

# The Land Grant Forum

## Monthly Newsletter of the New Mexico Land Grant-Merced Movement

### Santa Bárbara and Las Trampas begin fuelwood project

By **Bonifacio I. Vasquez**

*“Para Dios no hay nada imposible.”* The need for firewood in northern New Mexico communities is real. Nevertheless, the lack of understanding of the magnitude of this need by those who control access to this critical natural resource is a big problem. Many people in Peñasco and surrounding communities depend on firewood to heat their home and cook their meals, but struggle to have an adequate supply of wood. The irony is that this struggle does not have to exist, yet we have suffered a chronic shortage of fuelwood for decades. Wood is not available because of poor U.S. Forest Service land management practices and policies. The Santa Bárbara and Las Trampas Land Grants are rich in forest products but are denied the cultural and traditional uses of our land. Our people have had to travel long distances to get firewood when in reality, the firewood is in their backyards. At the Camino Real Ranger District people have traveled to Tres Piedras, nearly a two-hundred-mile round trip, to get a load of wood.

During the Calf Canyon and Hermits Peak Forest fire, the Carson National Forest closed the forest during the most important period for firewood gathering season. In May 2022, the Santa Bárbara and Las Trampas Land Grant Board members started working with several agencies to get firewood to our communities. We worked hard to get Carson National Forest management to reopen firewood allotment areas in Las Trampas, Ojo Sarco and Ojito. We also worked with the New Mexico State Land Office to keep the Copper Mountain firewood allotment open.



*Fuelwood from the HP/CC fire lines at the Taos County yard in Rodarte*

We took advantage of the wood that was made available by the U.S. National Forest that came off of contingency lines created during the fire suppression efforts to control the spread of forest fire. We requested and had nearly four hundred cords of firewood staged at the Taos County yard in Rodarte. While coordinating the delivery of the wood to the Rodarte yard, we started collecting names to identify the need for firewood.

We developed a list of people that needed wood, with the major objective of identifying the elderly, homebound, and needy residents of twelve (12) communities. By August 2022, we had collected the names of approximately five hundred and twenty-five (525) people, by the end of September this list had increased to well over six hundred (600) residents.

### *Firewood processing in Rodarte*



With the help of Candyce O'Donnell, Taos District V County Commissioner, and the cooperation of Camino Real Forest Ranger supervisor, Mr. Michael Luján, we were given an additional three hundred cords of wood that was decked at Bear Mountain by forest fire fighters.

On October 22, 2022 we started moving firewood from Bear Mountain to high priority residents in the communities. By November 30, 2022, we had provided some firewood to one-hundred and seventy (170) residents.

We are now starting to process the wood at the Taos County yard. Logs are being cut, split, and firewood piled for delivery. We are hopeful that the four hundred cords will be processed by mid- January 2023 and are planning to start delivery firewood during the week after Christmas.

*Bonifacio Vásquez is the President of La Merced de Santa Bárbara*

## **Welcome, Greta!**



We are excited to welcome Greta Archuleta to the NM Land Grant Council and the UNM Land Grant Studies Program. She and her family are originally from Abiquiú, New Mexico, however, she was primarily raised in Santa Fe. After a few years living out of state, she has relocated back to New Mexico. Greta retired from the State of New Mexico after working for 26 years. The last 15 years of her employment, she held the position as a Budget Analyst. After taking a break from state government for a few years, in 2015, she returned to state government as a contract employee. For the last seven years, she worked for the State of New Mexico, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM). In her capacity with DHSEM, she was tasked with preparing the annual department budget request and operating budget. She prepared budget adjustment requests (BAR's), and budgeted all grant awards, executive orders and any other grants awarded to the agency. She was responsible for monitoring the operating budget of the federal grants, which entailed preparing federal quarterly reports, as well as auditing expenses related to the operating budget of these grants. In total, she has 32 years of state government budgeting and auditing experience. We are excited to add Greta to NM Land Grant Council staff. In the new year, she will begin working with individual land grants, providing financial / budgeting assistance, and work towards ensuring their overall success.

