

RIO GRANDE WATER FUND 2019 OVERVIEW AND MAP



Restoring Forests to Protect Water at its Source

New Mexico's forested mountains serve as our water towers, providing freshwater for towns, communities and cities downstream. As well, mountain forests significantly contribute to air quality, provide firewood and timber for community use, and serve as an important destination for those who love recreating in the Land of Enchantment.

However, wildfires - followed by post-fire flooding - threaten New Mexico's forests and water security. And those fires have been increasing in size and number. The Rio Grande Water Fund, launched in 2014, is a solution to securing clean water by restoring forests to a healthy state.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Many other important resource and social values, in addition to water and watershed health, are at risk when forests are severely damaged by wildfire including:



• **Wildlife:** Animals are displaced and habitat is destroyed.



• **Business:** Economic development suffers due to a perception that water supplies are unreliable.



• **Tourism:** Severe wildfire in recreational areas lead to declines in tourism, affecting state revenue.



WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE HEALTHY FORESTS

Large-scale, proactive steps are necessary to protect 1.7 million acres of forests in the Rio Grande Watershed. That's why 60 organizations have come together in collaborative partnership—the Rio Grande Water Fund—to generate sustainable funding for large-scale forest and watershed restoration treatments, educating youth about the connections between forests and water, providing research to policy makers, and creating forestry and wood products jobs. And, we are making great strides!

In 2017 alone, we saw a 125% increase in the number of acres restored, \$9 in leveraged public funding for every private dollar raised, and hundreds of students participating in educational opportunities exploring watershed and forest health.

Revealing How it Works

The Rio Grande Water Fund is restoring forests across a large region, and demonstration sites play an important role in providing tangible examples of the techniques and outcomes. For example, near Taos, campers, hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts are getting an inside-view of forest thinning along the banks of the Rio Hondo. With Rio Grande Water Fund support, the Taos Valley Watershed Coalition and USDA Forest Service removed clusters of small trees that could fuel damaging fires along the road to the Taos Ski Valley.

In the Cibola National Forest near Tijeras, TNC and its partners are restoring 500 acres to thin overgrown trees, introduce controlled burns and boost the water-holding capacity of the stream and adjacent land. Small trees cut by volunteers are providing firewood for the local community and the project has created more than a dozen full-time forestry jobs. Youth and young adults are getting first-hand experience about the connections between forests and water supplies through on-the-ground monitoring and environmental education programs.

LONG-TERM CONSERVATION GOALS

- Restore 600,000 acres of the forested watershed to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and subsequent contamination of the Rio Grande.
- Secure clean water for wildlife and 1 million New Mexicans.
- Offer economic opportunity by creating jobs in the Water Fund area, approximately 20 jobs for every 1,000 acres thinned.
- Reach hundreds of students and youth each year through educational programs focusing on the connection between forest health and water supplies.

