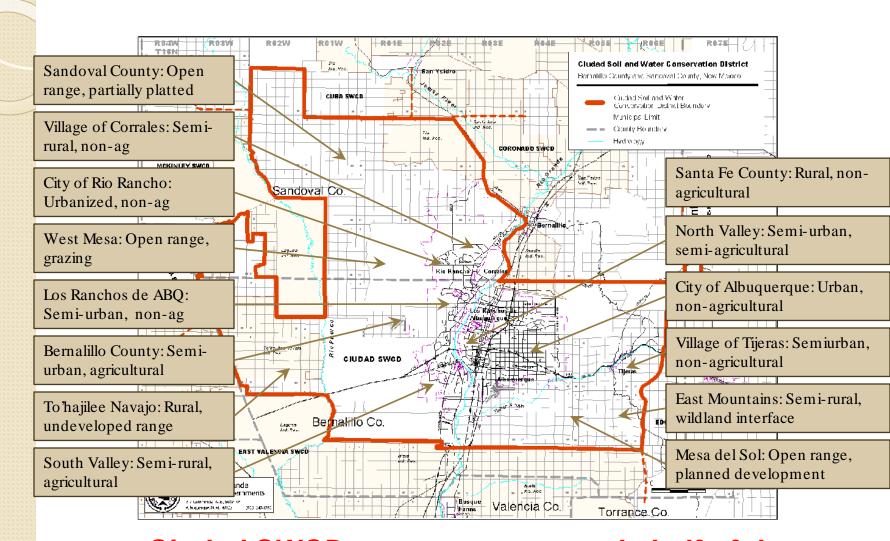


# PERSONAL CONNECTIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS



J. Steven Glass, Board Chair January 19, 2017

#### Ciudad SWCD Constituencies



Ciudad SWCD encompasses nearly half of the population of the entire state of New Mexico

### Key to Ciudad SWCD success

- Complex, diverse, competitive constituencies
- Personal connections are necessary to avoid getting lost in the shuffle
- Connections cultivated and maintained by Supervisors over years in public service
- Local entities important for personal connections
  - County governments
  - Municipal governments (cities, towns, villages)
  - Special districts (flood control, irrigation, water utility)
  - Intergovernmental collaborations: Specific focus
     offers best opportunities for communication
     and new personal connections





### Intergovernmental Collaboration

- Middle Rio Grande MS4 Stakeholders
  - 19 cities, towns, villages, counties, flood control authorities and tribes
  - Primary partnering area: Federal pilot watershedbased stormwater permit issuance
  - Giudad SWCD provided grant-funded professional facilitation services in permit negotiations with USEPA







## Intergovernmental Collaboration

- Middle Rio Grande Stormwater Quality Team
  - 10 local stormwater agencies (cities, villages, counties, flood control authorities)
  - Primary partnering area: Federal stormwater permit public education compliance support
  - Gudad SWCD provides reportable public education and collaborative grant writing support
  - MRGSQT funds elementary school watershed health education program







### Intergovernmental Collaboration

- Mid Region Council of Governments
  - Water Resources Board: 19 regional agencies (cities, towns, villages, counties, irrigation district)
  - Primary partnerning areas: Water quantity planning, watershed health
  - Giudad SWCD joined WRB in 20 14; Two other SWCDs followed
  - SWCDs participated in updating the local Regional Water Plan
  - Gudad SWCD representative elected WRB Chair in 20 16











- Primary partnering areas
  - Upland forest health (WUI)
  - Watershed restoration (WUI)
  - Federal stormwater permit compliance support
  - Greenprint low impact development master planning initiative
- Unique funding relationship
  - 1% of 20 14 Open Space mil levy earmarked for SWCD to support County cooperative programs
  - County Commission side-stepped issue, but County staff implemented funding









- Personal contacts: A mixed bag
  - District 1 Commissioner (rural): Supports partnering and SWCD funding
  - District 2 Commissioner (rural): Supports partnering, advocated for tax set-aside to support SWCD
  - District 3 Commissioner (urban): Noncommittal
  - District 5 Commissioner (WUI): Supports partnering, but opposes SWCD funds from County
  - Water Resources Program Manager: Supports partnering for stormwater permit compliance
  - Open Space Program Manager: Supports partnering for watershed improvement, upland forest health, urban LID master planning





- Strong partnering potential
  - Initiated Rio Grande potable water treatment in 2008: Urban runoff impacts
  - Watershed health, water quality and quantity, local ag, public education support ABCWUA mission
- Personal contacts: A challenge
  - Executive Director: *Opposes SWCD messaging* about river contamination from urban runoff
  - Operations Manager: Cites stormwater as possible future water source, opposes messaging about future water shortages
  - Solids Management Superintendent: Supports markets for composted biosolids, but stymied by utility policies



#### Lessons Learned

- Personal connections with local officials are crucial to continued SWCD recognition and success
- Local officials respond best to SWCD collaborations that support their agency's goals
- Personal connections must be cultivated and maintained through regular contacts over the long term
- Intergovernmental collaboratives can be good sources for developing personal connections
- Not all connections will be productive at first – persevere!

