Ancient Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture

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Quita Ortiz
New Mexico Acequia Association
Outline

Acequias in the Landscape

Historical Overview

Acequia Governance Overview

Acequia Agriculture

The Role of NMAA
Ribbons of Green...

- Irrigated river valleys
  - Green swaths across arid regions
- In northern New Mexico, traditional acequias are the main irrigation systems
Perspective View, Typical Acequias
Historical Overview

1600 - 1800s Establishment of land grants and acequias

1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between US and Mexico

1851 Territorial water code codifies ancient acequia practices

1898 Within 50 years, most of communal lands lost.

1907 NM Water Code: privatized water rights

1980s Acequias organize to defend water rights in adjudication defense and to protest water transfers

1990s Statewide acequia and land grant organizations formed

2000s Historic policy reform strengthening local acequia governance.
Acequias manage water according to local custom, each acequia unique.

*Repartimiento* is custom of sharing within each acequia and between acequias on the same stream.

Each acequia is a local governmental entity – political subdivision of the state.

Each has three member commission and a mayordomo who are elected.

800 Acequias in New Mexico