

NM WRRI Agricultural Water Resilience Program FAQs

These answers were updated on July 24, 2025 and are subject to revision.

General Program Questions:

1. Who is eligible to apply for AgWRP funding?

Eligible applicants include New Mexico public entities that partner with ranchers or farmers. These public entities include soil and water conservation districts, irrigation and conservancy districts, watershed districts, acequia and community ditch associations, tribal governments, or local governments (see RFA section 1.4 for more details).

Note: Individual ranchers and farmers must partner with an eligible public entity to apply.

2. Can a soil and water conservation district apply on behalf of an acequia association, or does the acequia association need to apply themselves?

Acequia associations are themselves eligible applicants, but they can partner with a soil and water conservation district in addition to partnering with a rancher or farmer.

3. Are colleges and universities eligible applicants?

Colleges and universities are not eligible applicants, but they are definitely eligible to participate in these projects.

4. Can a researcher or professor apply?

Researchers may collaborate on a project, but only an eligible applicant may partner with a rancher or farmer to apply.

5. Does an eligible applicant have to partner with a rancher or farmer?

Yes, a complete application must include an eligible applicant and a partner rancher or farmer.

6. Can the partner be a producer association? For example, a water conservation project at a cooperative production facility.

An individual rancher or farmer may self-identify as part of a project or facility, but must be identified individually.

7. If a tribe applies, who would be the farmer or rancher? Or would an Agriculture Department suffice?

The farmer or rancher may be represented by the Agriculture Department but must be identified individually.

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8. Is a for-profit project within a tribe an eligible partner? To clarify, our tribe has for-profit agricultural enterprises within the tribe. Do these "in-house" farmers count as partners?

An individual farmer or rancher may be represented by the for-profit agricultural enterprise but must be identified individually.

9. Can an eligible applicant submit multiple applications?

Yes, an eligible applicant can submit multiple applications with different partners, but they must have the capacity to support all the projects they apply for.

10. Can one application serve more than one partner rancher or farmer?

Yes, an eligible applicant can submit one application with multiple partners. Each partner would need to sign the application and the eligible applicant would need to include individual budgets and water monitoring and assessment agreements for each partner in the group. Keep in mind, the max award for a single project is \$250,000.

11. Can the eligible applicant and the partner rancher or farmer be the same entity?

No, the eligible applicant and the partner rancher or farmer cannot be the same entity.

12. Can multiple properties/types of projects be considered on one application?

Multiple projects can be submitted by one eligible applicant, but they need to have their own application.

13. Can multiple technologies be included in one application?

If there is one eligible applicant and one farmer or rancher, then multiple technologies can be included in one application.

14. Is participation in the Monitoring and Water Impact Assessment required?

No, awarded applicants are not required to collaborate with NM WRRI for monitoring, but are highly encouraged. NM WRRI will install and maintain monitoring equipment, collect data, and analyze project outcomes. Participation is formalized through the Monitoring & Water Impact Assessment Agreement found on the program website.

15. What kinds of monitoring equipment might be installed?

NM WRRI may install devices such as flow meters, soil moisture sensors, rain gauges, and stock tank level sensors. See Appendix B of the RFA for more information.

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16. What are the reporting requirements?

Awardees must submit quarterly progress reports and a final report including data analysis, lessons learned, before/after photos, etc. Templates for all reports will be provided. Payment of final invoices is contingent upon NM WRRI's acceptance of the final report.

17. Is there any need from the applicant to engage in reporting of end-of-season results if the applicant agrees to the monitoring and water impact assessment?

Each project that is funded will submit quarterly reports as well as a final report and they are not exclusive just to the water monitoring and impact assessment part of the project. Report templates will be sent to the funded projects that will have detailed instructions on what needs to be included in the reports.

18. Can I get technical support designing my project?

Applicants need to rely on the technical support outlined in their proposal.

19. Can an eligible applicant apply for project design and engineering now and follow up at a second funding period for project construction?

This program is only designed to have one funding period so it would be highly recommended to put design, engineering, and construction together in one project application.

20. Is there a specific land designation (private, federal, state)?

The land designation is not restricted, however, if the proposed project is on public land, the eligible applicant and partner must have the appropriate permissions to implement all components of the proposed project.

21. What is the project timeline?

Projects will have two phases. The first expenditure phase requires that all project funds be expended from September 15, 2025, through June 30, 2026. The second completion and assessment phase will extend until June 30, 2027.

Application Questions:

22. How do I apply?

Submit your application on the program website at: <https://nmwrri.nmsu.edu/nmwrri-agwrp/nmwrri-agwrp.html>. The deadline is Monday, July 28, 2025, at 5:00 PM MT. More details are available on the program website.

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23. Where can I get help with the application?

