

# GREEN FIRE REPORT

Q1 2021 Newsletter



## A LOOK AT THIS ISSUE:

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## CONTINUING OUR IMPORTANT WORK...



*BY: DR. VIRGINIA NECOCHEA,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

Dear Supporters and Community,

Although we continue to endure the many shifts and challenges stemming from the ongoing pandemic, I am happy to share that our work at the New Mexico Environmental Law Center continues strong. In this Green Fire Report, you will meet our newest staff and read the latest case updates from our attorneys.

I've officially been with NMELC for 7 months and as each day passes, I reflect on what an honor and privilege it is to work with such dedicated staff who are deeply committed to working alongside our most impacted communities across the state in fighting for their fundamental right to clean air, water, and land.

Now, with the change in administration, we are glad to see environmental justice treated as a priority. Even more, we are encouraged to witness how environmental racism is being intentionally named in the larger national narrative.

People who have been working on environmental justice issues and with frontline communities fully understand that you cannot achieve environmental justice without naming and centering environmental racism. It is vital to understand that naming...  
(continues on page 2)

environmental racism should not be interpreted as a personal attack. Talking openly about racism is an invitation for all of us to confront this moment of racial reckoning and strive for transformation.

I end this with the following question: What does this mean for people who want to support the movement, especially in this momentous time? It means listening and learning from the most impacted communities. It means standing alongside communities in their demands for environmental justice. It means that we are willing to open our hearts and minds to real change and that we will take every opportunity to hold our leaders accountable to those who have endured the most harm. It means that we will have the courage and the patience to continue on this life-long path toward achieving true justice.

I thank every one of you for your ongoing support of NMELC— we wouldn't be here without you! We sincerely hope that you continue the journey walking alongside us as we remain dedicated to providing high quality legal services and support to communities across New Mexico who are fighting for environmental justice.

In solidarity,



## CASE UPDATES

### **Homestake Barrick Gold Uranium Mill Superfund Site**

*BY GAIL EVANS, STAFF ATTORNEY*

Just north of Milan, the Homestake Uranium Mill, which closed in 1990, has left behind a total of 22 million tons of uranium-laden waste, in two piles—both unlined and uncapped. One of them is a mile long and 400 feet high. This mesa of highly toxic rubble has been seeping uranium and other contaminants into groundwater for decades, forcing the residents of the area to leave their homes, family farms and ranches, because it was not safe to live there. This is yet another story of a community destroyed by the uranium industry.

The Homestake Mill operated from 1958 until 1990, processing uranium ore into “yellow cake,” the form of uranium usable for nuclear energy. It operated under a license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which included a requirement that the contamination caused by the mill would be cleaned up after the mine closed. Water contamination from the uranium mill was first detected in 1961. In 1983, the Homestake Mill was placed on the National Priorities List, making it a Superfund Site. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible to ensure the clean up of Superfund Sites. So now, both the NRC and the EPA have responsibility for the clean up.

During the decades of so-called “clean up,” the contamination has become worse. What started as the contamination of one aquifer—the shallow, Alluvial Aquifer—has grown into the contamination of five aquifers—the Alluvial, Upper Chinle, Middle Chinle, Lower Chinle, and even the pristine San Andres Aquifer. Not surprising, since Homestake Barrick Gold had been flushing the large tailings pile with water, pushing the contamination out of the pile and into the ground and water below.

Rather than applying the best science and technology and implementing a clean up plan that would actually work, Homestake Barrick Gold is now asking the EPA and the NRC to let them off the hook. They say they have tried and failed to clean up and they want to walk away from the mess they created. We are working with our clients, the Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment (MASE), and the Blue Water Valley Downstream Alliance, to try to convince the EPA and the NRC to hold Homestake Barrick Gold's feet to the fire and to insist that their highly toxic massive mess is cleaned up. Our fresh water resources are far too precious to allow anything else.

# Proposed Santolina Development Update

BY DOUGLAS MEIKLEJOHN, STAFF ATTORNEY

This involves two sets of cases. Kendra Palmer, Jaimie Park, and I worked on the first set of cases, and Kendra Palmer, Gail Evans and I are working on the second set of cases.

