



Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association

P.O. Box 721 San Luis, CO 81152

719-298

Colorado Water Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources
1313 Sherman Street Room 721
Denver, Colorado 80203
Attn: Ben Wade

August 30, 2021

RE: CWP GRANTS – [POGG1,PDAA,202100002360]

[\[Acequia Community Education and Outreach Program\]](#)

Dear Ben,

Enclosed please find the 2nd Invoice and final report for POGG1,PDAA,202100002360, Colorado Water Plan Grant– Acequia Community Education and Outreach Program. The amount of invoice number 002 is \$5,000.00.

Thanks for everything and if I can be of further assistance please let me know.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Delmer Vialpando". The script is cursive and fluid.

Delmer Vialpando
President, Board of Directors
Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association

Final Report of Grant Deliverables

Thanks to the Colorado Water Conservation Board, the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association has developed a more robust system of sharing knowledge, both historical and educational materials and current events to support Colorado's oldest agricultural community of BIPOC farmers and ranchers. The Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association now houses an informational library and a newsletter template is in place, with newsletters going out to 122 new recipients, making our total newsletter list 627 users.

Though events had to be postponed due to COVID, we were able to complete landowner outreach events outdoors July – August of 2021. These events, such as the one in the flyer below, included the following topics:

- Land PKS: A Tool for Producers – CSU, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies
- Understanding the Culebra Basin Aquifer – Craig Cotton and Deb Sarason, Division of Water Resources
- Culebra Watershed Assessment Update - Tailwater Limited - Andrea and Greg Tiallacq
- Innovative Grazing on Commons - Maria Fernandez Gimenez
- Habitat and Agriculture in a Changing Climate - Kevin Terry, Trout Unlimited

LandPKS: A Tool for Producers

Join us on July 23, 2021
in San Luis and surrounding lands
9:30 am – 2:30 pm

At this training, you will learn how you can use the LandPKS app. LandPKS provides essential information for ranchers and farmers to make management decisions.

You will learn how to:

- rapidly identify soils
- monitor vegetation
- evaluate wildlife and vegetation habitat requirements for a suite of species

Participation is free. Coffee and lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP to Judy Lopez for final details and to confirm your participation:
jlopez@coloradoopenlands.org or 719-580-5

Learn more about LandPKS at LandPotential.org.



Made possible by:



Colorado Congreso de Acequias
August 20, 2021
Acequia Association Courtyard, 401 Church Place, San Luis, Colorado



AGENDA
Opportunities and Threats for Acequia Irrigators

- 9:00 Registration with Coffee and Pastries**
- 9:15 Welcome and House Keeping** - Norman Maestas, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association
- 9:30 Blessing** - San Francisco Morada Hermanos
- 9:50 Understanding the Culebra Basin Aquifer** - Craig Cotton and Deb Sarason, Colorado Division of Water Resources
- 11:30 Lunch**
- 12:15 Watershed Assessment Update** - Andrea and Greg Tiallacq, Tailwater Limited
- 1:15 Grazing on an Acequia** - Maria Fernandez Gimenez and Ariana Gloria Martinez, Colorado State University
- 2:15 Break**
- 2:25 Acequia By-laws Program Update** - Gregor Macgregor, CU Boulder Law
- 2:35 Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area Update** - Julie Chacon, Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area
- 2:45 Habitat and Agriculture in a Changing Climate** - Kevin Terry, Trout Unlimited
- 3:15 Wrap-up and Closing Remarks** - Norman Maestas



[illegible]

Congreso Sign-in			
Name	Phone	Email	Acequia
Norman MAESTAS	722-3933	Satchema@humboldt.edu	Cerro
Maria Fernandez-Gimenez	970-297-8181	maria.fernandez-gimenez@colorado.edu	
CHARLIE JAQUES	719-672-3511	cjaques@colorado.edu	
Charlie Maestas	992-1690 719-1222		San Francisco
Eileen Maestas	719-588-0141	maestas@colorado.edu	CCOB
Andy T. Maestas	719-588-7667	amaestas@colorado.edu	Valley
Julie (Helen) Schmitt	719-588-8200	jschmitt@colorado.edu	
Alina Marquez Schmitt	719-588-8200	amarquez@colorado.edu	
Sherryn Power Schmitt	719-588-8200	spower@colorado.edu	La Jolla
Andi Valdez	719-672-3678	avaldez@colorado.edu	Cerro
Jon Cohen	971-404-1467	jcohen@colorado.edu	
Alex Lukens	719-358-2035	alukens@colorado.edu	
Gary Tallag	719-331-4584	gtallag@colorado.edu	
Andrea Tallag	303-450-9138	atallag@colorado.edu	
Leslie Volkov			Colorado Openlands
FRANK Vigil	719-588-4920	fvigil@colorado.edu	
Ronda Lobato	719-992-4472	lobato@colorado.edu	Montez chiquita
Joseph Lobato NRC			1111
Gregor MacGregor (U Law)	253-244-1879		Montez
Thomas NAVARRO	303-588-5838	tnavarro@colorado.edu	San Francisco
Rio de la Vista	719-850-2255	rio.de.la.vista@colorado.edu	
Tock Jacob	970-319-8462	jock@colorado.edu	Montez
Mascello Pacheco	672-4237		Montez
Craig Cotten	588-6653	craig.cotten@colorado.edu	
Kevin Terry	970-755-7852	kerry@colorado.edu	
Steven Romero	588-2500		
Dana Maestas	588-6831	ddvmaestas@gmail.com	Montez