## Last Interim meeting for 2022 takes place in November

The Interim Land Grant Committee's 2022 session came to a close with the Committee endorsing two pieces of legislation, one recognizing partition grants and the other relating to the Cristóbal de la Serna Land Grant. The partition bill recognizes sub-grants that own, manage and pay taxes on their common lands independently of their mother grant and have done so for decades. This past summer, two of these land grants, the Lower Gallinas Grant and Los Vigiles Grant, were ravaged by the Hermit's Peak / Calf Canyon Fire, each losing more than half of their forested lands, which have served the communities' grazing and fuelwood needs for nearly two centuries. In Taos County, the Arroyo Hondo Arriba Land Grant has been recognized as a distinct community land grant since the Mexican Era (1821-1846) and won recognition of their ownership and management by the district court more than a century ago.

### *Important Reminders and Upcoming Events*

- The next Land Grant Council meeting will be held on **January 20, 2023** in Albuquerque. Visit [lgc.unm.edu](http://lgc.unm.edu) for location information and how to participate virtually or in person.
- The rescheduled December 2022 New Mexico Land Grant-Merced Consejo quarterly meeting will be held on **Saturday, January 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am** virtually via Zoom. Contact the Consejo at [nmlgconsejo@gmail.com](mailto:nmlgconsejo@gmail.com) for information.
- The New Mexico Legislative Session will begin on **January 17, 2023** and will close on **March 18, 2023**. Capital outlay requests are due **January 12, 2023**.
- Please join land grants-*mercedes* from across the state as we commemorate the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on **February 2, 2023** at the New Mexico State Capitol. Programming is tentatively scheduled to start at 10:00 am. Please find the information for the Treaty Day youth art and essay contests on the next page.

# TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO DAY 2023

## Art/Essay/Coloring Contest for NM Land Grant Youth!



Land Grant Youth, help us celebrate Treaty Day by writing an essay, drawing a picture of your land grant or coloring a page!



**\$300 Prize - 500 word essay (ages 13-21)**

How does your land grant improve the lives of people in your community?  
How does it protect land and water?



**One-\$50 Prize (ages 6-10) / One-\$50 prize (ages 11-18)**

Draw a picture of what you want your land grant to be in the future.

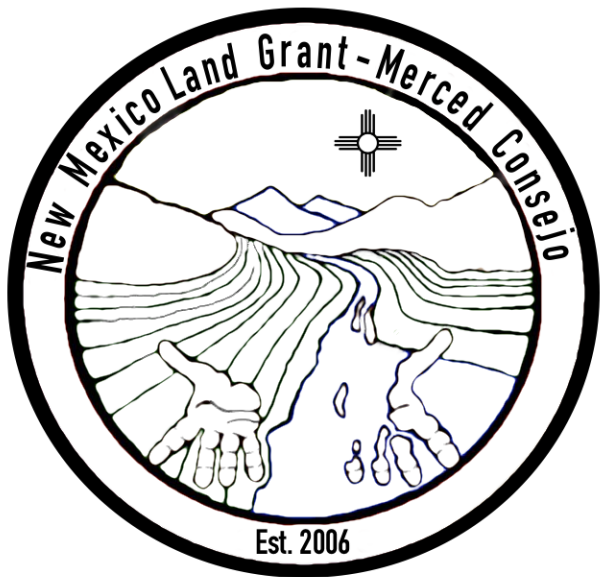
**One-\$25 Prize (ages 2-5) coloring page (attached)**

**Essays, drawings and coloring pages due by January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

Call or text Anissa or Jacobo at 505-692-7033 / 505-400-9426 or e-mail  
Consejo at [nmlgconsejo@gmail.com](mailto:nmlgconsejo@gmail.com) for submission instructions.

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