## First set of cases

In 2015, the Bernalillo County Board of County Commissioners approved:

- 1) the zone map amendment sought by Western Albuquerque Land Holdings (“WALH”) changing the zoning where the Santolina development is proposed from Agricultural to Planned Communities;
- 2) the Level A Master Plan for the proposed Santolina development; and
- 3) the Santolina Level A Development Agreement between WALH and the Board.



For the Law Center’s clients, the Law Center appealed those Board decisions to the District Court in Albuquerque. The District Court: 1) affirmed the Board’s approval of the Level A Master Plan; 2) reversed the Board’s approval of the zone map amendment; and 3) refused to review the Board’s approval of the Santolina Level A Development Agreement.

The Law Center appealed the District Court’s decision affirming the Board’s approval of the Level A Master Plan and refusal to review the Board’s approval of the Development Agreement to the Court of Appeals. WALH and the Board appealed the District Court’s decision reversing the Board’s approval of the zone map amendment to the Court of Appeals.

In December of 2020, the Court of Appeals affirmed all of the District Court rulings, which means that WALH does not have the zone map amendment that it needs for Santolina. Recently WALH (joined by the Board) asked the State Supreme Court to review the Court of Appeals' ruling invalidating the Board's approval of the zone map amendment. We are resisting WALH's effort. We also have asked the Supreme Court to review the Court of Appeals' rulings upholding the Board’s approval of the Master Plan and the Development Agreement.

## Second set of cases

These cases involve the Board’s 2017 approval of the Santolina Level B.1 Master Plan and the Board’s 2018 approval of the Santolina Level B.1 Development Agreement. On behalf of our clients, the Law Center appealed these two Board decisions to the District Court, but the District Court affirmed those two Board decisions. Again on behalf of our clients, the Law Center appealed those District Court decisions to the State Court of Appeals. The cases have been briefed, and we are waiting for decisions by the Court of Appeals.

# Honstein Oil Company

BY ERIC JANTZ, STAFF ATTORNEY

Abuquerque/Bernalillo County Joint Air Quality Control Board's (Control Board) permit allowing the Honstein Oil Company to operate a bulk fuel terminal in Albuquerque's South Valley threatens community health. Residents of the South Valley struggle with chronic health conditions linked to air pollution which will be exacerbated by Honstein's activities.

The Law Center's clients appealed the Control Board's decision, arguing that Albuquerque/Bernalillo County's air pollution regulatory agency had a statutory obligation to consider public health when issuing individual pollution permits. Unfortunately, in October 2020, the state court of appeals sided with the Control Board and rejected our clients' appeal.

Despite the setback, the Law Center will continue to work with impacted communities to address the disproportionate concentration of polluting facilities in their neighborhoods.



# Santa Fe Asphalt

BY ERIC JANTZ, STAFF ATTORNEY;  
MASLYN LOCKE, STAFF ATTORNEY

A coalition of Southside residents has formed in response to concerns about public health. Many residents see the location of so many polluting businesses near their homes and area schools, parks and athletic fields as environmental racism.

If the air pollution permit is issued, as anticipated, then the applicant will apply to Santa Fe County for permission to consolidate its two existing asphalt plants into a single plant with the right to operate 24/7, 365 days per year.

Southside residents and concerned residents of Santa Fe are encouraged to voice their concerns at the public hearing for the Air Quality Permit on March 22.

**“THIS AREA HAS RAPIDLY TAKEN ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SACRIFICE ZONE.”**  
— MIGUEL ACOSTA,  
EARTH CARE CO-DIRECTOR



# Aquifer Science Effort to Appropriate Ground Water from the Sandia Basin and a Small Part of the Rio Grande Basin

BY DOUGLAS MEIKLEJOHN, STAFF ATTORNEY

In early 2019, then District Court Judge (now State Supreme Court Justice) Shannon Bacon entered a decision in our clients' favor denying Aquifer Science's appeal from a ruling by the State Engineer dismissing Aquifer Science's application to appropriate ground water from the Sandia Basin and a small part of the Rio Grande Basin.

