



January 10, 2023

FINAL REPORT

Connecting Students to Wildlife and Habitats in New Mexico and Wildlife
Rehabilitation

Contract #22-516-0000-0024

Attention

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Organization

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Reference

Professional Services Contract #22-516-0000-0024

Total Amount of Contract: \$10,000

Amount available through June 30, 2022: \$4,286

Amount available through January 17, 2023: \$5,714

Contract Start Date: January 18, 2022 Termination Date: January 17, 2023

Project Title: Connecting Students to Wildlife and Habitats in New Mexico and Wildlife Rehabilitation

NARRATIVE

Wildlife Rehabilitation

The wildlife rehabilitation component of the project was addressed during the contract period of July 1, 2022 through January 10, 2023. The focus of this work supported the objectives including, but not limited to, providing the specialized care and treatment of injured, ill or orphaned native wildlife species. The goals of this work are the successful rehabilitation and return to the wild of these native species. Anticipated number of animals receiving care during the total contract period was initially estimated at 800. The actual intake number for calendar year 2022 was 671. Successful releases following veterinary care and rehabilitation were 216 including 1 amphibian, 126 birds, 83 mammals and 6 reptiles with 13 animals (birds and reptiles) currently still in care. This represents an overall release percentage of 32 percent. NMWC's hospital intake survival rate after 24 hours, for the year ending December 31, 2022, was 100 percent for amphibians, 56 percent for birds (67 percent when considering only raptor species), mammals 70 percent, and 90 percent for reptiles. Nine New Mexico Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), totaling seventeen individuals, were treated during the grant period.

Share with Wildlife grant funding helped to ensure these successes through the partial salary support of a full-time Seasonal Wildlife Rehabilitator. This key position hire ensured trained professional staff coverage for the period of our busiest patient intake season of April through October. Further, the grant aided in covering a portion of the costs associated with providing food and nutritional supplements for wildlife patients. Because of the diversity of species that come through the NMWC hospital, the annual expense for dietary supplies is a major expense. Food items run the gamut of live meal worms to frozen rats and specialized formulas for more than twenty species ranging from hummingbirds to mule deer. Lastly a portion of the funding was directed towards two vital but easily overlooked items that are central to the operation of our veterinary hospital – distilled water and surgical gloves. Basic items, but without them, our ability to function would be significantly decreased.

Information was recorded for animal intakes including species, approximate age, sex, physical condition, information related to injury and/or illness, location where the animal was rescued, outcome of treatment and release documentation, if applicable. Additionally, NMWC began testing and recording lead levels for all raptor intakes during 2022.

Wildlife Rehabilitation Financial Details

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
07/01/22 - 10/16/22	Personnel: Wildlife Rehabilitator (30% of wages)	\$3,404.02
07/01/22 - 01/10/23	Animal Medical Supplies (surgical gloves and distilled water)	\$ 694.84
07/01/22 - 01/10/23	Animal Diets (insects, fruits & vegetables, frozen & live rats and mice, and specialized species-specific formula mix)	\$1,615.14
Total Spent		\$5,714.00
Total Contract		\$5,714.00
Balance		\$ - 0 -

Wildlife Education – Pollinator Garden Project

The Pollinator Garden Project was implemented during the 2021-22 school year. Promotion of the program began in August of 2021, just prior to the start of the school year and prior to the start of this project, and continued through the early Spring of 2022. Phone calls, emails and print information were used to advertise the program to elementary schools and 4th – 5th grade classroom teachers who had employed prior NMWC educational programs. The response and engagement by classroom teachers was less than anticipated. The goal for 2022 was to reach a combined total of 140 4th and 5th grade students with this school-based program that would encompass approximately four to six classrooms. Early interest in the program resulted in pre-registration of six classrooms. Ultimately, the program reached one 4th grade and one 5th grade classroom, both at Taos Integrated School of the Arts. A total of 48 students participated in the program. This level of participation was only possible because of a modification to the program that allowed for the classroom teacher to fully facilitate implementation; the New Mexico Wildlife Center delivered the curriculum materials and Pollinator Garden supplies and plants to the school. The low response to the program, we learned from follow up questions to classroom teachers, was in most cases a result of one or more of the following:

- 1) The resurgence of COVID in the late fall and winter of 2021-22, which created uncertainty for teachers and school administration planning for the Spring semester
- 2) The reluctance by classroom teachers to take on the responsibility of maintaining the Pollinator Gardens, especially over summer and extend holiday breaks
- 3) The issue of teacher time management and burnout in having to learn, incorporate and assist in the facilitation of a new curriculum module

The lack of engagement with the program prompted a re-evaluation of the delivery method for the Pollinator Garden Project. A meeting was held February 15th, 2022, to discuss proposed alternatives. Participating in the meeting were Matthew Miller, NMWC Executive Director, Jessica Schlarbaum, NMWC Communications & Outreach Manager and Ginny Seamster,

NMDG&F. The outcome of the meeting was an agreed upon modified implementation strategy that would include the following two components to be carried during the duration of the contract period.

- 1) The Pollinator Garden curriculum would continue to be promoted by NMWC to New Mexico schools. Interested schools would be provided with the curriculum and program materials at no charge for implementation at the school by school faculty and potentially parent volunteers or others interested in pollinator gardens;
- 2) New Mexico Wildlife Center would expand and maintain a demonstration Pollinator Garden at its facility in Espanola. The demonstration garden would be a part of the interpretive education visitor pathway. The Garden would also provide a teaching area through informational signage and through incorporation into NMWC’s on-site school programs and during special on-site events

The launch of the on-site portion of the revised Pollinator Garden Project was scheduled for Saturday May 28, 2022, as a highlight of NMWC’s Start of Summer Celebration. However, the week of the event saw an outbreak of COVID in the NWMC staff resulting in half of the staff and several volunteers having to self-quarantine. Regrettably, because of the impact to staff and volunteers, the Start of Summer event had to be canceled. The plants, containers, soil and other materials purchased for the event that would have been made available to children and families to create the six demonstration container gardens were instead installed by NMWC staff following the COVID outbreak. The established gardens are on the main visitor pathway and signage is being created to interpret the benefits of pollinator species, pollinator plants and creating pollinator gardens.

Pollinator Garden Program Financial Details

Date	Item	Amount
05/02/22	Home Depot potting mix & deck boxes	\$ 216.48
05/03/22	Plants of the Southwest pollinator plants	\$ 258.80
05/20/22	Plants of the Southwest pollinator plants	\$ 679.58
05/20/22	The Feed Bin, metal planters, seeds, soil mix	\$ 390.33
05/24/22	Lowe’s metal planters, trowels, soil, water cans	\$ 297.02
05/11/22	Personnel salary	\$2,443.79
Total Spent		\$4,286.00
Total Contract		\$4,286.00
Balance		\$ - 0 -

Submitted By:
 Matthew Miller, Executive Director
 New Mexico Wildlife Center
 01/10/2023

**Species of Greatest Conservation Need
that received treatment at the New Mexico Wildlife Center in 2022**

Organ Mountains Colorado Chipmunk (2)

Bald Eagle (1)

Flammulated Owl (1)

Common Nighthawk (3)

Juniper Titmouse (1)

Mountain Bluebird (1)

Western Bluebird (1)

Vesper Sparrow (1)

Evening Grosbeak (6)