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Made possible by:



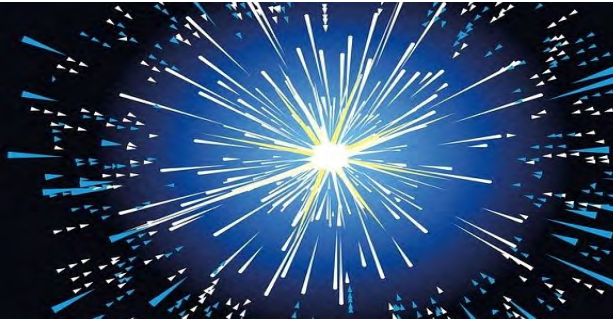
January 2022



El Parciante

Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association
PO Box 721 — 401 South Church Place
San Luis, Co 81152 719-298-6731

Happy New Year



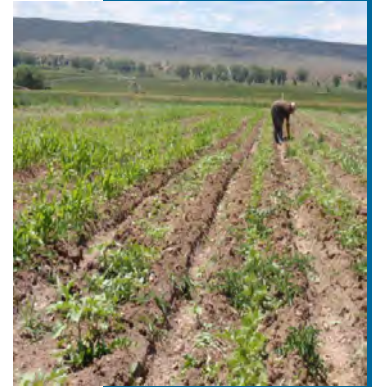
The Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association would like to wish you and your families a safe and healthy new year filled with moisture.

POSTPONED: 2022 Congreso de Acequias

The Association has decided to shift the annual Congreso from January to June this year to allow for an outdoor event. This year, we encourage irrigators to bring their families with them. We all know that farms and ranches require the work and support of the whole family and we hope to have everyone involved, especially as we hear from and teach the next generation.

We plan to hold student creative contests, inspired by acequia life and culture, so please keep an eye out for announcements in the schools. If you would like to honor a family or community member who has died within the last year, please email the name and photo of that person to: sangredecristo-acequia@gmail.com

El Parciante



**Sangre De Cristo Acequia
Association Mission
Statement**

**To Preserve Acequias,
Their Traditional
Governance
And Water Rights**

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Call for Board Members

The Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association is looking for new members to serve on the Board of Directors and we hope all will consider! All boards have practical, legal, and ethical duties. These responsibilities ensure proper oversight and enable the organization to make consistent progress toward its mission. The expectation of this board is that you attend and prepare for board meetings, which currently occur monthly in the evening. An individual must be over 18 to be considered. The majority of members must be surface water users in Costilla, Conejos, Huerfano, or Las Animas Counties to be eligible to serve on the board; however, those who are involved with organizations that work with the acequia community are also eligible.

Why join? This is a chance to share your ideas and talents to keep the acequia community strong. The Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association hosts the annual Congreso, facilitates community workshops, and partners with University of Colorado Law

on the Acequia Legal Assistance Program, to protect water rights and practices. As a board member, you can provide input to ensure that this work continues to be meaningful and explore future work and partnerships that are meaningful to your family, your ranch, your acequia. We are especially hopeful to find a new board member interested in serving on the Rio Grande Roundtable Basin to represent acequias. The Roundtable reviews funding requests aligned with the Colorado Water Plan and Basin Implementation Plan and gains valuable perspectives about issues impacting water in the San Luis Valley.

Process: If interested, please email or mail a letter of interest to the Association by February 28, 2022. Please include in the letter: name, contact information, acequia(s) on which you irrigate, why you would like to become a board member and what skills or experience would be helpful to the board. Names and a short description of each candidate will be shared in the March newsletter and candidates will be voted via

The Board & Staff

Delmer Vialpando, President
719-672-0944

Andy Manzanares, Vice President
719-588-7607

Norman Maestas, Secretary
719-672-3933

Charlie Maestas, Treasurer
719-672-3949

Jack Jacober
970-319-8962

Steven Romero
719-672-3372

Acequia Association Office
719-298-6731

ballot at an annual meeting of delegates.

Email letters of interest to: sangredecristoacequia@gmail.com

Mail letters of interest to: PO Box 721, San Luis, CO 81152





Designation of Delegates from Acequias

In order to elect board members (new and renewing), the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association asks that each acequia submit the name of their delegate using an acequia delegate form which will be attached to this newsletter. The SdCAA will determine whether to hold the election at Congreso or at a special annual meeting specifically for purposes of electing the board. Please choose a delegate at your annual meeting and return the form by April 15th+

Land, Water, Community

By Beatrice Medina (2017)

The land is what we use to survive.

The water is for our crops

The Community is stronger than you could imagine.

Each section of land has a place and a purpose

Each drop of water gives us what we have today.

The Community works together.

Look at what we have,

We have family

We have heart

We have passion

We have this because of the land.

Tell me what you see

Show me the way of life

Help me learn the ways of the community

The land gives us a home

It gives us food

It lets us be Free,

The land lives even with little water,

It shows its beauty

And gives us what it can.

My Community is all it can be,

It might not be perfect,

But it's perfect to me.