Later, in early 2020 District Court Judge Clay Campbell entered an order granting our clients their costs, including the fees paid by our clients to their experts. The order that our clients' costs be paid provided that Aquifer Science and the State Engineer are jointly and severally liable for the entire amount of the costs, which means that each of them – Aquifer Science and the State Engineer – is liable to our clients for the entire amount of the costs, although our clients can only recover their costs once.

## Augustin Plains Ranch

BY DOUGLAS MEIKLEJOHN, STAFF ATTORNEY; GAIL EVANS STAFF ATTORNEY; KENDRA PALMER, PARALEGAL

In the summer of 2019, Seventh Judicial District Court Judge Matthew Reynolds denied the appeal that the Augustin Plains Ranch filed from the State Engineer's denial of the Ranch's application to appropriate 54,000 acre feet of ground water per year from the San Agustin Basin. The Ranch then filed an appeal to the State Court of Appeals, and the attorneys for the Ranch filed the Ranch's Brief in Chief in October of 2020.

Following the filing of the Ranch's Brief in Chief, we were scheduled to file our Answer Brief on behalf of our clients during November of 2020. Due to two requests for extensions of time that were granted by the Court of Appeals, our Answer Brief is now due on March 12th.



## Waters of the United States

BY CHARLES DE SAILLAN, STAFF ATTORNEY

In 2019, the Trump administration issued final regulations defining the term "waters of the United States" under the federal Clean Water Act. This definition is a crucial one; it establishes the scope of Clean Water Act jurisdiction, permitting, and water quality protection. The Trump administration rule, among other things, completely eliminated Clean Water Act jurisdiction and protection over all ephemeral streams. This rule leaves some 90% of New Mexico streams unprotected.

In June 2020, the Law Center filed a lawsuit on behalf of our clients against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the agencies that had issued the rule. The lawsuit challenges the rule as unlawful on several substantive grounds. The federal agencies have sought a stay of the proceedings while officials in the Biden administration decide whether to repeal or replace the rule. In addition, in the Law Center filed an amicus brief in a federal appeals court supporting the State of Colorado in a similar challenge to the Trump rule.

## Mountain View

BY ERIC JANTZ, STAFF ATTORNEY;  
MASLYN LOCKE, STAFF ATTORNEY

New Mexico Terminal Services applied for a permit from Albuquerque Environmental Health Department (EHD) to construct a hot mix batch asphalt plant at 9615 Broadway SE, just south of the Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge in the Mountain View neighborhood.

The proposed plant would be built next to the Rio Grande river and the bosque, the beloved green corridor that runs through the state's largest city. Mountain View is a community of approximately 4,000 residents, who are predominantly low-income people of color.

The neighborhood has been saturated with dozens of industrial companies that have contaminated the air, water and land with toxins and hazardous wastes. In fact, Mountain View has been designated by the EPA (along with San Jose, its neighbor to the north) as an environmental justice community, meaning it has already been identified by the federal government as an impacted community facing the disparate impacts of environmental pollution. A hearing has been scheduled for May, 2021.



**“ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO CALL MOUNTAIN VIEW HOME DESERVE TO LIVE IN A HEALTHY AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT; IT IS THEIR FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT.”**  
~MARLA PAINTER,  
MOUNTAIN VIEW COMMUNITY ACTION

## Mount Taylor Mine

BY ERIC JANTZ, STAFF ATTORNEY

Rio Grande Resources announced the closure of the Mount Taylor Mine in December 2019. NMELC staff are in the process of incorporating our clients' comments as well as the public's concerns in the Rio Grande Resources Corporation's proposed Mount Taylor Mine close-out plan.

We and our clients continue to press state agencies to force Rio Grande Resources to conduct the most thorough surface reclamation possible.

The Law Center and our clients are also pressing the state Environment Department to require Rio Grande Resources to identify the source of uranium groundwater contamination and restore groundwater quality to pre-mining conditions.

# Nuclear Watch New Mexico v. U.S. Department of Energy

BY DOUGLAS MEIKLEJOHN, STAFF ATTORNEY



This case involves a lawsuit that the Law Center filed for Nuclear Watch New Mexico – which is a private non-profit organization – against the U.S. Department of Energy. The lawsuit – which was filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico – sought reversal of the agreement made by the U.S. Department of Energy and the New Mexico Environment Department (during the Martinez administration) to replace the 2005 Consent Order for cleanup of pollution at Los Alamos National Laboratory with a much weaker 2016 Consent Order.

