

Success Story - El Llano Estacado RC&D Council – June 2020

“El Llano Estacado RC&D is ever striving to develop and utilize motivated community leaders that provide direction in their community to improve and conserve our natural resources.”

El Llano Estacado RC&D Council is located in eastern New Mexico and covers 7 counties: Union, Harding, Quay, Guadalupe, De Baca, Curry and Roosevelt. It was organized in 1969 as one of the first councils in New Mexico.

El Llano Estacado Resource, Conservation & Development Council (RC&D Council) plans and carries out the annual Northeastern New Mexico Prairie Partners Meeting each year held in Tucumcari, New Mexico each December. 2020 will be its 12th annual meeting.

The Prairie Partnership is the product of over twelve years of establishing relationships with landowners and state and federal agencies in eastern New Mexico and the western Panhandle of Texas. Developed by Robert Martin and Tish McDaniel of The Nature Conservancy and Christopher Rustay of Playa Lakes Joint Venture (PLJV), the idea for a collaborative effort was based loosely on work done by the Malpais Borderland Group in Southwest New Mexico and the Quivira Coalition. The intent of this partnership was to develop a cohesive group of producers, resource managers, and conservationists who were interested in the integrity of the short grass prairie, the health of its working landscapes, and the future of its rural economies. The Prairie Partnership’s purpose is to provide a forum for state, federal, and private partners to encourage and support voluntary, proactive conservation of prairie and playa habitats, and promote the sustainability of the land-based human communities integral to their future.



Over the past 12 years Prairie Partners has developed into an annual event that hosts 60-80 participants from around New Mexico and Texas. Speakers are brought into Tucumcari each December to speak on topics ranging from energy, soil, crop production, conservation, small farm production, weather, ground water, weed management, wildlife, CoCoRaHS, and other innovative ideas. In the past couple years the format has developed into having an academic professional speak on a topic and then a have producer tell their experience with that topic. It is an all-day event so lunch is catered by a local restaurant which is an attendee favorite as the food is outstanding and the time provides opportunity for idea sharing and networking. We have many repeat participants each year.

Besides the invaluable information disseminated and sharing of ideas between individuals and organizations, El Llano Estacado uses Prairie Partners as an annual money maker. It has kept the cost for attending low by getting sponsors to pay the majority of the cost so everyone can attend.

