

Middle Rio Grande Water Advocates' Annual Conference 2022

“The Great Change: Surviving New Mexico’s Arid Future”

Speaker Bio's

(click the name)

[Paula Garcia](#), Executive Director, New Mexico Acequia Association

[Norm Gaume](#), P.E. (ret.), BSEE, MSCE, water activist, retired NM water resources manager

[Mike Hamman](#), New Mexico Governor Lujan Grisham's Water Advisor

[Laurie McCann](#), Board of Directors MRGWA, and Secy-Treasurer of the New Mexico Paddlers Coalition

[John Mumm](#), Water Planner

[Melanie Stansbury](#), U.S. Representative (N.M.-CD-01)

[Stacy Timmons](#), Associate Director, New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources

[Bob Wessely](#), Past President, Middle Rio Grande Water Advocates

Paula Garcia, Executive Director, New Mexico Acequia Association

Paula Garcia is Executive Director of the New Mexico Acequia Association. During two decades of her service, acequias in New Mexico have built a movement around the principle that water is life, agua es vida. Through her leadership, acequias have strengthened community self-determination through local water governance, have enacted policy reforms protecting rural, agricultural water rights, and have fought for clean water to flow in our rivers. With the NMAA team, she has also established innovative youth and leadership development projects and farm apprenticeships that seek to strengthen the next generation of farmers and ranchers who are caretakers of water, land, livestock, and native and heirloom seeds. With her family, Paula cares for a small ranch and traditional gardens characteristic of the subsistence agriculture of her ancestors. When not living and breathing acequias, Paula can be found hiking, playing classical piano, and cooking a simple meal based on some variation of corn, beans, and chile. Her son is a first year student of the United World College which is dedicated to global peace and sustainability through education.



[Back to Top](#)

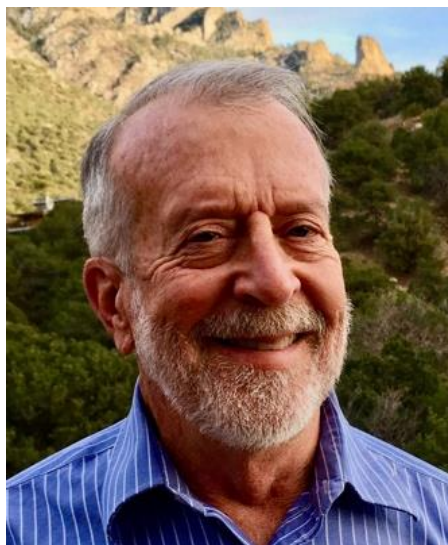
Norm Gaume, P.E. (ret.), BSEE, MSCE, water activist, retired NM water resources manager

Norm is a retired licensed water engineer with broad professional experience. Norm worked for the City of Albuquerque wastewater utility and the water utility 1978-1989 as an operations and maintenance manager. As City of Albuquerque water resources manager 1990-1997, Norm managed the geohydrology investigations, modeling, and extensive public planning that transformed Albuquerque's view of its aquifer and replaced its water supply strategy. As director of the NM Interstate Stream Commission 1997-2002, he led the collaborative planning that developed and obtained statutory authorization of a technical solution and settlement for New Mexico's permanent compliance with its Pecos River Compact water delivery obligations pursuant to the U. S. Supreme Court's 1987 decree. He also spearheaded the ISC's 2002 "Framework for a State Water Plan." He operated his own water planning and management consulting business 2003-2014.

He has been a volunteer water expert and advocate since he closed his business in 2014. He worked with the Gila Conservation Coalition 2014-2019 to successfully protect the wild Gila River from state's infeasible Gila diversion plan. He has advocated and lobbied for reform of New Mexico's water planning and governance, for facing the impacts of climate change on New Mexico's water and adapting to substantially reduced water supplies, for spill prevention of oil and gas toxic waste liquids, against privatizing New Mexico's rivers, against the Santolina sprawl development, and for the proposed Green Amendment to the New Mexico Constitution.

Norm received the New Mexico Foundation for Open Government 2016 Dixon citizen award for his "relentless" use of state government transparency laws "to shine a light on controversial decisions by the government to divert the Gila River." The New Mexico Environmental Law Center gave him the Carl Souder water protector award in 2019. Norm is president of the Middle Rio Grande Water Advocates and is an Adobe Whitewater Club of New Mexico board member.

He and his spouse have reduced their household direct carbon footprint. They live off-grid in a rural Sandoval County home and now drive an electric vehicle that they charge off-grid.



[Back to Top](#)

Mike Hamman, New Mexico Governor Lujan Grisham's Water Advisor

Mike A. Hamman has more than 38 years of engineering and water resources management experience primarily in New Mexico with a focus on upper Rio Grande basin water projects and issues. He has worked as a registered professional engineer in New Mexico since 1990.

Mike joined the Governor's Office as Senior Water Advisor on January 3 from the position of Chief Executive Officer and Chief Engineer of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He joined the District in 2015 and led a staff of 220 that provides irrigation, drainage, flood control and ecological services for the middle Rio Grande valley. He worked with multiple jurisdictions in the region at the local, state and tribal levels in order to deliver water to 60,000 acres of irrigated farmlands that includes 12,000 acres farmed within the six middle Rio Grande Pueblo lands.