Specifically, the lawsuit sought to: 1) require reinstatement of the 2005 Consent Order and 2) require the U.S. Department of Energy to pay the penalties that it owed for failure to meet deadlines set by the 2005 Consent Order during the time that the 2005 Consent Order was still in effect.

Several years ago, the U.S. District Court Judge dismissed Nuclear Watch New Mexico's claim that the 2005 Consent Order should be reinstated. However, the Judge refused to dismiss Nuclear Watch's claim that the U.S. Department of Energy should be required to pay the penalties owed for failure to meet deadlines under the 2005 Consent Order before that Consent Order was superseded by the 2016 Consent Order.

Nuclear Watch New Mexico, the Law Center and our co-counsel John Stroud (who is a private attorney in Santa Fe) have been engaged in discussions with the U.S. Department of Energy to determine whether we can settle Nuclear Watch New Mexico's claim that the U.S. Department of Energy must pay the penalties that are at issue. Those settlement negotiations have recently been joined by the New Mexico Environment Department – which intervened in the litigation – and they are ongoing. The negotiations are confidential.

## Kirtland Air Force Base Jet Fuel Spill

BY CHARLES DE SAILLAN, STAFF ATTORNEY

The Kirtland Air Force Base's jet fuel spill, resulting in a plume of 5 - 25 million gallons of leaked fuel, has contaminated groundwater, threatening a major source of drinking water in the Albuquerque metro area.

In February 2020, we filed a legal complaint on behalf of our clients, because the Air Force has neither fully defined the extent of the Kirtland Air Force Base fuel spill, nor implemented procedures to clean up the groundwater.

In fact, no written work plan or schedule for clean-up exists.

The United States has, on behalf of the Air Force, moved to dismiss our lawsuit. On April 26th, we filed a brief in response to their motion to dismiss. NMELC presented arguments in a July 21st hearing on the United States' motion to dismiss our lawsuit. The court has not yet ruled on the motion.



# Tererro Mine

BY CHARLES DE SAILLAN, STAFF ATTORNEY

The Tererro Mine, another proposed mining operation, would be located in the Upper Pecos River watershed, near the site of the old Tererro Mine. The old mine, which operated in the 1930s, has left behind a legacy of tailings and mine wastes that continue to threaten the Pecos River. The proposed new mining operation would extract copper, zinc, lead, gold, and silver. So far, the mining company has sought regulatory approval only for mineral exploration activities, which includes the drilling of up to 30 borings several thousand feet deep.

The Law Center and its client are part of a coalition of environmental, wildlife, community, and tribal organizations opposing the mine. The coalition has advocated for strong conditions in the exploration permit under the New Mexico Mining Act. A public hearing on the exploration permit will probably be held in the spring of 2021. In addition, the coalition has requested that the U.S. Forest Service conduct an environmental assessment of the exploration proposal under the National Environmental Policy Act. The Forest Service, in response, has reversed its earlier position and agreed to conduct the assessment.



"PAWA UNDERSTANDS THAT WITHOUT WATER THERE IS NO LIFE, JOBS, OR ECONOMY, THAT THE MINE SUPPORTERS WHO LOOK TO JOB CREATION HAVE NOT YET UNDERSTOOD THEIR OWN NEED FOR WATER, AND THAT THE WATER NMCC (NEW MEXICO COPPER CORPORATION) FALSELY CLAIMS TO OWN WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH TO SUPPLY THE NEEDS OF A CITY THE SIZE OF SILVER CITY SUPPORTING A LARGE ECONOMY WITH MANY, MANY TIMES THE JOB POTENTIAL OF COPPER FLAT MINE."

- PERCHA-ANIMAS WATERSHED ASSOCIATION (PAWA)

# Copper Flat Mine

BY CHARLES DE SAILLAN, STAFF ATTORNEY

The Copper Flat Mine is a proposed open-pit copper mine near Hillsboro in Sierra County. Mining operations, if they occur, would have the potential to contaminate groundwater through naturally-occurring fractures in bedrock, posing significant threats to water quality and fragile ecosystems. The mine will also leave behind a large pit lake that will exceed water quality standards. The lake will draw in surrounding groundwater and cause it to evaporate.