Acequia Assistance Project Update

After completing their fall semester training, our student-attorneys and supervising attorneys are hard at work for your community! Along with bylaws and water rights cases, students are examining the decrees catalogued in the watershed assessment for accuracy. The Project will provide pro bono services to help any acequia correct an inaccurate decree in water court. Other research groups are looking through the decrees in Conejos, Costilla, Huerfano, and Las Animas counties to identify additional acequias, or ditches that could qualify as acequias if the recognition statute was broadened. We recognize some ditches were established by acequia members after statehood, have been operating as acequias ever since, and would like to be recognized as acequias under the law. Identifying how many of these ditches exist is the first step in finding a solution to this problem. Please reach out to the Project if your ditch fits this description.

We are looking forward to seeing you all at the annual Congreso! You can speak with me there and fill out an application for legal services, or you can email me directly any time at Gregor.MacGregor@colorado.edu. Please reach out if we can help you with establishing or amending bylaws, researching title to water rights or land served by an acequia, filing for water rights, mediating a dispute on your ditch, or helping to record the historical use of water on your acequia.

Gregor MacGregor

Director, Acequia Assistance Project

Want to learn more about Colorado Water Law or your rights as an irrigator?

The Colorado Acequia Handbook is a free resource available on our website

www.coloradoacequias.org.



Calendar

- Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Meeting — the second Tuesday of each month. Beginning at 2:00 pm in Alamosa.
- SdCAA Monthly Meeting— The second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM Via Zoom meeting.
- Costilla County Conservancy District Meeting—The Third Friday of each month at 12:30pm at 324 Main St. San Luis.

Have a an event you want readers to know about? Please send the information to sangredecristoacequia@gmail.com



Water Use

Water in any stream, or river in Colorado is an adjudicated right . Therefore, it belongs to the water right holder, Acequia water is no different. The water that flows through the Culebra Watershed Acequias belongs to the parciantes (landowners) on the acequia, who use the water to irrigate their land. Using the water without this right is stealing and is in direct violation of Colorado Law.



New Mexico Acequia Association Online Series for Youth

NMAA is excited to share a series of online gatherings for young people from acequia communities – “Con Nuestras Corazones, Para Nuestra Gente (With Our Hearts, For Our People): Career & Life Paths To Care For Your Acequia Community”.

From February – June 2022 we will host EIGHT different online events – you are invited to join all the sessions, or just the ones that interest you most! Each one will focus on a different way that you can use your unique interests and skills to help care for your community and the land and water of New Mexico. Each event will feature inspiring local leaders who will share what they do with their career and life, why they love it, how they got there, and how you can get involved.

This series is designed for middle school, high school and college aged youth, but is open to all ages and families.

TO REGISTER: <https://forms.gle/7whi3G7qZ95gu8Uy5>

**** SCHEDULE ****

Free & Online (join by Zoom or phone)

ALL session are held from 5:00-6:00pm

- Wednesday February 16 – Feeding Our People: Acequia Farming, Ranching & Food Businesses
- Thursday February 24 – Leading & Organizing: The Work of Mayordomos & Commissioners
- Wednesday March 9 – Puro Manos: Adobe, Wood, Weaving & Herbal Medicine Making
- Thursday March 24 – The Heart of Acequia Culture: Artists, Musicians & Poets
- Thursday April 7 – El Agua No Se Vende: Law & Policy Advocacy
- Wednesday May 4 – Telling Our Stories: Acequia History, Storytelling & Documentarian Work
- Wednesday June 15 – Soil, Water, Forest & Climate Science to Care for Acequias
- Thursday June 30 – Using Tech to Protect Traditions: Infrastructure, Engineering & Mapping

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER: <https://forms.gle/7whi3G7qZ95gu8Uy5>

DETAILS ON OUR WEBSITE: <https://lasacequias.org/career-livelihood/>

Questions? Contact: emily@lasacequias.org / 505-995-9644



July 2021



El Parciante

Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association
 PO Box 721 – 401 South Church Place
 San Luis, Co 81152 719-298-6731

2021 Mini Congreso

Opportunities & Threats for Irrigators

Friday, August 20th @ 9:00am

Acequia Association Courtyard

San Luis, CO

Lunch will be served

We hope to see you there!



The 2021 Mini Congreso de Acequias will be held on August 20th at the courtyard at 401 Church Place. We will meet outside where participants can socially distance and learn about our Aquifers and a plan to understand the aquifer beneath us so that we can protect our historic water rights, Grazing on an acequia in dry times, acequia bylaws program, the Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area and using beavers to improve water retention. Lunch will be provided and as always the event is free!

Land PKS: A Tool for Producers

-Workshop geared towards acequias!

Sangre De Cristo Acequia Association Mission Statement

**To Preserve Acequias,
 Their Traditional
 Governance
 And Water Rights**

Inside this issue:

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Learn more about LandPKS at LandPotential.org.



Made possible by:



Soil Health

Jock Jacober

Soil depleted of its biology is what humans are now using to grow food. The consequence of this is poor food quality, excess use of water, and unnecessary carbon respiration. Recovering and nurturing soil biology and managing crops is the affordable way to reduce the detrimental effects of climate change caused by humans.

Dr. Johnson, a microbiologist from New Mexico State University, has studied and developed a technology to stimulate and recover the biology of food producing soil. In the last several years he has shared his research with the public, including the farming community.

