

# NEW MEXICO STATE POLICIES

The Center for Western Priorities' **Western States Conservation Scorecard** evaluates each Western state in three areas: Lands and Access, Outdoor Recreation, and Responsible Energy Development. Our aim is to illuminate best practices and gaps in state-level public lands-related policy in the West. We hope to highlight where Western states are demonstrating leadership, as well as where they can improve. Please see the full report for a breakdown of methodology and the complete grading rubrics with scores at [www.westernpriorities.org/statescorecard](http://www.westernpriorities.org/statescorecard).

NEW MEXICO	LANDS AND ACCESS	OUTDOOR RECREATION	RESPONSIBLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT
	AVERAGE	AVERAGE	AVERAGE

## AVERAGE — LANDS AND ACCESS

New Mexico state trust lands are **available for recreation**, with stipulations. Hunting and fishing is allowed with a license, written permission, and only if the state trust lands are accessible by public road. Other recreation is allowed with a permit, which costs \$35 a year. Camping is restricted to no more than 14 days per year. Stream access has fluctuated in recent years. In 2015, the New Mexico legislature amended their Stream Access Law of 1978, **cutting walk-and-wade access** wherever a stream crosses private property, and ultimately creating significant implications for floating.

New Mexico has little dedicated funding for conservation. New Mexico's **Natural Heritage Conservation Act** put forth \$5 million in conservation funds to attract federal matching funds in 2010, but funds have since dried up. In 2016, New Mexico passed a Senate **commemoration** recognizing and honoring the state's public lands legacy, saying it "is vital to the state and national economies and to the health and well-being of the residents of New Mexico."

## AVERAGE — OUTDOOR RECREATION

While the state does not have a dedicated office of outdoor recreation, the state legislature recently passed a **resolution** requesting state agencies study the impact of creating a state office of outdoor recreation and recruiting outdoor industries to the state. The state does not have dedicated funding for outdoor infrastructure, but New Mexico State Parks' **Kids n' Parks** transportation grants provide funds for buses to connect students to the outdoors.

## AVERAGE — RESPONSIBLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

New Mexico has a range of energy-related policies. New Mexico lets counties determine **setbacks** from oil and gas wells. The state allows blanket bonding for oil and gas well reclamation, and allows self-bonding for coal operations. When it comes to spill reporting and transparency, New Mexico requires oil and gas producers to report spills and provides the public access to spill reports through an **online database**. The state requires companies to share fracking chemicals with state agencies. Like most Western states, royalty rates on energy extracted on public lands exceed the federal rate of 12.5 percent. New Mexico also charges a conservation tax and a severance tax on production. Though some industry groups have urged companies to **conduct baseline water testing**, that testing remains voluntary. Though energy production in the state results in significant methane emissions, New Mexico does not have methane capture rules.