

# 2023

Winter Edition

December 21, 2023

# LA VOZ



211 10th ST. SW, Albuquerque NM. | [cesoss.org](http://cesoss.org) | [info@cesoss.org](mailto:info@cesoss.org)



# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Queridxs colegxs, amigos, y colaboradores,

**The winter solstice is both the darkest day of the year and a turning point towards more light.** Through a conversation with Paula Garcia, our beloved board member, Marcia Fernandez, and Norm Gaumm a few months ago, I was shocked to learn that the state, as a political entity, does not have a statement that defines the “well-being” of New Mexicans. Why was I shocked? Because it means that there is not a set of cultural, normative, or even moral values that can serve to make decisions for the well-being of New Mexicans! Much of our work starts at the consciousness level and if the state of New Mexico does not have a statement of well-being, then how do our politicians make rational decisions based on the responsibility that the state has with its constituents? During this winter solstice, we invite politicians to look inward, slow down, and assess their work with communities across New Mexico.

At CESOSS, we believe in the power of unity and the strength that emerges when hearts come together for a common purpose. This winter edition of our newsletter serves as a testament to the inspiring stories, unwavering commitment, and selfless generosity that define our shared journey in the stewardship of our community, of the water, and the green belt that provides life to many other species that coexist with us, right here in Atrisco, or what we know today as the South Valley.

Throughout the past year, our dedicated team and compassionate supporters have worked tirelessly to continue to preserve the Acequia culture that is so prominent in our community. From participating in the Primera Agua, showing up to our Acequia Walk & Talks to participating in our community workshops, your support has been the driving force behind our success.

**I want to express my deepest gratitude to every one of you who has played a role in our mission. Your generosity with your time and energy will continue to create a ripple effect in our quest for transformative justice.**

Wishing you all a season filled with joy, warmth, and the company of your loved ones. Our wish is that the year comes with new opportunities and challenges as we all move forward in this quest to protect and preserve water as a legacy for the unborn.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Jorge Garcia

Executive Director



# SAVE THE DATE UPCOMING ACEQUIA WALK & TALK



CESOSS is excited to bring the Acequia Walk & Talk series back to the community. We invite the community and larger public to join us in an educational morning spent sharing stories/issues related to the acequias and our community, while we take a walk along one of the Atrisco acequias. Local community members connected to acequia and agricultural traditions are invited to lead the talk and the walk. Not only will we learn about the powerful history of the Atrisco community, but we'll also be improving our overall health.

## *Pajarito Acequia*

**May 18, 2024**

**9:00-11:00**

## *Atrisco Acequia*

**June 15, 2024**

**9:00-11:00**

## *Arenal Acequia*

**July 20, 2024**

**9:00-11:00**

## *Armijo Acequia*

**August 17, 2024**

**9:00-11:00**

## *Los Padillas Acequia*

**September 21, 2024**

**9:00-11:00**



# CICLOS DE LA TIERRA & FOODCORPS



CESOSS has officially formed a strategic partnership with FoodCorps through the use of the Ciclos de la Tierra curriculum!

This collaboration marks a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to create sustainable, healthy, and thriving communities where traditions connected to land and water are protected, preserved, and passed onto future generations. FoodCorps will be utilizing our Ciclos de la Tierra: Cultivating Querencia Through Mutualismo, Resolana, and Self Governance across New Mexico and states like California and Oregon to amplify our impact and reach even greater heights in serving our community and achieving our shared goals.

The Ciclos de la Tierra curriculum represents ongoing collaborative efforts among community members, local organizations and schools. If you would like to learn more about the curriculum itself please visit our website:

<https://www.cesoss.org/ciclosdelatierra>

FoodCorps brings a wealth of expertise and resources to the table, and we are confident that this partnership will result in innovative solutions and meaningful initiatives that will benefit those we serve.

We look forward to working closely with FoodCorps and leveraging our collective strengths to make a positive difference for future generations in New Mexico and across the U.S.

Stay tuned for more updates as we embark on this exciting journey together. If you have any questions or would like more information, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your continued support, and we are excited about the positive impact we can create together!





# Congreso de las Acequias 2023

by Katrina Gallegos, Comisionada de los Ranchos de Atrisco/Armijo  
Acequia Association

As a newly elected Comisionada with SVRAA I often find myself wondering what I can do to make a positive impact in my South Valley. The South Valley is a semi-urban liminal space, it is a visual reminder of the rural origin of many Burqueño familias. I grew up in the 5 Puntos neighborhood where we had chickens and horses, where brothers would put Coronado weenies on sticks to catch crawdads in the acequia behind our property, where I wondered if La Llorna lived behind a cottonwood tree. Contrastingly, a 10-minute walk along our acequia and one would end up on the bustling streets of Central Avenue, Route 66. I held this knowledge close as I made my way to this year's annual Congreso de las Acequias in Taos, New Mexico.

It was my first time attending and I was nervous, I wondered if I would be judged for being a city dwelling Burqueña in the world of rural, traditional Norteños. Upon arrival all my unease was put to rest as I was met with openness, the Norteños of New Mexico operate with full hearts and joviality. Admittedly, internally I still wondered, where do I belong in this sea of farmers and ranchers? Many of the sessions focused on leveraging state and federal funding to help with disaster recovery of acequias affected by the Calf Canyon/ Hermits Peak fire of 2022. However, there were also cultural and spiritual moments which reminded me that I do have a place among acequeros.