In collaboration with clients and other grassroots partners, the Law Center is working in several forums to oppose the mine and to mitigate its potential harmful effects. First, the Law Center has challenged the groundwater discharge permit for the mine in agency regulatory proceedings. In 2018, we appealed the permit to the New Mexico Court of Appeals.

The case has been briefed, and we are awaiting a decision from the court. Second, in a separate agency proceeding, we have challenged the operating permit for the mine under the New Mexico Mining Act. In early 2020, responding to the Law Center's arguments, New Mexico state regulators determined that the mine operator had not demonstrated it has sufficient water rights to operate and reclaim the proposed mine.

The permit apparently will not be issued until the operator makes this demonstration. Third, we are opposing the transfer of water rights to the mine in proceedings before the Office of the State Engineer and in the New Mexico Court of Appeals.

# PAST & UPCOMING EVENTS



Member Appreciation event, December 4, 2020

## New Momentum

In September 2020, we held two online Meet & Greet events. NMELC supporters were introduced to our new Executive Director, Dr. Virginia Necochea and also connected with the rest of our committed staff - Doug Meiklejohn, Charlie de Saillan, Eric Jantz, Kendra Palmer, Janiece Jonsin and our newest attorneys - Gail Evans and Maslyn Locke. During the Fall 2020 we hired three additional staff members - Sue Schuurman, Communications Manager; Valerie Rangel, Community Outreach & Engagement Manager; and Ricardo Castillo, Operations and Finance Director. We have significantly increased the diversity of our staff and are having ongoing conversations on the importance of centering the voices of our clients and community and what it means for us as we continue our commitment to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion across our entire organization.

## Impact

NMELC works with frontline communities across the state that continue to be disproportionately impacted by a legacy of environmental injustices. Now more than ever, the work of our organization is instrumental in working alongside impacted communities to demand fundamental rights to clean air, water, and land. We are committed to working with our clients in better understanding their needs and as a way of strengthening our partnerships as we join forces in the fight for environmental justice.

## New Environmental Justice Series & Member Appreciation

During fall of 2020 we launched our Environmental Justice Series. The first event featured a candid conversation about environmental racism in New Mexico. November's event centered community knowledge and advocacy regarding uranium contamination. We held our Member Appreciation event at the end of the year to honor individuals and community organizations for their outstanding work. We will resume our EJ Series in April 2021 with another conversation on uranium contamination featuring June Lorenzo. We are also planning to host a community listening session to hear concerns regarding environmental issues across the state and a fundraiser event featuring local musicians this Spring — stay tuned!

## HB-50 Private Right of Action

This bill creates private rights of action in the environmental statutes: the Air Quality Control Act, the Water Quality Act, the Hazardous Waste Act, the Solid Waste Act, and the Oil and Gas Act (a private right of action provision already exists in the Mining Act). Rep. Georgene Louis is sponsoring this bill. HB-50 would be an important step towards environmental justice in New Mexico; it ensures that individuals can sue to protect the environment, rather than leaving enforcement solely to the state agencies.

## SB-8 Local Government Air Quality Regulations

This bill removes the clauses in the Air Quality Control Act and the Hazardous Waste Act that bar the Environmental Improvement Board, local governments and the NM Environment Department from adopting regulations that are "more stringent than" federal regulations. This legislation would make it easier for the Environment Department to regulate ozone precursors (VOCs and NOx) from oil and gas production. Reducing VOC and NOx emissions effectively reduces methane emissions, and combats climate change. Sen. Peter Wirth and Sen. Linda Lopez are co-sponsoring this bill, and Rep. Andres Romero will carry it in the House.

