

Otero Soil and Water Conservation District

3501 Mesa Village Drive, Alamogordo, NM 88310 (575) 437-3100 x 3

District board meetings are generally, the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 am. The meetings are held in the same building, in the Forest Service's Smokey Bear conference room located at 3463 Las Palomas Dr.

Current SWCD Board of Supervisors: NRCS Staff:

*Bob Nichols, Chairman
Rick Baish, Vice Chairman
Jeff Rabon, Secretary/Treasurer
Colt Howland, Supervisor
Eddie Vigil, Supervisor
James Evrage, Supervisor
Wacey Cochise, Supervisor*

Kristi Wright, District Conservationist
Katie Pritchett, Soil Conservationist
Erika Rodriguez, Rangeland Management Specialist
Amalia Montoya, Area Rangeland Specialist
Morgan Smith, Civil Engineering Technician
Brissa Bailon, Pathways Program Intern

*The Otero SWCD is an
equal opportunity
employer.*



District Employee:

Victoria Milne, District Manager

FSA Staff:

Cheyanna Reyes, County Executive Director
Amanda Wylie-Largeteau, Program Technician



**The USDA Alamogordo Service Center will be closed:
June 19th, July 4th, September 4th, and October 9th**

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OTERO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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NRCS Alamogordo Field Office Welcomes New Pathways Program Intern

The Alamogordo Field Office got a new Pathways Program Intern. Brissa Bailon started working here in May. Brissa was born in Arlington, Texas and raised in Wildwood, Florida. She attends the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL to gain a Bachelors in Agricultural Operations Management with a minor in Soil and Water sciences. In 2022 she became a pathways intern at the NRCS office in Albuquerque. This year she is stationed here in Alamogordo.

She is excited to have the opportunity to work out of the Alamogordo Field Office and looks forward to learning about the local conservation activities and working with the producers in Otero County. In her spare time she enjoys visiting the local attractions and exploring the outdoors.



USAJOBS Help Center | Students & recent graduates:



The Pathways Program offers federal internship and employment opportunities for current students, recent graduates and those with an advanced degree.

The Internship Program is for current students. If you're a current student in high school, college, trade school or another qualifying educational institution, you may be eligible. This program offers paid opportunities to work in federal agencies and explore federal careers while completing your education.

www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/students/

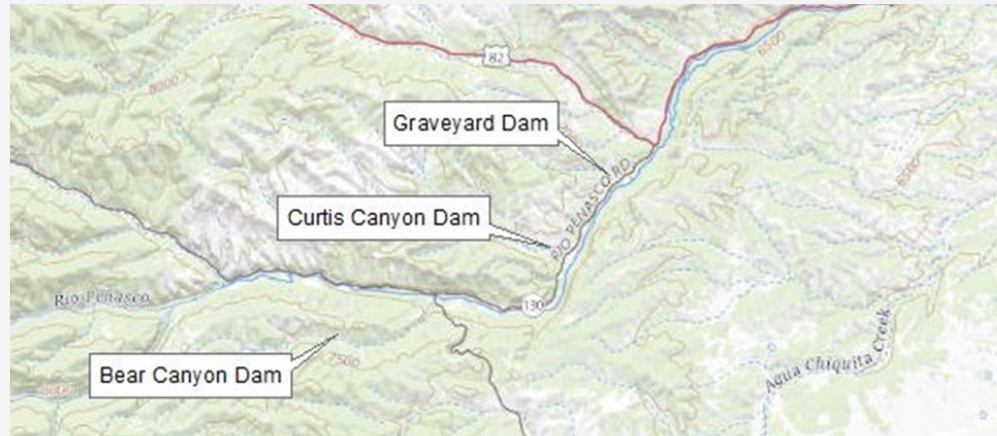
Otero County Fair & Rodeo

Each year the Otero SWCD has a booth at the Otero County Fair. Providing information on noxious weeds, building homes for wildlife in our neighborhoods, the importance of native pollinators and conservation coloring books for the kids. The 2023 fair runs September 20th-23rd.

For more information go to their website:

<http://www.oterofair.com>

OTERO COUNTY WATERSHED DAMS



Bear Creek, Curtis Canyon and Graveyard Canyon Dams are part of the Rio Peñasco watershed. Their purpose is to provide flood protection and sediment storage. They are classified as high hazard dams due to the threat to life and property below them. It is not an indicator of the condition of the dam.

The Upper Rio Penasco watershed is in Otero County and includes the upper reaches of the Rio Penasco to the Otero-Chaves County line. It is a major tributary to the Pecos River. The watershed rises at the crest of the Sacramento Mountains and flows eastward approximately 80 miles to the Pecos River. The watershed is about 23 miles in length. It has a maximum width of about 16 miles in the upper reaches and narrows to about two miles in width in the lower reaches. Principal tributaries are James Canyon, Cox Canyon, Wills Canyon, Bear Creek, and Curtis Canyon. The watershed has an area of approximately 128,000 acres (200 square miles).

