



Office of the Governor

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Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund

*Senate Bill 9 – Sponsored by Sen. Peter Wirth, Sen. Steven Neville,
and Rep. Nathan Small*

Our lands hold immeasurable cultural, recreational and economic value for New Mexicans. The Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund will create sustained funding for state programs that protect and preserve our environment for present and future generations.

WHAT IS THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT LEGACY FUND?

The Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund will be the first state fund solely dedicated to conserving our state's land and water. Because New Mexico does not have a dedicated state funding stream for land and water conservation, we often have trouble raising federal matching dollars for programs that could better protect communities from wildfire, flood and drought, safeguard our water supplies for urban and rural areas, support our agricultural communities, and grow our outdoor recreation economy.

The Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund will change that, dedicating state funding for existing land and water stewardship programs through a historic investment that will leverage millions of federal dollars and reach all 33 counties and Tribal communities. This will help preserve our cultural heritage and outdoor traditions, leaving a legacy for our children to hunt, fish, farm, ranch, and enjoy the lands and waters the way our ancestors have for generations.



Protecting and preserving New Mexico's lands and waters

HOW WILL IT WORK?

The Fund will not create new programs – instead, it will provide a stable source of funds for programs already administered by six state agencies: the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Economic Development Department, the New Mexico Environment Department, the Department of Game & Fish, and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture.

These programs have a proven track record of success and are popular in local communities. However, they have never been funded to their full potential. Approving the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund will boost funding for important programs in the following manner:

- **EMNRD will receive a 141% overall increase**, including a 71% increase for Forest and Watershed Restoration Act programs and consistent funding for Natural Heritage Conservation Act programs for the first time.

- **NMDA will receive a 331% overall increase**, including a 158% increase in Soil & Water Conservation District funding, a 51% increase in funding for the Healthy Soils Program, and consistent state-appropriated funding for the Noxious Weed Management Program.
- **NMED River Stewardship program will receive an 83% increase.**
- **EDD Outdoor Recreation Division will receive a 450% overall increase**, with a 44% increase for the Outdoor Equity Fund and a 470% increase for Special Projects and the Outdoor Infrastructure Fund.
- **DCA will receive the first consistent state funding** for Cultural Properties Protection Act programs.
- **DGF will receive consistent state appropriations** for the Game Protection Fund that will be in addition to receipts from license fees and federal grants.

HOW WILL THE FUND BE STRUCTURED?

First, a “legacy fund” using a one-time appropriation would be created. This expendable fund would provide automatic distributions to 10 existing land and water conservation programs over the next 4-5 years. It would be managed by the Department of Finance and Administration.

A secondary “permanent fund” would be provided with seed funding now with the goal of enabling that balance to grow over time so that it can provide sustainable funding over time. That permanent fund would be managed by the State Investment Council and would be subject to future appropriations. Depending on the appropriation amount, this reserve fund could gain interest and distribute money back into the legacy fund, further extending the time it is able to provide funding to the existing 10 land and water conservation programs.

If funded adequately, both investments have the potential to leverage millions of federal dollars and reach all 33 New Mexico counties and Tribal communities.

New Mexico is one of the only Western states that does not have dedicated conservation funding. This gives states like Arizona, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana a competitive advantage over New Mexico, jeopardizing growth in our outdoor recreation economy sector. It also harms local industries like agriculture that rely on land and watershed health to prosper.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to both preserve our state’s longstanding connection to the land and water and ensure our future prosperity. Support the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund – for our land, water, economy, and culture.