



Stephanie Garcia Richard, Land Commissioner  
State of New Mexico

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 7, 2019

Contact:

Angie Poss, Assistant Commissioner of Communications  
505.470.2965  
aposs@slo.state.nm.us

**Commissioner Garcia Richard Signs Joint  
Planning Agreement with McKinley County and  
City of Gallup**

*Economic Development Tool Emphasizes Collaboration, Kicks Off  
National Economic Development Week*

**SANTA FE, NM** – On Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup> 2019, Commissioner of Public Lands Stephanie Garcia Richard joined officials from McKinley County and the city of Gallup for the signing of a Joint Planning Agreement (JPA). The signing kicked off National Economic Development Week at the McKinley County Courthouse. Former Land Commissioner Ray Powell signed a similar JPA with the city and county on February 7, 2013, which remained in place during his administration but was recently inactive during the Dunn administration. The agreement is meant to foster enhanced collaboration between the city, county, and the Land Office in the process of marketing 177,000 acres of state trust land for economic development purposes. 700 acres are within or immediately adjacent to the city of Gallup.

“This agreement is a win, win, win – the county wins, the city wins, and the beneficiaries of state land trust win. This really allows us to partner with local entities to leverage economic development and seek business opportunities,” Commissioner Garcia Richard said. “We are looking to sign similar partnerships across the state so that we are meeting our obligation to responsibly use state trust land to raise money for New Mexico schools, hospitals, and colleges.”

JPAs with cities, counties and Tribal governments reinforce the Land Office's commitment to transparency by assuring that any and all land sales or leases are collaborated on by all interested parties. Any planning and development will have everyone at the table to ensure that if a business endeavor is being proposed, all of the project aspects, such as access to water or emergency services are taken into account by the appropriate government or agency.

“Big things are coming to Gallup and McKinley County – this is an important step to bring those things to fruition,” McKinley County Commission Chair Bill Lee said in his remarks.

Chairman Lee said that Gallup is a bright spot in New Mexico's economic potential, sighting existing infrastructure, a workforce ready to work, and the city's proximity to Interstate 40.

“The city of Gallup is proud and honored to enter into this agreement not only with the county but with the Land Office, as we recognize the potential for growth in our area,” Gallup Mayor Jackie Kinney added. “Opportunities are coming forward quickly to create investment and jobs which we desperately need from our surrounding area and for the Navajo Nation. It is exciting. Commissioner Garcia Richard just took office and she is already here to assist us and guide us to help make all of us successful.”



Representative Patricia Lundstrom (D – 9, McKinley and San Juan County) kicked off the signing ceremony, and alluded to a visit later in the week by Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales. Lundstrom is the Chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee, the Executive Director of the Greater Gallup Economic Development Committee, and a former House colleague of Commissioner Garcia Richard.

“This kick off for National Economic Development Week is extremely important. Having the Land Commissioner, the Mayor, and the Commission Chair is a wonderful example of collaboration as we are moving forward with economic development in McKinley County,” Representative Lundstrom said in her remarks. “With Commissioner Garcia Richard at the helm of the Land Office, we look forward to great things. This is a great day for our community.”

The Land Office is currently working on JPAs with the town of Edgewood, Dona Ana County, The Pueblo of Laguna, Cibola County and the city of Grants. Language in the JPAs highlight the importance of renewable energy projects in the marketing of state trust land or land that is proposed for land exchanges or land swaps. The Land Office, under Commissioner Garcia Richard, is committed to tripling the number of renewable energy projects on state trust land, as well as being at the forefront of helping New Mexico turn the corner to become a leader in the market for the storage and transmission of renewable energy.

---

---

***Oil, gas, and mineral production, ranching and farming, and commercial development on State Trust Lands support public schools, seven universities, New Mexico Military Institute, New Mexico School for the Deaf, New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, three hospitals, correctional facilities, water conservation projects, and public building construction and repair. In fiscal year 2018, the State Land Office collected \$852 million from lease payments, oil and gas lease sale earnings, rights-of-way, permits, interest, fees, and oil, gas, and mineral royalties.***