All three dams were designed and constructed under the supervision of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, previously known as the Soil Conservation Service. Curtis Canyon Dam was constructed in 1957-58. Graveyard Canyon Dam was constructed in 1958-59. Bear Creek Dam was constructed in 1960-61. The dams were built for the Otero Soil and Water Conservation District, which currently owns the dams.

The Dam Safety Bureau ensures that dams in New Mexico are designed, constructed, operated, and maintained as safely as possible. The responsibilities of the Dam Safety Bureau include inspecting existing dams to verify they are operated and maintained in a safe condition. The bureau reviews plans and specifications for new dams and modifications and repairs to existing dams to ensure compliance with State Engineer design criteria.

On May 3rd, representatives from Otero SWCD, Otero County Emergency Services, Chaves County Emergency Services, South Central Mountain RC&D engaged in a tabletop exercise to test our emergency action plan. The emergency action plan details the actions that need to be implemented in case of severe weather events (rainfall, earthquakes, etc.). During this exercise there was a lot of discussion on the need to advise visitors of the potential hazards they might encounter while in the mountains, from wildfires to floods. This is particularly important for the RV parks located in close proximity to the dams. South Central Mountain RC&D has a visitors brochure that can be adapted to help meet this need.

DISASTER RESOURCES FOR OTERO COUNTY

Reporting Losses

If your operation was impacted by a natural disaster and you have an interest in participating in an available disaster assistance program, you should report losses and damages to FSA and/or your Approved Insurance Provider for crop insurance claims. Timelines to file notices of loss differ by program or coverage:

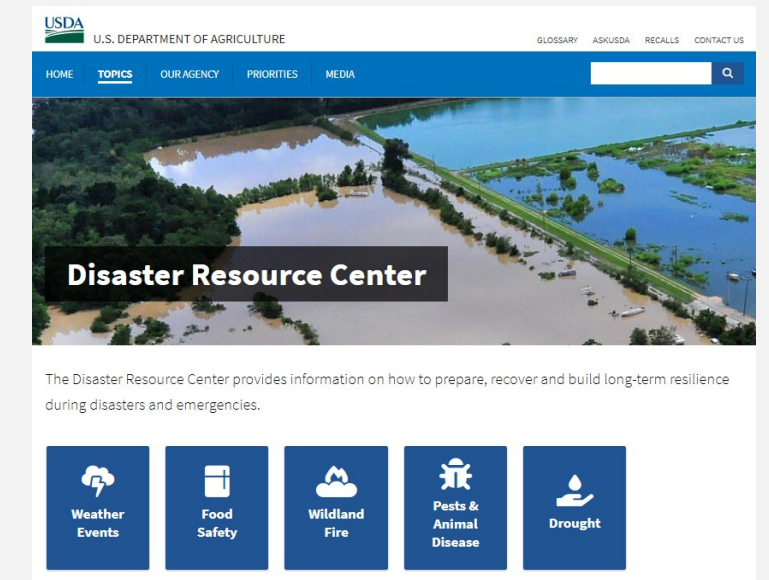
- **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program:** File with your Service Center within 30 days for livestock and fish and within 15 days for honeybees.
- **Tree Assistance Program:** File a program application with your Service Center within 90 days.
- **Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program:** File notice of loss with your Service Center within 15 days, except for hand-harvested crops, which should be filed within 72 hours.
- **Crop Insurance:** Contact your agent within 72 hours of discovering damage and follow up in writing within 15 days.

How do I report losses to the USDA?

Contact your local USDA Service Center to report losses and learn more about program options available to assist in their recovery from crop, land infrastructure and livestock losses and damages. On farmers.gov, learn more on our Protection and Recover webpage or by using the Disaster Assistance Recovery Tool.

www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/disaster-recovery

www.usda.gov/topics/disaster-resource-center



Questions? Find your local service center at farmers.gov.

Service Centers for Otero County

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides services related to loans, disaster assistance programs, and more. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Office provides services related to conservation programs and more. Rural Development (RD) provides financing infrastructure and housing throughout rural America. Please contact your local office to learn more!

Service Center	Physical Address	Contact
Alamogordo Service Center		
Farm Service Agency Office (575) 437-3100 Ext 2	3501 Mesa Village Drive Alamogordo, NM 88310	Contact Cheyanna Reyes Cheyanna.Reyes@usda.gov
Natural Resources Conservation Service Office (575) 437-3100 Ext 3		Contact Kristi Wright kristi.wright@usda.gov
Las Cruces Service Center		
Rural Development (575) 522-8775 Ext 4	760 Stern Drive Las Cruces, NM 88005	Contact Jennette Castillo jeanette.castillo@usda.gov

[After Wildfire \(afterwildfirenm.org\)](http://After Wildfire (afterwildfirenm.org))

