

Sections 73-20-25 through 73-20-48 NMSA 1978 is the summary description of the New Mexico Soil and Water Conservation District Act (Act). The San Francisco Soil and Water Conservation District (District) is the administrative body responsible for the dictates of the law in Catron County within the boundaries of the District. The District was organized on April 14, 1942 by the farmers and ranchers in the area to promote conservation on private lands. Since that time there have been three additions to the district. The first on May 9, 1944, the second addition on July 1, 1957, and the third addition was on November 12, 1957 when the Luna SWCD joined the San Francisco District. and there are approximately 3,008,534 acres within SFSWCD boundaries.

The District is a governmental subdivision of the state, a public body politic and corporate. The Board of Supervisors (Board) is charged with matters affecting soil erosion and floodwater and sediment damage. As such, the duties of the Board include the coordination of matters of research, investigations, and surveys with government agencies. The results should be published and disseminated along with remedies and control measures related to such findings.

The District will coordinate projects on the land with federal, state, and local agencies for such remedy and enhancement of the resource base. The District is charged with assisting, contracting, and rendering financial aid to the stakeholder community.

The body of work acquired over time must be expanded into parallel, comprehensive plans for natural resource conservation and development and utilization. This includes flood prevention and soil erosion control.

By law and mutual good, projects of any government agency imagined, planned, and undertaken for the matters of soil conservation, erosion control or prevention, flood prevention, or matters of turf enhancement, brush control, or wildlife and livestock system enhancements should be acquired and or managed by the District. As such, the District is the agent and instrumentality for state or federal government acquisition, land designation, construction, operation, or administration of such projects.

In order for the foregoing to be accomplished, the District must have a comprehensive and dynamic Land Use Plan (Plan). The Plan is required to take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus and coordinate them so they meet the needs of the local land user. The Plan is predicated on the District always being in full knowledge of agency Schedules of Proposed Actions (SOPA), state agency plans, and local government planning.

The Plan is also dependent on enhancing and strengthening stakeholder presence culminating from strong local custom and culture. Such a matter of importance must be judged on zero net loss of privately held lands that equates positively to concentration of assisted projects.

Within the algorithm of control of zero net loss, farm and rangeland must further be protected on the same basis. All other matters explicit and implicit in the Plan strongly adhere to that basic premise.

Most importantly, the soil and water resource pool must be protected from agency and governmental creation of willing sellers emanating from stepwise reduction of productivity from restrictive land use designations.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) policies have been increasingly driven by litigation, which has diverted attention and resources away from species recovery. It is this District's policy, to the maximum extent possible including 'cooperating agency status' and 'coordination' as defined by congressional action, to

participate in all decision processes associated with federal and state agencies management actions relating to all sensitive, threatened, and endangered species, including candidate species.

The District will adhere to the dictates of the law and seek those actions that will satisfy the standards of consistency review within the process. In that manner, expectations of customs and culture will be honored. A Land Use Plan is crafted to address those major issues.