Over the last several years, it has become known that fungus plays a pivotal role in the health of soil. The highest fungal counts are found in soils that support the massive forests of earth. Farm land that has been worked for generations contain fungal counts that are just above what is naturally found in desert conditions. This is principally due to the activity of plowing or cultivating which exposes the microbiology to air and sun, effectively killing it.

At a lecture in Taos, New Mexico, Johnson presented his work to a group of people that included several farmers from the San Luis Valley in Colorado. Among these was Patrick O'Neil, a soil scientist. Patrick has taken it upon himself to work with Dr. Johnson to scale his laboratory work to a commercial level. This allows it to be field tested on crops including potatoes,

corn, grains, and forages.

The compost technology developed by Dr. Johnson and his wife Hui-Chun Su, is now being used by Dave West of Jaroso, Colorado, a professional compost processor. The compost being developed into several different products can be administered on farmland. Testing and documentation are being handled by Patrick O'Neil. The high fungal compost technology developed by the Johnson's may have real implications in bringing viability to local food production in the arid west.

More information can be found on the internet by looking under the name of Dr. Johnson with regard to soil health. His YouTube presentations are quite impressive.

In 2018 Rivers and Birds hosted a presentation by Dr. David Johnson from New Mexico State University during which he described the method he and his wife had developed to create fungal dominated compost. The evening was well attended and took place at the Harwood auditorium. Several attendees used his method to create the compost which accelerates the microbial activity in soils, and leads to reduced inputs, especially water.

Several of us from the San Luis Valley in Colorado attended. Among those was Patrick O'Neil (719-588-0836). Patrick is a trained soil scientist and is the supervisor of the Mosca-Hooper Conservation District near Alamosa, Colorado. He and I came away with the obvious question as to whether this technology could be scaled up to the commer-

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Charlie Maestas, Treasurer

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Jock Jacober

970-319-8962

Dave Marquez

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Steven Romero

719-672-3372

Acequia Association Office

719-298-6731

cial level.

Patrick got to work and created funding for a scale up study. He and his group contracted with Dave West of Jaroso, Colorado (575-770-8841) to produce the compost on a commercial level.

Now in 2020 the first batch has been produced and is in different fields with different crops which are being studied for the efficacy of the process.

It is a bit good news during this period of bleak news.

My name is Jock Jacober (970-319-8962). I have farmed a good part of my life and have a passionate interest in good soil.

Congratulations to the SdCAA 2021 Scholarship Winner Feliciana Lobato

Feliciana Lobato is the daughter of Joseph & Ronda Lobato.

Feliciana graduated from Centennial High School, and is attending Adams State University. She is earning her Bachelor's degree in Communication & Media Studies, and minoring in Water Leadership, as well as Philosophy.



Calendar

- Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Meeting — the second Tuesday of each month. Beginning at 2:00 pm in Alamosa.
- SdCAA Monthly Meeting— The second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 PM Via Zoom meeting. Have a an event you want readers to know about? Please send the information to Faleen Lobato at sangredecristo-acequia@gmail.com
- Castilla County Conservancy District Meeting—The Third Friday of each month at 12:30pm at 324 Main St. San Luis.
- SdCAA office hours are by appointment just give us a call at 719-298-6731

Water Use

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Get To Know the Acequia Association Board

Alexandria Taylor

Mr. Charlie Maestas is the treasurer of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association. Charlie was one of the first members of the association when it was previously known as the Colorado Acequia Association. He has been involved with the Acequia Association for 22 years. When he first joined, Charlie's "main objective was to keep the water with the land." This was very important to him because "water is precious and should be protected, and not sold, it should be kept here and with the land." In Charlie's opinion, the biggest contributions the association has made are writing the bylaws for each acequia, and when Mr. Devon Pena and Mr. Joe Gallegos got the state to recognize the acequias. Charlie is very satisfied with the system used in the San Francisco ditch; he believes that it works well. In the future, Charlie would like to see more people from the community get involved in the Congreso. A piece of advice Charlie would give to the future generation is to "do the best you can to protect your water, because that's the most important thing there is. Without water there is nothing." Another piece of advice he would give is to protect the bylaws of the association. He also encourages future members to be "in it with your heart and soul." Charlie is also willing to work with students to teach them about the acequias and their bylaws. Through communica-

tion with Charlie, we can learn plenty and increase the community participation.

Mr. Jock Jacober is a director on the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association board of directors. Jock had been farming for quite some time around Colorado before moving to San Acacio. Before coming to the valley, Jock raised cattle and the grass-fed beef for Whole Foods Markets. When Jock came to farm in San Acacio, he got out of the grass-fed beef business. Although Jock had worked with water rights all over Colorado, he felt especially lucky to be in the valley where he was surrounded by the mountains which provide us with our water. Jock got involved with the Acequia Association after attending the Congreso, because they were making an impact and doing the right thing and he wanted to be part of a group that was doing this. The greatest contributions the association has made have been the bylaws which govern the water of the acequias, and the Congreso which brings people together. Jock's plan for the association is to protect the aquifers because "they are the best storage of water God has given us." He also hopes to see continuity in the future for the Acequia Association because without a board there "wouldn't be an Acequia Association." He wishes that some women would join the board because they have different ideas about nurturing the Earth. One piece of advice he would give to the future generations is to "keep growing your own food" because it is "part of your life as a human being to keep growing food." He feels

that this is especially important because it encourages each of us to nurture our relationships with the Earth. With help from Jock, we can all learn more about our aquifers and how to protect them; and nurturing our relationships with the Earth.