## SB-296 Increasing Penalties for Environmental Violations

This bill increases the Maximum Civil Penalties that can be collected under the environmental statutes by adjusting the penalty amounts for inflation that has occurred since the passing of each penalty provision. This bill covers the penalty provisions in the Air Quality Control Act, the Water Quality Act, the Hazardous Waste Act, the Solid Waste Act, and the Mining Act. The bill doubles the maximum penalties under these laws. It does not cover the Oil and Gas Act because that Act's penalty provision was amended in 2019. Right now, the same monetary penalties have been on the books for 30-40 years. Monetary penalties are our best way to push polluters to change their practices and not violate New Mexico's environmental protection laws. Sen. Brenda G. McKenna and Sen. Jeff Steinborn are co-sponsoring this bill.

## SB-86 Protect Our Water Bill

"Produced" Water aka Use of Water in Oil & Gas Operations –TABLED, co-sponsored by Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez and Sen. Liz Stefanics, sought to protect fresh water from being used in fracking and would have prohibited oil and gas waste water from being used off of oil fields. Although SB 86 passed its first committee, Senate Conservation, it was unfortunately tabled in Senate Judiciary, in a unanimous vote that included the Senate Democrats. The reality is that the oil and gas industry plays a huge role and has a major influence at the Roundhouse. Organizations and coalitions are strategizing on next steps to address the stronghold of oil and gas and to address what have been viewed as problematic processes at the legislative session. The bottom line is that frontline communities remain vulnerable to environmental contamination from "produced" water.

## HB-9 The Climate Solutions Act

The Climate Solutions Act (HB 9) establishes nation-leading carbon pollution-reduction targets to benefit current and future generations while ensuring that all New Mexicans will benefit from the increased jobs provided in a green economy. The bill ensures that most impacted and historically disadvantaged communities have a seat at the table to create a more diversified and resilient economy as we move to a net-zero-carbon future. The bill is sponsored by Reps. Melanie Stansbury and Angelica Rubio; HB 9 passed through House Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Committee and, after being rolled over three times in a week, it has stalled on a vote in the House State Government, Elections & Indian Affairs Committee. There is a shift by proponents of the bill to support HB 297 and SB 112 which fund just transition and energy targets.

# NMELC Board of Directors Elects New Officers

At the most recent board meeting, the NMELC Board of Directors elected the following officers. Thank you to all the board members for your service and dedication in guiding the Law Center and your commitment to environmental justice.

## Donna House, President (Alcalde)

Donna House (Diné) currently is a biocultural consultant who works with Indigenous community-based organizations to protect People and their ecosystems. A lifelong ethno|botanist|conservationist, House was previously one of the key designers of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., and has protected plant species/habitat on Indigenous lands throughout the southwest. House inhabits spaces in historic Ohkay Owingeh territory along the Río Grande del Norte, and the Navajo Nation.



## Ramón Padilla, Vice President (Las Cruces)

Ramón is a high school social studies teacher at Alma d'arte Charter High School and college instructor in the College of Education at New Mexico State University. Prior to his teaching career, he worked for many years with the Doña Ana County Colonias Development Council as their youth and community organizer. He brings to the board his experience working with communities, political organizing and community education. His commitment to equity is the foundation of his teaching and community work.



## Johana Bencomo, Secretary (Las Cruces)

Johana Bencomo is the Executive Director of NM Comunidades en Acción y de Fe (CAFe) and a Las Cruces City Councilor. Johana has been community organizing for eight years, working to build power for and with historically underrepresented communities throughout Southern New Mexico. Johana joined the NMELC Board of Directors in 2018.



## Harry Browne, Treasurer (Silver City)

Harry is the business manager for Aldo Leopold Charter School. He is the former Executive Director of the Gila Resources Information Project (GRIP) where he worked closely with the Law Center on the Chino and Tyrone Mine cases. He is in his second term as a member of the Grant County Commission and brings administrative and public policy expertise to the board.



## Michael Casaus (Albuquerque)

Michael is The Wilderness Society's New Mexico State Director and has worked for over two decades to protect our wild and sacred places and to diversify the environmental and conservation movements. Michael brings to the board his knowledge of environmental justice issues in the Southwest and his experience as a conservationist, political campaigner and community organizer.



## Susanne Hoffman-Dooley (Santa Fe)

Susanne is a water lawyer who worked for many years with the Office of the State Engineer where she oversaw water rights adjudications, conducted administrative litigation and wrote regulations. She is currently mostly representing asylum seekers pro bono in immigration law cases. She brings to the board legal, water law, and administrative law expertise.



