasures functioning need help to restore them.

"It is important that we help to preserve acequias so that we can ensure that they can be passed along to future generations, just like they have been for centuries before."

Senator Campos said the ditches in need were identified by the New Mexico Acequia Association. They include the Acequias de Llano de San Juan Neopumuceno, 1892 Luna Irrigation Ditch Association, West Puerto de Luna, Acequia Cañon de Luna, Acequia de la Aguila, Acequia de Rainsville Norte, Tularosa Ditch Association, Acequia de la Plaza de Dixon, Acequia del Medio de Coyote, Acequia de San Rafael del Guique, Northside acequia madre de Villanueva, Ponderosa Community Ditch, San Ysidro Community Ditch, Acequia del Barranco de Jacona, Acequia Larga de Jacona, Acequia de los Chupaderos, Acequia de la Otra Banda, Acequia de la Cienega, Acequia del Monte del Rio Chiquito, Las Colonias Community Ditch, Acequia de San Jose and Acequia de la Isla, Acequias de Chamisal y Ojito, Acequia de los Pinos, Los Ranchos de Atrisco Acequia, West Pecos Community Ditch, Cebolletita Acequia, Acequia de la Madera, Acequia de la Mesa Prieta, Acequia de la Poscion, Acequia de los Ranchos;

Acequia del Llano-Dixon, Acequia del Rincon, Cecilia Ditch Gallina, Gallina Community Ditch, Archibeque Ditch, Acequia del Portrero, Acequia de Arriba del Llano de San Miguel, Acequia de la Sevadilla, Acequia del Canon, Acequia de Canoncito de la Cueva, Acequia Venita de Teodoro Romero, Placitas Reservoir, Talpa Reservoir, Acequia de Agua Fria, Acequia Otra Banda-Canjilon, East Puerto de Luna, Indian Ditch, Rosario Lopez Community Ditch, Nacimiento Ditch, Vadito Southside Ditch, Los Prandos, Ceboyetita Acequia, La Madera Acequia, San Francisco de Pauda Ditch, Los Gallegos Acequia, Acequia Encinal y Canoncito, Acequia del Medio, Acequia Venita de Teodoro Romero, Hormigoso Ditch, Vado de Juan Pais, Tecolotito Ditch, Upper Anton Chico Ditch and lower Anton Chico Ditch.