Mr. Steven Romero, our current Costilla County commissioner is also a member of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association. He was born and raised in San Luis. Steven was appointed to become a member in January at the annual Congreso. He is a sixth generation *parciante*.

Mr. Dave Marquez spent 25 years serving in the United States Army and now volunteers with the schools and is a member of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association. Dave joined the Acequia Association in 2014 when he began attending meetings before his uncle, Ernest Sanchez was about to retire. He got involved because he was interested in learning about how the acequias worked and wanted to make things better for everyone. In Dave's opinion, the biggest contributions made by the association have been educating the people about the "water rights and how precious the water is." Something that sticks out the most to Dave while working with the acequias is when he was learning about how to grow crops, save land, the purpose of the acequias, and

and how to graze properly. In the future, Dave would like to see an increase in education about the acequias and have better communication with all the acequia boards in the community. He hopes to create a system that is equal for everyone because “whatever is the right thing is what we should be doing.” While serving on the board, Dave thinks about “what we do will impact the next generation.” If Dave could give one piece of advice to the future Acequia Association members it would be to “get your bylaws done and incorporate them.” We can all learn plenty from Dave and work to educate others as well.

Thank you to all the board members of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association for your time and thoughtful answers. The knowledge you each shared was extremely interesting and helpful.

Got an Article Idea?
Let us know, we would love
to hear it!
Call us at
719-298-6731





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El Parciante

Acequia Association Partners with Centennial School District and the Work Experience Program By Alexandria Taylor

Hello, my name is Alexandria Taylor. As a participant in the Centennial High School Work Experience Education program, I am interning as an author for the *El Parciante* newsletter. The newsletter that is distributed six times a year by the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association.

I have lived in the San Luis Valley all my life, and I am grateful to have grown up in such a beautiful and tight-knit community. I am a senior at Centennial High School. My parents are Aaron and Pam Taylor, and my grandparents are Orlando and Lydia Taylor, and Oliver and Esther Manzanares.

I participate in many school and community activities. At school, I play volleyball, basketball, cheerleading, and am also a representative for my class in student council. In the community, I am a youth consultant for the Costilla County Prevention Partners youth coalition. I was also a member of the Move Mountains Youth Group where I had the opportunity to deliver a speech regard-

ing GMO's at the Acequia Association Congress.

Living here has taught me to value family, as well as the importance of water and the outdoors. I have grown up on the farm. Since I was a little girl, I have always had a front row seat to branding, irrigating, and other farm necessities like, cutting, baling, and bucking bales.

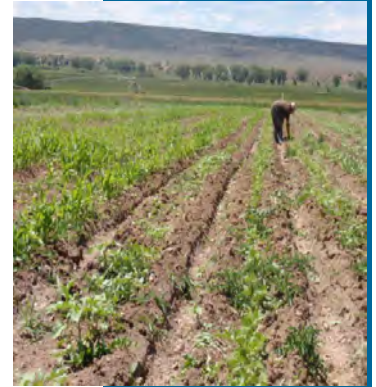
We have been taught to do things the way my grandpa taught my dad and uncle. My dad always says that my grandpa had a way of doing things and has an explanation about why that way is the best. On walks through our property with my parents, or on drives with my dad through the field, I learned about the acequia names and how the rotation for the San Francisco irrigation works.

Anyone who works on the farm knows that problems often arise. One time, my family and I were all bucking bales in a field that had plenty of ditches. Someone instructed me to go to the truck for something. The trip to the truck went great, but sadly, I cannot say the same about the trip back. My dad started

saying "be careful with all the ditches, don't hurt yourselves anybody." As I looked up to watch as he spoke and answer him back, I stepped down and my ankle popped. Pain immediately shot through my ankle and I fell to the ground. Grabbing my ankle and crying on the ground, my parents, uncles, and cousins ran to me. After hopping to the truck, I was taken home where I stayed alone while the rest finished bringing in the bales.

As a member of the *El Parciante* newsletter team, my goal is to compile engaging and informational content. I also hope to conduct interviews with other Acequia Association members.

I am very excited to be a new member of the Acequia Association, and I look forward to speaking with other members. Stay tuned for more content, and I hope you enjoy.



Sangre De Cristo Acequia Association Mission Statement

**To Preserve Acequias,
Their Traditional
Governance
And Water Rights**

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Bolita Beans In Danger of Extinction

This mouthwatering, rich, creamy, nutritious, and easily digested food is grown in the San Luis Valley. Can you guess what it is? I am sure some of you guessed, it is the bolita bean!

Bolita beans are small, almost salmon-colored beans that are very high in protein, and much easier on digestion than other beans, such as pinto beans. Many say bolita beans resemble little balls, and “bolita” means little ball in Spanish.

They were first cultivated in Peru 10,000 years ago. Then, Spanish Settlers brought them to New Mexico. After this, the crop spread throughout the four corners, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah, where American Indians included them as part of their diets. Bolita beans are an especially good crop to grow in the San Luis Valley and throughout the Southwest, because of their deep root system which allows them to withstand droughts and drier climates.

