

# El Grito de Las Mercedes

Newsletter of the  
New Mexico Land Grant-Merced  
Movement

## Vidal Gonzales hosts The Indigenous and Hispanic Youth Fly Fishing Camp for a second year

The Indigenous and Hispanic Youth Fly Fishing Camp was first created in 2022 by Vidal Gonzales and strives to uplift Indigenous and Hispanic youth from underserved communities (specifically from local tribal and land grant communities). The camp would never have been dreamt of if Vidal (a tribal member of Santa Clara Pueblo) wouldn't have walked into the doors of the New Mexico Land Grant Studies Program when he was a student at the University of New Mexico. While he was employed by the Studies Program, he was mentored by Jacobo Baca and Arturo Archuleta where they exchanged traditional knowledge and Vidal learned the importance of Indigenous and Hispanic community collaboration. Since then, the camp has grown with the support of Trout Unlimited to move from a one-day outing to a three-day camp with the intention of growing the program. The camp's goal is to educate underserved youth about their cultural landscape, traditions, language, and traditional ecological knowledge through the medium of fly fishing. The camp uses the art of fly fishing to foster a community of care, to provide a healthy outlet for underserved youth, and to grow the next generation of leaders who will need to work together as our communities face drought, climate change, and the reduction of cultural and natural resources. Vidal Gonzales said, "It is important not only to teach these kids about their lands and their history, but to foster the next generation of leaders to take care of it." If you are interested in donating or learning more about the camp, please email Vidal Gonzales at [vidalbaseball@gmail.com](mailto:vidalbaseball@gmail.com). If you know an underserved youth that fits the camp's goals, have them contact Mr. Gonzales.





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## Land Grant Interim Committee meets in Española

Northern New Mexico College hosted the first meeting of the Interim Land Grant Committee in Española on July 25 and 26th. The Committee received updates from the San Joaquín del Río de Chama and Tierra Amarilla Land Grants on their work on the Mercedes Unidas Center (formerly the Piedra Lumbre Visitors Center). Tierra Amarilla Land Grant President, Steve Polaco, also provided an update on the Laguna del Campo, which the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish will transfer to the Grant after years of delays. There was also a presentation by the newly reorganized Santa Cruz de la Cañada Land Grant, which is seeking political subdivision status in the 2025 legislative session. Committee Chair Senator Leo Jaramillo led committee members and others on a lowrider cruise of Española, “the lowrider capital of the world.”



## *El Consejo de las Mercedes* – NM Land Grant Consejo changes its name

The New Mexico Land Grant-Merced Consejo voted to change its name at its quarterly meeting in late June in Talpa. Founded in 2006 at the “New Mexico Land Grant Council/Consejo”, the Consejo advocated for federal and state policies that improve community land grants, including the creation of the UNM Land Grant Studies Program in 2008 and New Mexico Land Grant Council in 2009. The similarity in the Council’s name and the Consejo’s name has led to confusion between the state agency and the grassroots organization, leading to name changes in 2009 and 2019. In an effort to further distinguish the grassroots organization from the state agency, Consejo members voted to rename the organization *El Consejo de las Mercedes*.



## Treaty Division hosts land grant and acequias training in July, will host training in September

The New Mexico Department of Justice Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Division, with assistance from the New Mexico Land Grant Council and sponsorship from the New Mexico Land Grant Merced Consejo (*Consejo de Mercedes*) and a half dozen other organizations, hosted training for land grants and acequias on July 12 in Taos. Presenters offered guidance on government transparency and accountability (including IPRA, OMA and the Government Accountability Act), the Procurement Code, the Audit Act, elections and bylaws. The next training will take place on September 13, 2024 at the UNM Taos campus and will include presentations on liability (including the Tort Claims Act), natural resource and property protection, and enforcement actions.

### *Important Reminders*

- The next Land Grant Council meeting will be held on **August 16 at 10:00 am** in **Albuquerque** at Continuing Education. Visit [lgc.unm.edu](http://lgc.unm.edu) for location information and how to participate virtually or in person.
- The next Land Grant Interim Committee hearing will be held on **August 19-20** in Las Vegas, NM at Highlands University. Visit [their website](#) for more information.
- The Office of the State Auditor is collaborating with NMLGC staff to offer a virtual training for land grants on **August 22**. This training will focus on preparing for Tier 4 and Tier 5 Agreed Upon Procedures (AUPs). The Council will send more information on the training soon.