NM WRRI hosted an informational webinar and Q&A on July 1, 2025. The slides from the presentation are included along with webinar recording on the program website. You may also email questions to: nmwri@nmsu.edu with the subject line: *"FY26 Agricultural Water Resilience Application Questions."*

24. How are applications evaluated?

Applications are scored out of 100 points across 10 evaluation criteria. Refer to Section 1.6 of the RFA for the full list of evaluation factors.

25. What if I submit my application and then realize there's a mistake?

If you need to make changes to an application you already submitted, please make those changes and submit the entire application again before the deadline at 5:00 pm MT on July 28, 2025. Once the application window has closed no changes can be made to any applications.

26. When will contracts be sent to successful applications?

We're anticipating notifying recipients of these grants on August 29, 2025 and between August 29 and September 15, 2025 contracts will be issued.

Financial Questions:

27. What expenses are eligible for reimbursement?

Costs eligible for reimbursement include but are not limited to labor (hourly wages), equipment rentals and purchases (e.g., irrigation systems, pumps), supplies, contractor/subcontractor fees, travel for project implementation, and gross receipts tax. See Section 2.1.4.1 of the RFA for more details. Ineligible costs include but are not limited to indirect fees, lobbying, or ongoing maintenance beyond the contract term. See Section 2.1.4.2 of the RFA for more details.

28. Are eligible applicant expenses for implementing/administrating the project allowed?

Yes, eligible applicant expenses for implementing/administering the project are allowed, but they must be detailed and justified in the budget.

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29. Is there a limit on the amount of administrative fees that can be requested?

A cap for administrative costs has not been determined; however, administrative fees should be clearly allocable to the project, necessary and reasonable for the project's success and well-justified in the budget narrative.

30. Can grant funds support the researcher's time and resources?

The researchers will be treated as subcontractors and the budget will need to detail and justify their time and the scope of work that they'll be completing on the project.

31. What is the reimbursement process?

The eligible applicant will submit the appropriate paperwork to NM WRRI for reimbursement.

Note: Only the eligible applicant can bill for the project and only for expenses they incurred (i.e. reimbursing the partner), so agreements between the eligible applicant and partner about how purchases will be made are highly encouraged.

32. What is the timeline for reimbursement of costs?

Once the appropriate paperwork is submitted to NM WRRI, payment is typically issued within 45 days.

33. What if an eligible applicant doesn't have the necessary funding to cover the project's expenses and wait for reimbursement?

In situations where an eligible applicant can demonstrate they don't have the funding to cover the project's expenses and wait for reimbursement a different funding mechanism may be available. Please reach out to NM WRRI at nmwrrri@nmsu.edu for more information.

34. Do farmers have to be registered with the federal farm service and have a federal ID number with sam.gov to receive funding?

No, because this is state funding, not federal funding, farmers do not have to be registered with the federal farm service or have a federal ID number through sam.gov.

35. What are restricted state/federal funds not eligible for match?

Restricted state/federal funds not eligible for match are funds coming from state or federal sources for specific projects that are granted through either a grant contract agreement or are for specific projects.

36. Is a contingency fund allowed in the budget?

Contingency funds are not allowed. A breakdown of all the direct costs associated with the project must be included in the budget.

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37. Is there any buffer in the approved budget for the rapid rise in construction costs?

Include in your budget your best estimate that's reasonable for the cost you expect to have for your project.

38. Will the eligible applicants need to issue 1099s to the farmers/ranchers they work with to implement these projects?

The eligible applicant's accounting department needs to determine if they need to issue 1099s to the partner ranchers and farmers. NMSU will issue a 1099 to the eligible applicant.

Eligible Activity Questions:

39. What types of projects are eligible?

Projects must support agricultural water conservation and resilience without increasing water depletions. Examples include improved irrigation systems, livestock watering infrastructure, rainwater harvesting, soil moisture monitoring, and crop conversion to drought-tolerant species. A full list of examples is available in Appendix A of the RFA.

40. Is the upgrade of existing infrastructure an eligible activity?

Yes, upgrading existing infrastructure is an eligible activity, but remember it is up to the individual applicants to show that either water use efficiency or water resilience are positively impacted by the proposed activity.

41. Does a proposed project have to include agricultural food production or is water savings enough to qualify?

A proposed project needs to include agriculture and ideally support food production along with water savings.

42. If a proposed project is retiring irrigation, would a water right lease be an eligible activity?

This program is not designed to buy out water rights.

43. Is improving soil health and the capacity of soils to absorb and store water a suitable activity?

It is up to the individual applicants to show that either water use efficiency or water resilience are positively impacted by the proposed activity.

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44. Is drilling a well an acceptable project?

It is up to the individual applicants to show that either water use efficiency or water resilience are positively impacted by the proposed activity.

45. Is rehab of a well and construction of a watering station for drought relief for livestock and agricultural uses eligible?

It is up to the individual applicants to show that either water use efficiency or water resilience are positively impacted by the proposed activity.