

**2024 PROPOSED  
WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE  
for the  
WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

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Sen. Shannon D. Pinto	

**Proposed Work Plan**

The Water and Natural Resources Committee was created by the New Mexico Legislative Council on March 25, 2024. The committee will focus on the following topics, as scheduling permits:

**A. reports from water- and natural-resources-related executive agencies, including statutory reports, agency initiatives, legislation passed and budget and staffing needs, including:**

1. implementation of the Water Security Planning Act and regional water plans and alternative models for funding water resilience projects;
2. a review of the 2024 New Mexico state water plan;
3. an update on the status, distributions and future of the New Mexico Unit Fund;
4. an update on the strategic water reserve;

5. implementation of the Water Data Act and aquifer mapping program;
6. an update on the community solar program and potential for expansion;
7. renewable energy production tax credits, advanced energy tax credits and the advanced energy deduction;
8. the Community Energy Efficiency Development Program;
9. Oil and Gas Act violations, lawsuits and penalty amounts;
10. the San Juan Generating Station Facility and Mine Remediation and Restoration Study Act updates;
11. progress of the Rio Grande Trail Commission;
12. updates from departmental tribal liaisons on state-tribal collaborations and cross-boundary resource management; and
13. a working group report on advancing citizen science at the state agency level; and

**B. other proposed 2024 work plan topics:**

1. the Low Flow Conveyance Channel;
2. Oil and Gas Act changes, including:
  - a. establishing in statute the 98% gas capture requirement for permits;
  - b. allowing for surface setbacks for oil and gas wells;
  - c. increasing bonding, fee and civil penalty amounts; and
  - d. increasing rules and limits on well transfers between operators;
3. water use and tracking in oil and gas operations, including produced water reuse and off-site use and compliance with the Produced Water Act;
4. Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) reform and cattle growers' input on the NMDGF;
5. the impacts of lead bullets and tackle on wildlife;

6. the statewide beaver management plan (Senate Memorial 4 (2014));
7. "species of greatest conservation need" funding and uses;
8. Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund update;
9. wildlife policy on elk, Mexican wolves and prairie chickens, including the "Elk Private Lands Use System", NMDGF four-year elk rule and state and federal compensation for Mexican wolf depredation;
10. enforcement of stream access rights;
11. review of the waters of the United States and new successes in regional planning efforts, including an update on the Colorado River Compact and potential compact dispute implications and the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and potential use to meet out-of-state Navajo Nation needs;
12. farmer and rancher perspectives on water;
13. farming and ranching opportunities for young people, including funding for National FFA Organization training programs;
14. land stewardship and economic opportunities for farmers, ranchers, food hubs and businesses; and updates on the governor's Food Initiative, the New Mexico Grown program and the New Mexico Food Charter and annual "report card";
15. methodologies and ongoing initiatives for cleaning water;
16. the role of hydrogen in the state and private sector;
17. Energy Transition Act updates, including the dilemma of securing rare earth minerals for, impacts to land from and recycling options for solar and wind projects;
18. pore space ownership;
19. the State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department budget overview and proposed fee increases;
20. the proposed Green Amendment to the Constitution of New Mexico (House Joint Resolution 4 (2024) and Senate Joint Resolution 8 (2024));

21. an overview of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS, in our aquifers and products and potential regulatory changes to protect consumers and the environment;
22. solar tax credit application process, funding and sustainability of program;
23. carbon capture and sequestration;
24. water use and contamination from fracking and mining operations and the potential for fracking-related earthquakes;
25. recycling and anti-littering policies to address plastic pollution and the use of single-use plastics and Styrofoam;
26. Solid Waste Act modernization and an overview of municipal waste management, the net import of landfill waste and the potential to turn waste into commodities through composting and waste-to-energy industries;
27. Water Quality Act revisions, including a surface water permitting program, changes to the toxic pollutant list and federal funding to address contaminants in public water systems;
28. creation of a community response, investigation and remediation program and fund to address abandoned contaminated sites;
29. Department of Environment fees and funding changes (Senate Bill 228 (2024));
30. effects of solar energy development on wildlife;
31. updates on efforts to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions and establish wildlife crossings (Wildlife Corridors Act and Senate Bill 72 (2023));
32. resource adequacy and electricity needs for growth of the oil and gas industry in the southeast region;
33. the public health risks posed by extreme heat and the proposed statewide public health and climate program (House Bill 104 (2024));
34. mining proposals in the Upper Pecos watershed;
35. a report from the State Climatologist on weather station installations;
36. reports on water rights litigation and settlements;

37. updates on the status and accessibility of the climate tax credits;
38. electric and solar for school buses and buildings;
39. an update on the electric grid and distribution needs;
40. planning for sediment and debris removal after flood events related to fires and climate change;
41. "Blue Workforce Development": building up the state's water infrastructure workforce;
42. tools and policies to expand water conservation and efficiency for climate-resilient agriculture;
43. an update on ground water management and aquifer characterization and monitoring;
44. an overview of river health and updates on the Active Water Resource Management Program and the River Stewardship Program;
45. implications of the *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency* decision and the need for surface water monitoring and permitting programs; and
46. water supply augmentation alternatives, including brackish water desalination, wastewater reuse and cloud seeding.

**Water and Natural Resources Committee  
2024 Proposed Meeting Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
May 28	Santa Fe
July 22-23	TBD
August 26-27	TBD
September 26-27	TBD
October 28-29	TBD
November 25-26	Santa Fe

**Proposed meeting locations:**

Socorro/New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Las Cruces/New Mexico State University, Hobbs, Chama, Ruidoso/Artesia/Roswell and Silver City