Prior to the MRGCD, Mike served for 17 years for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation culminating as Area Manager with responsibilities over 13 federal water projects from the San Luis Valley in Colorado to Fort Quitman in Texas. As Area Manager, he led a staff of 200 in six field offices that perform operations and maintenance of well fields, diversion dams, large dams and reservoirs such as Elephant Butte, river channel maintenance on the Rio Grande and Pecos basins, water modeling and accounting for project water, and implementation of endangered species programs.

Mike served as a Regional Water Planner for the NM Interstate Stream Commission for two years, five years as the Water Utility Director for the City of Santa Fe, and was the Water Administrator and head of the Utility Authority for the Jicarilla Apache Nation for nearly 9 years. At the Nation, he led the development of its water administration policies, created a water rights leasing program that assisted power producers, oil and gas operators, and the City of Santa Fe in meeting their water needs. He was instrumental in the development of the Nation's water and wastewater treatment and delivery systems project that was funded by the federal Jicarilla Apache Reservation Rural Water System Act that appropriated \$45M beginning in 2002 to address inadequate water and wastewater systems for the town of Dulce.

Mike was raised in Taos and received his Bachelors of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of New Mexico in 1983. Mike and his family live on a small farm in Corrales, New Mexico.



[Back to Top](#)

Laurie McCann, Board of Directors MRGWA, and Secy-Treasurer of the New Mexico Paddlers Coalition.

Laurie, a recent arrival in New Mexico (2019), had leadership positions in three statewide California river protection campaigns (the Stanislaus, North Fork American, and Tuolumne Rivers) from 1978 to 1994. Subsequent to in-depth training in interest-based negotiation, and a 2-year apprenticeship in the negotiation of labor/management contracts, her river activism evolved into designing and facilitating multi-stakeholder water policy collaboratives for major California watersheds. Clients included the Santa Clara Valley Water District's Fisheries Restoration program, Sacramento Flood Control Agency's Lower American River Task Force, and the El Dorado County Water District South Fork Dialogue.

Her professional career culminated in 2012 with a 12-year stint as Campus Ombudsman at the University of California Santa Cruz, where she helped staff, faculty, and students resolve their campus-related problems. Since then, while she continues to advocate for river protection and equitable water policies, she is now the diva of RainDragon's Workshop - where discards, detritus, found and gifted objects become the raw materials of her mixed media art projects. Her bio includes a B.A. in Comparative Literature from UC Berkeley, an M.A. in Psychology from California State University Sonoma, and two years in the Peace Corps in West Africa.



[Back to Top](#)

John Mumm, Water Planner

John Mumm is a Hydrologist for Tech 2 Solutions at LANL, and a recent past Water Planner for the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission. He has a Master's Degree in Arctic Hydrology from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, and has worked for the Office of the State Engineer for both the State of Wyoming and New Mexico. He has great knowledge and enthusiasm in hydrology, water management, water rights and statutes, agricultural and environmental engineering, and water planning.



[Back to Top](#)

Melanie Stansbury, U.S. Representative (N.M.-CD-01)

Born and raised in New Mexico, Congresswoman Melanie Stansbury leads with determination and compassion. She has dedicated her career to finding solutions to water issues, poverty, and climate change — representing New Mexico in the Legislature and now in Congress. She is a champion of efforts to address hunger, food, and water insecurity, conservation and climate change, and economic development and recovery. Stansbury worked in communities across the state as a STEM educator, researcher on land and water issues, and served as a former staffer in the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the White House Office of Management and Budget. As the Congresswoman from New Mexico’s 1st Congressional District, she is working hard to lift up the voices of our communities and tackle our biggest challenges—from economic development, to food and water security, to climate change.



[Back to Top](#)

Stacy Timmons, Associate Director, New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources

With over 15 years working in the hydrogeology realm, and 5 years managing the Aquifer Mapping Program, Stacy has enjoyed working all around the desert southwest and New Mexico. Developing regional scale hydrogeology projects to address important societal questions or issues has been the emphasis of Stacy's work at the Bureau. However, she really enjoys the process of helping people understand their water resources, especially groundwater. Stacy began serving as an Associate Director for Hydrogeology Programs at the Bureau in 2019, and has added the responsibility of leading the implementation of the NM Water Data Act (from 2019 House Bill 651). Stacy has worked in hydrogeology for the Bureau of Geology since 2004.



[Back to Top](#)

Bob Wessely, Past President, Middle Rio Grande Water Advocates

Bob has worked with and led the Water Assembly, now Water Advocates, for over twenty years. Partnering with the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments, the Assembly coordinated the planning process that resulted in the 2004 MRG Regional Water Plan. The work included technical evaluation, extensive outreach; public meetings, agency briefings, and working with the legislature. The Assembly has worked with the state on subsequent updates and conducted annual conferences on water issues. Bob has also advised the Las Vegas, NM Water Utility in its upgrade planning.

In Bob's previous 30-year career he co-founded and served as Technical Director of SciSo, Inc., an Albuquerque software system engineering and management consulting firm, supporting diverse industries.

Although Bob holds a PhD in Theoretical, Solid-State Physics, at heart he is a systems engineer who enjoys the challenge of finding solutions for those problems important to NM and its communities, but especially water.



[Back to Top](#)