

## Taos to host 2014 Congreso de las Acequias

Staff report

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The New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA) will have its 15th annual membership meeting, Congreso de las Acequias, Saturday, Nov. 15, at the Sagebrush Inn in Taos.

The theme of this year's statewide gathering of acequia leaders is "Poco a poco se anda lejos: Honoring Centuries of Acequia History & Celebrating 25 Years of Acequia Advocacy."

The meeting is an opportunity to pass resolutions to guide the association, and to elect members to the 11-person Concilio.

The association says it hopes to continue building the movement throughout the state, protecting our land and water resources for future generations of acequia farmers and ranchers.

Acequias serve families and so they are inherently intergenerational. This year's event will feature youth activity areas that will accommodate children, from toddlers to teenagers. Kids are encouraged to attend so they can be exposed to acequia issues at an early age. Registration is free for children 12 years and under.

For more information or to register for the event visit [lasacequias.org](http://lasacequias.org). You can also call Paula Garcia with the New Mexico Acequia Association at (505) 231-7752.

The event is co-hosted by the Taos Valley Acequia Association and the Taos Soil and Water Conservation District. Event sponsors include USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Services, Taos Soil and Water Conservation District, Trader Joe's, American Friends Service Committee, Rancho de Chimayo, Los Alamos National Bank, Santa Cruz Farm, and La Asociacion de las Acequia del Valle de Mora.

The initial incarnation of NMAA took place as early as 1989, followed by the organization formally establishing itself in 1990. This effort was made by various acequia leaders concerned primarily about the transfer of water rights out of acequias and changing the use of those water rights away from agriculture to other purposes such as subdivisions, resorts, and industrial uses. Working as volunteers the original group of NMAA leaders formed vital communications networks to resist the growing trend toward the commodification of water in the 1990s.