Unfortunately, bolita beans are not grown in our community as much as they used to be. Because of this, these precious heirloom seeds are in danger of extinction and need us to save them. Eugene Jacquez is a person in our community who saved his grandmother’s heirloom bolita beans and began to grow the crop. Eugene remembers as a young boy helping his grandmother plant, hoe, and harvest bolita beans.

His planting and harvesting began about 10 years ago when Eugene’s cousin gave him a 10-pound canister of his grandmother’s bolita

beans. Eugene planted them. The first year he planted them, he did not get too many, but every year that he continued to plant bolita beans, he began harvesting more and more. Through the tedious harvesting process, Eugene brings in 1,200- 1,500 bolita beans. Since he has been growing bolita beans, Eugene has not bought pinto beans. He says, “I can grow pinto beans, but they are just not as good.” In fact, Eugene’s heirloom seeds won the best tasting bean contest two years in a row. This is how we know that nothing can beat the incredible taste of bolita beans!

Here is how to grow bolita beans. The seeds can be planted as soon as the temperatures reach 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit. First, prepare your soil by covering it with about 2-4 inches of aged manure or compost 7-10 days before planting. The bolita bean grows from a small, round, tanish colored seed. These seeds should be planted 1 inch down, 4-6 inches apart, with at least three feet between rows.

Now it is time to water the seeds. It is very important not to soak the soil which should only be damp. A useful rule of thumb for watering is light watering after planting, medium when it begins flowering, and heavy before harvesting. After 50-55 days the crop is mature. The green, leafy plant with a brown stem grows to be about 2 feet tall. It holds green pods that are smaller than the palm of your hand.

Once the beans are mature, it is time to harvest them. The first step is pulling the plants out and leaving

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them to dry. This allows time for the beans in the pods to harden. Once hardened, the beans are passed through a thrasher where the beans fall out of the pod. Finally, after this long process, you get the greatest reward, eating a warm bowl of bolita beans.

I encourage you all to first, try bolita beans, and second, preserve these precious heirloom seeds. Eugene and many others have taken the first step in preserving the heirloom bolita beans. This issue is larger than just one or two people, it is a community effort. If we all work together, we can preserve the precious heirloom bolita bean.

Bolita Beans with Chicos Recipe

By—Teresa Dovalpage

Ingredients:

1-pound bolita beans
 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
 1 diced onion
 4 medium garlic cloves, finely chopped
 12 ounces bacon
 1 can of peeled tomatoes
 1 tablespoons salt
 2 tablespoons brown sugar
 2 cups chicos
 4 to 5 cups water

Place all in a large pressure cooker and start adding water until the beans are well covered. Cover and cook, following your pressure cooker's instructions, on high pressure for 20 minutes. Remove the pressure cooker from the heat and allow the pressure to come down naturally for at least 15 minutes. Quick release any pressure left in the cooker before removing the lid.

Preparation:

Soak the bolita beans overnight. Sauté onions and garlic in a large skillet until soft, then add the other ingredients, except water, and cook briefly to combine.



Calendar

- Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Meeting — the second Tuesday of each month. Beginning at 2:00 pm in Alamosa.
- SdCAA Monthly Meeting— The second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 PM Via Zoom /Call line meeting.
- Have a an event you want readers to know about? Please send the information to us at Sangredecestrocequia@gmail.com

Water Use

Water in any stream, or river in Colorado is an adjudicated right . Therefore, it belongs to the water right holder, Acequia water is no different. The water that flows through the Culebra Watershed Acequias belongs to the parcientes (landowners) on the acequia, who use the water to irrigate their land. Using the water without this right is stealing and is in direct violation of Colorado Law.

The Acequia By-laws Legal Assistance Program

OPEN TO ALL ACEQUIAS IN COSTILLA AND CONEJOS COUNTIES

The Acequia By-laws assistance program will be accepting applications for 2021 water year. We are asking that interested acequias please contact SDCAA office by calling 719-672-0944. SDCAA, President will get your contact information and will get your acequia set up with an application and be able to walk you through the application process. We are asking that all applications be submitted to Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association by August 8, 2021. This will allow time for the bylaws team to review the applications and then assign your acequia to a legal team to develop your by-laws. Due to the Covid pandemic, we are scheduling this first meeting with your lawyer via a Zoom meeting at the Acequia office.

These assistance programs are made possible by grants awarded to the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association, Colorado Open Lands, and the University of Colorado Law School. They are also a result of the dedication of attorneys who care about the acequia community. Because of grant funding, we are limited in the number and type of applications we can accept. Please submit an appli-

cation through the SDCAA. The by-laws team will review and prioritize the applications, and if your case is accepted the attorneys and student-attorneys at Colorado Law will plan on meeting you with you via Zoom meeting at the SDCAA office in early September, at a time that fits everyone's schedule. This is a must attend meeting, so that the attorney can get started.

For the bylaws project, applications will be considered based on a number of factors:

1) acequias that do not have any existing bylaws will be prioritized, 2) we strive to serve a balance of large and small acequias, but acequias that serve a larger number of irrigators may be prioritized, 3) avoiding conflicts of interest, 4) willingness of parciantes to share information that they learned with others in their community (when applicable), and lastly, all else being equal, an application received earlier will have a higher priority.