# NEW STAFF

## Director of Operations & Finance, Ricardo Castillo

Ever since Ricardo Castillo was a little boy, he loved traveling to Mexico and learning about his culture. Living in Albuquerque, New Mexico has implanted a respect for diversity and desire to advocate for those underserved in his community. This goal has been the reason for past formal and informal studies. Working as a Staff Accountant for the South Valley Economic Development Center in helping revitalize the economy in New Mexico, as well as helping end Homelessness through Heading Home has provided him with the essential tools he will need to meet the challenges he will face as the Director of Operations and Finance for NMELC.



## Communications Manager, Sue Schuurman

Susan ("Sue") is a long-time community organizer and activist with extensive media experience. She is the former Coordinator of the Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, was a video production trainer for Quote-Unquote Media Center, a member of the New Mexico IndyMedia media collective on public access TV Channel 27, a producer at KOB-TV, and an editor and writer for the *Weekly Alibi*. Her grassroots activism has included working with community for Palestine, against police brutality, for immigration justice, on anti-racism, with Mutual Aid, and with the Nuclear Issues Study Group.



## Community Outreach Manager, Valerie Rangel

Valerie has a background in Environmental Science, Public Health, and Community Regional Planning. In April 2018 she presented selections from her book, *Environmental Justice in New Mexico: Counting Coup*, at the National Environmental Justice conference in Washington, D.C. Her book presents stories of strife and struggle in the war to protect the integrity of natural systems, rights to religious freedom and the continuation of traditional customs. She is deeply committed to uplifting the voices of frontline communities and marginalized voices.



## OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION

Your financial support makes it possible for us to hold state and federal governments accountable to protect our natural resources and public health.

Please consider a one-time donation or a recurring donation of \$10 or more.

Use the enclosed self-addressed remittance envelope to mail in your check or credit card information, or consider donating online at: <https://nmelc.org/donations/>.

All of us at the Law Center sincerely thank you for the ongoing support and for your commitment to environmental justice!

**NMELC 2020 REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR IMPACT REPORT**

**TOTAL INCOME:**

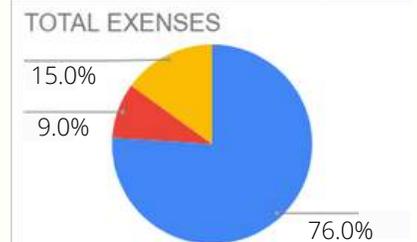
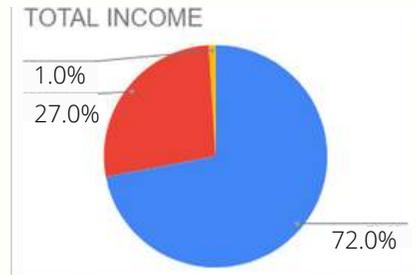
• Foundations	876,029.13	72.00%
• Individuals, Bequests & Green Business Partners	328,510.92	27.00%
• Fees & Cost reimbursements	12,167.07	1.00%
• Interest & Market gains		

**TOTAL INCOME:** \$1,216,707.12 100%

**TOTAL EXPENSES:**

• Program expenses General community & Native American representation	811,115.83	76.00%
• Development & Fundraising	96,093.47	9.00%
• Administration & General	160,095.75	15.00%

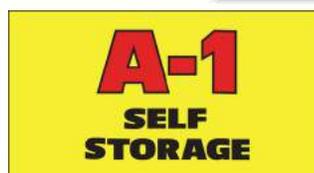
**TOTAL EXPENSES:** \$1,067,305.05 100%



**WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT**

See a complete list of our supporters, including individuals, and foundations in our 2020 Impact Report online. Our work is possible because of your continued support! Thank You!

**THANK YOU - BUSINESS PARTNERS**



# Your gift sustains our work!



With additional resources and donations from people like you, we can provide legal services to even more clients facing environmental threats in their communities.

Please give generously to support environmental justice in New Mexico!

# Thank You!



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Keep connected with us: [www.nmelc.org](http://www.nmelc.org)