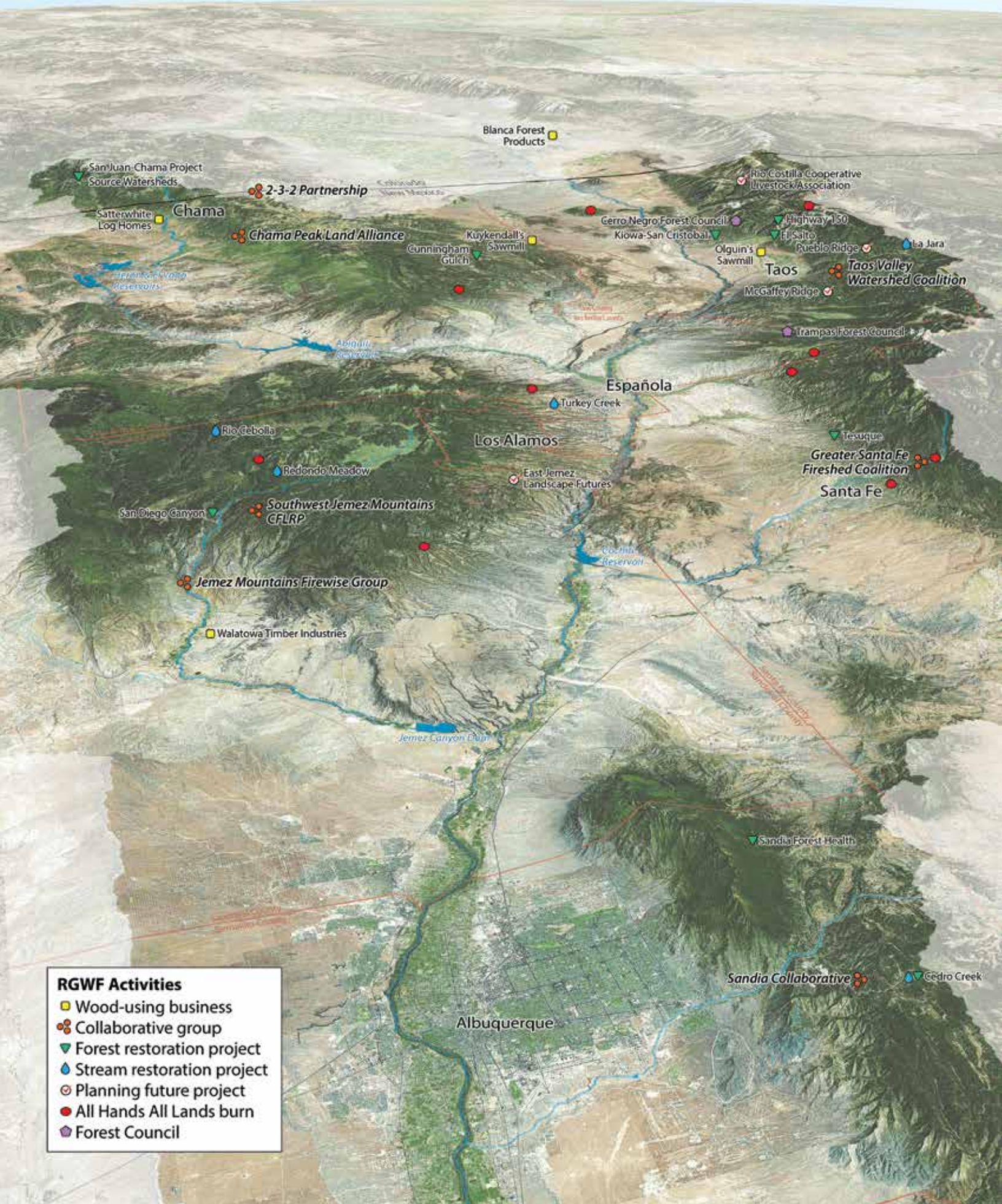
Our vision

Our vision is of healthy forests and watersheds that provide a reliable supply of high-quality Rio Grande water and other benefits for New Mexico for generations to come. With your support, we can continue this critical conservation work!



The Nature Conservancy, New Mexico Chapter
1613 Paseo de Peralta, Suite 200 | Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
505-946-2021
nature.org/newmexico

RIO GRANDE WATER FUND PROJECTS



- RGWF Activities**
- Wood-using business
 - ⊕ Collaborative group
 - ▼ Forest restoration project
 - 💧 Stream restoration project
 - ⊙ Planning future project
 - All Hands All Lands burn
 - ⦿ Forest Council

San Juan-Chama Project Source Watersheds

Satterwhite Log Homes

Chama

2-3-2 Partnership

Chama Peak Land Alliance

Cunningham Gulch

Kuykendall's Sawmill

Blanca Forest Products

Gerro Negro Forest Council
Kiowa-San Cristobal

Rio Costilla Cooperative Livestock Association

Highway 150

El Salto Pueblo Ridge

Olguin's Sawmill

McGaffey Ridge

Taos

La Jara

Taos Valley Watershed Coalition

Trampas Forest Council

Espanola

Turkey Creek

Los Alamos

East Jemez Landscape Futures

Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition

Santa Fe

Southwest Jemez Mountains CFLRP

San Diego Canyon

Jemez Mountains Firewise Group

Walatowa Timber Industries

Jemez Canyon Dam

Sandia Forest Health

Sandia Collaborative

Cedro Creek

Albuquerque