BYLAWS ASSISTANCE

This is a free program that will "pair" an acequia with a team of law students and an experienced attorney to help the acequia with the following:

Develop new bylaws or review and revise existing acequia bylaws

Provide legal guidance on issues such as voting, enforcement, insurance, etc.

Incorporate or re-incorporate with the state as an acequia ditch corporation (this is optional!)

In order to receive this assistance, we want to know that an acequia is dedicated to the process of working through these issues and that there will be at least one person on the ditch that is willing to be in regular communication with the acequia association and the assigned by-laws student/attorney. Please be willing to host your law students for your annual ditch cleaning – they are excited to help and it is a good way for them to understand the acequia.

If you're not sure whether you want help, but would like to speak to someone from the acequia association, please contact Delmer Martinez at 719-672-0944 or Judy Lopez at 719-580-5300.

2021 *Congreso de Acequias* Moves to an Outdoor Event Due to Covid

Due to the Covid pandemic the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association is postponing the 2021 Congreso de Acequias to the spring/summer. Our hope is to be able to meet

outside where participants can socially distance and provide on site exhibits around grazing, soil health, and irrigating in dry times. We have also opted to extend the terms of current board

members by a few months to facilitate the election of new board members at the Congreso. We will keep every one posted as things finalize.

Get to Know the SdCAA Board By Alexandria Taylor

In recent interviews with Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association board members, we take an exciting dive into each of their lives and experiences with the acequias. The board members are Delmer Vialpondo, Andy Manzanares, Norman Maestas, Charlie Maestas, Jock Jacober, Steven Romero, and Dave Marquez.

Mr. Delmer Vialpondo is the president of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association. Delmer is a fourth-generation farmer who purchased his own farm in 2002 where he taught his children the way of the farm and how to irrigate. He became a member of the Acequia Association about 18-20 years ago because he had goals to become the president and do his part to improve the acequias. As a member of the association Delmer has “learned a lot” and believes he is “never too old to learn something new.” In fact, he says, “I’m still learning.” An important memory Delmer has of working with the acequias is cleaning the ditches in the Spring. This sticks out to him the most because it ensures that “every drop we’re, [the farmers], entitled to gets to the farm.” In Delmer’s opinion, the greatest contributions by the Acequia Association are the Vallejo’s head gates, the trash racks, and their ongoing collaboration with the San Francisco ditch to get pipeline. In the future, Delmer hopes to keep the organization going by getting the youth involved. He says, “if youth get involved, I’m willing to teach them.” With help from Delmer, the next generation can learn a lot and continue the successful functioning of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association.

Mr. Andy Manzanares is the vice president of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association. Andy started working with the conservancy district, then joined the Acequia Association about 8 years ago because he has “always wanted to be involved in community affairs.” He believes that water is very important and wanted to assist the association with creating a stronger organization by helping them to become financially stable. When Andy first began working with the conservancy district, he recalls that Texas made attempts to pump water from the Culebra drainage. Andy organized and fought this, and halted Texas’ attempts to pump water. While recalling this experience, Andy says, “We have to be able to protect our resources here. This is all the water we got and when that’s gone, there’s no more.” In the future, Andy would like to see the association continue and be able to function in a financially stable state. Once financially stable, he hopes that the association can hire more staff to educate the community about important issues regarding the acequias. Andy’s main goal is to, “get the association to a functional capacity so that it can be an asset to the community.” With Andy’s guidance and support, the Acequia Association can expand its possibilities.

Mr. Norman Maestas is the secretary of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association. Norman left to the Navy in 1971 but returned to the valley. On the land he has, some from his father, and some he has purchased on his own, Norman farms, cuts alfalfa, and raises sheep. Although he has always worked with the acequias, he joined the Acequia Association in 2011 because he was interested in what it was doing and wanted to get involved. Norman shared some interesting history about the Acequia Association. One thing he shared was that in 1998, the association applied for a 501 C3, which is certification that recognizes the Acequia Association as a non-profit organization. Another important event in the association’s history Norman shared was that in 2009, the state statute of the association was passed by the legislature. In Norman’s opinion, the best contributions of the association are the partnership with the New Mexico Acequia Association, the collaboration with several acequias to develop bylaws that prevent the purchasing of our water and having our water rights taken away, the Congresso, and the many certificates it has received. In the future, Norman would like to “hopefully get some younger people involved.” Another goal of Norman’s is to educate the community about issues surrounding the acequias to encourage the community members to fight the issue of water being taken from the valley. Through collaboration with Norman, the board can educate and increase the community outreach.

To be continued in our next issue.



El Parciante

Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association
PO Box 721 – 401 South Church Place
San Luis, Co 81152 719-298-6731

Farewell To Judy Lopez



The Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association has partnered with Colorado Open Lands since 2011 to help host the Congreso and support our mission to preserve acequias, their traditional governance and water rights. Judy Lopez joined Colorado Open Lands in 2015 and grew this partnership, expanding Congreso attendance, hosting additional workshops on water rights issues, and completing 5 conservation easements to permanently protect land and water rights on 10 different acequias. Judy's passion for engaging the next generation, initially as a teacher and then as a teacher trainer, applied to acequias as well. Judy coordinated a student acequia day and worked with the SdCAA to bring on an intern, who is now employed by the association and planning the next Congreso! Judy has left COL and will no longer be working with the SdCAA, due to unforeseen health issues. Judy's dedication, creativity, and humor will be sorely missed, but her legacy will continue in the projects she completed to benefit the community. Thank you, Judy!



