



Citizen Advisory Committee 2024

Prioritized Project Tracking

Public Land User Stamp 19.34.6

The Citizen Advisory Committee met in August 2024 to prioritize habitat restoration projects for fish and wildlife. The total funds available for the 2024/FY25 prioritization were \$3,000,000 (Table 1). Some projects from the 2023/FY24 prioritization continued during this timeframe as well (Table 2).

The Rio Bonito Restoration on the Roswell BLM district is one project that was prioritized in 2023 and successfully completed during the FY25 cycle. The project addressed issues with willow armoring, channelization, and limited habitat complexity to improve conditions for fish and fishing access. Department staff surveyed for fish in late 2025 and reported structures were intact with excellent habitat and fish present. The Black Mesa thinning project from the 2023 prioritization was completed in FY25, with the 325 additional acres capping off the 565 acre forest thinning project that continued the legacy of forest restoration work on this segment of the Cibola National Forest.

The Whitewater Creek restoration project within the Catwalk Recreation Area on the Glenwood Ranger District was completed. This effort will improve aquatic functions on Whitewater Creek by increasing hydrologic diversity, shelter habitat for trout, and pool frequency and depth. Significant progress was made in improving connectivity for pronghorn, mule deer, and elk in three regions of New Mexico through conversion of netwire to wildlife friendly fence on the Northcentral Taos Plateau (~11 miles), the Southeast Macho Landscape (~8 miles), and the Southwest Pyramid Mountains (~7 miles). The Carson National Forest, Santa Fe National Forest, and Cibola National Forest all utilized funds for prescribed burning implementation, making important strides for forest restoration across multiple forests and forest districts.

While the Middle Ponil Barrier project was ranked high enough to receive 2023 funds, it would not have been enough to cover total costs of the fish barrier. Another funding source was used to complete this project and remaining funds were able to roll to the next two ranked projects (i.e. Snow Lake and SolarBee purchase). The Snow Lake Dredge evaluation was conducted and reported findings and recommendations were provided to the Department. The Gila National Forest is currently applying for funds to implement dredging. SolarBees will be purchased early in FY26 for the purposes of enhancing water quality, increasing oxygen circulation, and improving habitat conditions for aquatic species in New Mexico's lakes. El Rito Barrier Assessment was completed with other funds, and the Department is working with the Carson National Forest on implementation planning. Several projects from the 2024 prioritization are continuing into FY26 and are noted as "ongoing" in Table 1.



Table 1. 2024/FY25 Habitat Stamp Projects and budget expenditures. The surplus will carryover for FY26 Habitat Stamp Projects that are prioritized by the CAC. Fish and Wildlife projects are indicated by blue (fish) and green (wildlife) rows. In FY25, the initial budget for Habitat Stamp funds was \$3,000,000.

Project Name	Prioritization Meeting	CAC Rank	Federal Partner	Initial Estimate	FY25 Expenditures	Status
Whitewater Creek Restoration	2024 August	1	Gila NF	\$500,000	\$186,548.13	Complete
Black Mesa Restoration	2024 August	2	Cibola NF	\$350,000	-	Ongoing
Wildlife Habitat Connectivity	2024 August	3	BLM	\$600,000	\$350,607.58	Ongoing
Rio De Las Vacas Restoration	2024 August	4	Santa Fe NF	\$1,200,000	-	Ongoing
Prescribed Burns	2024 August	5	USFS	\$250,000	\$146,652.68	Ongoing
El Rito Barrier Assessment	2024 August	6	Carson NF	\$80,000	-	Project completed with different funding
Middle Ponil Barrier	2024 August	7	Carson NF	\$800,000	-	Insufficient funds; project completed with different funding
Snow Lake Dredge Evaluation	2024 August	8	Gila NF	\$50,000	\$33,330.00	Complete
Solarbee Purchase	2024 August	9	Gila NF	\$320,000	-	Ongoing
Soda Springs Enclosure	2024 August	10	Rio Puerco BLM	\$450,000	-	Insufficient funds
Cebolla Canyon Enclosure	2024 August	11	Rio Puerco BLM	\$200,000	-	Insufficient funds
					\$717,138.39	

Table 2. 2023/FY24 Habitat Stamp Projects and budget expenditures. The surplus will carryover for FY25 Habitat Stamp Projects that are prioritized by the CAC. Fish and Wildlife projects are indicated by blue (fish) and green (wildlife) rows. In FY24, the initial budget for Habitat Stamp funds was \$1,500,000.

Project Name	Prioritization Meeting	CAC Rank	Federal Partner	Initial Estimate	FY24 Expenditures	FY25 Expenditures	Status
La Belle Creek	2023 August	1	Carson NF	436,000	\$402,644.72	-	Complete
Black Mesa Restoration	2023 August	2	Cibola NF	350,000	\$141,288.00	\$139,455.00	Complete
Taos Plateau Connectivity	2023 August	3	Taos BLM	375,000	-	\$260,787.30	Complete
Whitewater Creek (compliance)	2023 August	4	Gila NF	50,000	-	-	USFS completed with other funds
Rio Bonito Restoration	2023 August	5	Roswell BLM	550,000	-	\$430,867.19	Complete
Hidden Barrel Restoration	2023 August	6	Gila NF	175,000	-	-	Cancelled by USFS
Macho Connectivity	2023 August	7	Roswell BLM	490,000	\$135,188.83	-	Complete
Delaware River Planning	2023 August	8	Carlsbad BLM	75,000	-	-	Insufficient funds
North Spring Habitat Protection	2023 August	9	Las Cruces BLM	300,000	-	-	Insufficient funds
					\$679,121.55	\$831,109.49	