The first reminder happened on the first day of the conference. Inside the reception room, next to the coffee station was a beautifully decorated altar which featured burnt orange fall leaves, a trio of dried corn, flower vases, candles and other ephemera related to the earth. This altar also featured palas which were painted with images of San Isidro El Labrador, angels' wings, and a santa who was reminiscent of La Virgen. It was upon this altar that I placed the water I brought for the communal blessing. As someone who cares deeply about preservation and maintenance of folkloric tradition, I felt proud to have brought an offering for an ancient, communal ceremony.



*William Zamora, Comisionado de la Acequia de Atrisco &  
Katrina Gallegos, Comisionada de la Acequia de Los  
Ranchos de Atrisco/Amrijo*

The second day of the conference after attending sessions and listening to keynote speakers each acequero, including myself, formed a procession line lead by musicos to deposit our water into the communal font. One by one we named ourselves and our acequias after which we poured the Earth's life blood, agua, into a large, blue earthen pot. Water from all over New Mexico mixed and coalesced and we prayed and gave thanks for this precious, sacred gift. Again, I was reminded, I belong. Afterward we were treated to a play which featured la Trucha, la Nutria, el Tecolote y la Tortuga as teachers and we learned about the importance of water for all Earth's creatures. This play was my final reminder that I belonged.

Acequias must be protected for all they do, providing water for local farmers, refuge for birds and ducks, and providing green spaces for us to commune with nature. As I grow and serve as the Comisionada of the Ranchos de Artisco/Armijo Acequia I know what my focus will be, to preserve the sociocultural aspects of acequias. I am not a ranchera who raises sheep, nor do I grow apples or hay. I live in a liminal pace of urban and rural. **I will protect our right to access water so my nephew can learn to catch crawdads with Coronado weenies, so La Llorna can keep searching for her lost children, and so all who call El Valle del Sur home know they belong.**

# CESOSS Community Water Research

Deposits and Withdrawals from the Water System(s) in  
the Middle Rio Grande

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*By Jorge Garcia*

CESOSS' vision is “to create sustainable, healthy, and thriving communities where traditions connected to land and water are protected, preserved, and passed onto future generations.” This vision encompasses historical realities and disconnection with our sense and understanding of water “ownership” and responsibility, and the lack of information that exists with regards to what it means to “own pre-1907 water rights.”

This understanding of “ownership” has launched community members, Dr. Rip Anderson, Santiago Maestas, and Jorge Garcia, to create a research project. **The overarching goal of the research project is to better understand the deposits and withdrawals from the water system(s) in the Middle Rio Grande.** This research will lead to a greater understanding of how much water the South Valley region gets in terms of its deposits and withdrawals, and how the cycle of water actually works in terms of irrigation systems, contribution to water conservation, and role of acequias in water conservation and preservation.

The lead investigators will work with a group of University of New Mexico students to develop a methodology which will guide CESOSS through the collection of data, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The phases for this project are the following: 1) create an information repository where data can be stored and shared, 2) develop the research agenda and 3) collect, analyze, and report data findings. Data findings will be published in the CESOSS newsletter, La Voz, and it will also be shared through social media. Our goal is to start publishing results from our data collection and analysis by the Summer Solstice of 2024.

We are very appreciative of the community support for this project.

More information will be shared through our webpage and announcements.

## **Lead Investigators:**

- - Dr. Rip Anderson/Marcia Fernandez
- - Santiago Maestas
- - Jorge Garcia. M.A, MBA, PhD Candidate

## **Student Support**

- - Makayla Romero, UNM Engineering undergraduate Student
- - Anala Pankof, UNM Engineering undergraduate Student
- - Karen Colorado, UNM Biocemistry undergraduate Student

# Pajarito Landmarks Project & Community-Based Participatory Research

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*By Angelina O., Cultivando Nuestro Futuro Leadership Intern*



Community Participatory Research (CPR) is a collaborative and empowering approach to research that involves active engagement of community members in the research process. The Pajarito Landmarks Project will be utilizing CPR throughout the completion of one of the signs that we will be placing along the Pajarito Acequia. Through CPR CESOSS aims to convey the unique perspectives of the community and history that exists along the Pajarito Acequia.

Community Participatory Research (CPR) is a research method that involves community members as active partners in the research process. For the Pajarito Landmarks Project, Angelina O. will work alongside CESOSS staff member Alexandra Rivas to delve into the archives and work with Pajarito Community members to highlight their history and their family ties to the Pajarito Community. To ensure that community members are actively contributing to the design, implementation, and dissemination of research findings CESOSS will consult Pajarito Community members at every stage of the project.

Community Participatory Research represents a transformative approach to research, emphasizing collaboration, inclusivity, and empowerment. While challenges exist, the benefits of CPR in generating more meaningful and impactful research findings make it a valuable methodology for addressing complex social issues. CESOSS is ecstatic to work alongside a community that has such deep love and care for their land and water.

We hope that through CPR, our project accurately amplifies the stories of the people who live alongside the Pajarito Acequia.

Our 2023 programming could not have been done without the help of committed community members like you all!

Thank you to these organizations and individual donors. CESOSS would not be able to do the work without our funders, our donors, and the people who continue to show up to preserve and protect our water here in the heart of the South Valley, Atrisco.



**NEW MEXICO**  
OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION







**Our mission is to develop sustainable community-based and culturally centered events, programs, and initiatives to empower and preserve the traditions and science-based practices of local and Indigenous communities, related to land and water.**

**Our vision is to create sustainable, healthy, and thriving communities where traditions connected to land and water are protected, preserved, and passed onto future generations.**

## WAYS TO SUPPORT

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### Donate via Check

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211 10th St. SW, Albuquerque, NM

### Donate Online