**Sangre De Cristo Acequia
Association Mission Statement**

**To Preserve Acequias,
Their Traditional
Governance
And Water Rights**

Inside this issue:

Upcoming Events

Utton Center hosts Workshop

"Land Grants, Acequias and the Law"

<https://lawschool.unm.edu/news/2021/09/utton-center-hosts-cle-workshop.html>

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Upper Culebra Watershed Assessment

The field assessment began in May and by June, boots were on the ground taking measurements and evaluating conditions. For those of you who haven't met me, I am Andrea Taillacq with Tailwater Limited, and I am the project manager for the assessment team. I want to start off by saying how much I have appreciated working in the Culebra basin and how great those individuals we have worked with have been!

The Costilla County Conservancy District has been instrumental in this assessment especially Ronda Lobato and Judy Lopez. I know there are many others that were engaged in identifying the need and making this happen and will be active in the future for implementing projects, participating in decisions, and providing support.

Keep an eye out on social media over the next few months as we start to finalize data and preview some of the information that will be included in the final report. I hope to have some fun with some of the posts as well, please join in the surveys and quizzes.

In the field by the numbers:

18 field technicians from 4 consultants – RedFISH Environmental (3), SWCA Incorporated (7), AloTerra Restoration Services (4), and Tailwater Limited (4).
10 water quality samples were analyzed by the Bureau of Reclamation,

thank you for providing these valuable services!

>50 additional field parameter sites were evaluated for pH and Specific Conductance.

23 aquatic habitat sites were sampled including 22 Macroinvertebrate samples.

Approximately 200 stream/road crossings were visually assessed.

39 sites were surveyed for geomorphic condition.

100 tree stand measurements were taken.

Approximately 500 hours were spent mapping riparian conditions

The team is working through the data including QA/QC formatting, and summarizing the findings. Thank you to those individuals who completed either the paper surveys that were passed out at Congreso or the Google survey, your input is invaluable. As part of the historical land use, Ernesto de la Hoz with RedFISH will be conducting individual interviews in October to help guide the assessment recommendations to fit the community vision.

We need your *help*, there were a few Acequia's we were not able to find using the decrees and aerial imagery. If you could please take a look at the following link <https://arcg.is/1LfOOn0> to see if the information we have is, or is not correct. We are specifically looking at location of acequia and if we identified all of the structures and their location correctly. If you don't see your structure let me know so we can update the map. Please contact me

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if you have any questions/comments, would just like to chat about the assessment, or are curious about what we do!

Andrea Taillacq,

303-250-9138 (call or text) or

andrea@tailwaterlimited.com.

Thank you!



Acequia Assistance Project Update

It is a pleasure to join the Acequia Assistance Project as its Director and thank you for the warm welcome at the Summer Congreso. I am looking forward to spending more of my time with the acequia community after five years as a student volunteer and supervising attorney. We just completed our first training for the year and have a bumper crop of new students who are excited to come down the Valley and work with your acequia.

The Project will continue to offer our services to help acequias draft bylaws, incorporate, file for water rights, and conduct title searches. This includes revisiting bylaws you would like to have amended, or finishing a set of bylaws that were never adopted. If you have previously been a client of the Project and would like to have more work done, please let us know.

We will also start providing several new services to acequias this year.

The first is mediation. In a mediation our students will be paired with a mediator to help you with a conflict, whether with another parciante or between ditches. Mediators do not represent either party in a dispute but help them create and implement their own solution. Mediators also do not provide legal advice, though some disputes do touch on the law, they are focused on resolving the issue between the parties outside of the legal system.

The second is what we will call a 'review' of your acequia. In a review our students will collect information from your parciantes on how the acequia has irrigated, record the history of your ditch, and review your water rights decree for accuracy. The Watershed Assessment has shown some headgates are not in their described positions, and that is one issue the Project can fix for you in water court. Having written records of your acequia's practices will also help maintain your acequia's traditions if new members move onto your ditch or if the state requests information.

Please let me know if you are interested in having a legal or mediation team from the Project work with you. Plan on your first meeting to occur over the winter, likely during the annual Congreso. Again, if you need your bylaws revised or if you want to complete a set of bylaws that were started by the Project, please apply to have another group assigned to your acequia.

Gregor MacGregor

Director, Acequia Assistance Project

401 UCB, University of Colorado Law School

Boulder, CO 80309

gregor.macgregor@colorado.edu

(303) 735-5880



Calendar

- Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Meeting — the second Tuesday of each month. Beginning at 2:00 pm in Alamosa.
- SdCAA Monthly Meeting— The second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 PM Via Zoom meeting. Have a an event you want readers to know about? Please send the information to Faleen Lobato at sangredecristo-acequia@gmail.com
- New Office Hours are Monday and Wednesday 8:00AM—4:00PM
- Costilla County Conservancy District Meeting—The Third Friday of each month at 12:30pm at 324 Main St. San Luis.



Water Use

Water in any stream, or river in Colorado is an adjudicated right. Therefore, it belongs to the water right holder. Acequia water is no different. The water that flows through the Culebra Watershed Acequias belongs to the parciantes (landowners) on the acequia, who use the water to irrigate their land. Using the water without this right is stealing and is in direct violation of Colorado Law.