



## 2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

### GOVERNOR

Outdoor recreation including hunting and fishing is a multi-billion-dollar industry in New Mexico and the United States, supporting jobs and economic development in rural communities. But for many sportsmen and women, hunting and fishing are more than a pastime – they are a passion. Hunters and anglers care deeply about wildlife, habitat and the public lands they have used for generations. They also have a long track record of civic engagement.

For all of those reasons, the New Mexico Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, with the concurrence of the New Mexico organizations listed below, developed a short general public interest questionnaire for every candidate listed the 2018 primary ballot for Governor, Commissioner of Public Lands, U.S. Senate and U.S. House. Our goal was to develop questions that affect all New Mexicans, but which are not often considered during the course of a typical political campaign.

Five individuals are vying to become the next Governor of New Mexico. We submitted the same questions to each campaign on April 16, then followed up to ensure they had received the questionnaire. We followed up again with a reminder on April 26, and gave the campaigns additional time if needed.

We received responses from all three Democrats who will appear on the June 5 primary – Jeff Apodaca, Joseph Cervantes and Michelle Lujan Grisham, as well as from Steve Pearce, who is unopposed in the Republican primary. Bob Walsh, who is a write-in candidate running as a Libertarian, did not respond.

The candidates' answers are on the following pages, along with a short, campaign-provided biography of the candidate and a photograph. We specifically asked the candidates to keep their answers short. We hope that New Mexico voters of all political backgrounds will find the responses informative.

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers and the following groups are nonprofit charitable 501(c)(3) organizations. We do not endorse or oppose any candidate or party for any political office. We do urge all eligible New Mexico residents to vote.

Jarrett Babincsak, Chairman  
New Mexico Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

On behalf of:

- New Mexico Wildlife Federation
- Albuquerque Wildlife Federation
- United Bowhunters of New Mexico
- Wild Turkey Sportsmen's Association
- Southwest Consolidated Sportsmen
- Doña Ana County Associated Sportsmen
- Sportsmen Concerned
- New Mexico Sportsmen





## 2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE GOVERNOR



### JEFF APODACA DEMOCRAT

Jeff grew up in Santa Fe and Las Cruces and is the son of former New Mexico Governor Jerry Apodaca and former First Lady Clara Apodaca. A cancer survivor, Jeff founded the Jeff Apodaca Celebration of Life Fund, benefiting cancer survivors and opening the Jeff Apodaca Multi-Media Center at UNM Children's Hospital. Jeff is a media executive with over 30 years' experience at Univision, AOL & CBS. Jeff sits on the board of Innovate ABQ, Albuquerque Economic Forum, and formerly served on the Albuquerque Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, American Cancer Society & United Way Projects. Jeff married the love of his life, Jackie Moss Apodaca, in 2002. A native New Mexican from Albuquerque, Jackie earned her MBA from New Mexico State University and worked for the Learning Company and Disney Corporation before returning to New Mexico as a community leader and full time mother. Today, Jeff makes his home in Albuquerque with his wife Jackie and their twin boys Asher & Gage.

Bio provided by candidate

#### WHAT ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO NEW MEXICO HUNTERS AND ANGLERS?

Walk and wade is an important issue. Anglers used to be able to freely walk their favorite trout streams without fear of prosecution, as long as they remained in the stream. A 2014 attorney general's opinion stated that streams were public domain. Ranchers and fishing lodge owners, angered by the attorney general's opinion, took to the legislature, where a bill was pushed through at breakneck speed. I believe New Mexicans have a constitutional right to fish in any stream that they can reach without crossing private land. This right was enshrined in water law when was New Mexico was a territory and written into our state Constitution. The New Mexico Supreme Court upheld and clarified these public access rights in 1945. Yet for more than 70 years the State Game Commission has ignored the Constitution, telling anglers they can be fined or even jailed if caught fishing in a "private" stream.

#### WHAT QUALIFICATIONS WOULD YOU LOOK FOR IN INDIVIDUALS YOU WOULD NOMINATE TO SERVE ON THE STATE GAME COMMISSION'S FIVE REGIONAL SEATS?

I want everyone to have a seat at the table. Nominees need to have shown a track record of listening to all parties and fair adjudication of issues before them. I do not want nominees that are beholden to a single interest at the expense of all other stakeholders. In the past, the voices of science and public environmental concerns have taken a back seat. This needs to stop. I value people with education and experience. And I will see to it that there's coordination between with the Department of Game & Fish to take a holistic approach to wildlife management that also includes and protects non-game species.

#### HUNTERS AND ANGLERS PROVIDE A SIGNIFICANT MAJORITY OF THE FUNDING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH. DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE EXEMPT FROM STATE BUDGET CUTS, BUDGET INCREASE CAPS AND FURLONGHS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

I think we need to fix New Mexico's economy to grow our tax base and lose our dependence on oil and gas for revenue. Until we do, every single item in the state budget will be raided to cover shortfall. That's why I'm the candidate proposing big ideas for major change – investing \$1.4 Billion of our permanent funds in New Mexico small businesses to create 225,000 new jobs. Then everyone, not just Fish & Game, can operate without budget worries. And until we do, yes I agree Game & Fish should be exempt from budget cuts. Fee based revenues should be used for the purpose collected.

#### DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH'S CURRENT OPERATING BUDGET (APPROXIMATELY \$40 MILLION) IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? ARE THERE ANY AREAS OF DEPARTMENT SPENDING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE INCREASED OR REDUCED?

Every agency can always use more. This is why I'm pushing so hard to grow New Mexico's economy and tax base. Areas I'd like to see increased as our state's economy rebounds are more large scale habitat restoration and restoration of native trout.

#### WHAT, IF ANYTHING, WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO INCREASE OR DECREASE THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH BUDGET?

I've committed to investing \$1 Billion in public and private monies to build renewable energy capabilities in New Mexico. My plan has the state retaining 30% ownership and generating on-going revenues. This plan will have few damaging environmental consequences and wean the state off oil and gas money. As our revenues grow, I would like to see more resources dedicated to enhancing our environment. Before growing Game & Fish, I'd look for opportunities to partner with sports, wildlife and environmental organizations doing good work in habitat and game restoration.

#### WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH?

Better coordination with other state agencies and more reliance on peer reviewed science as the basis for decision-making. And of course, I'm a believer in everyone having a seat at the table. I'd like to see more consultation with experts at sports, wildlife and environmental organizations become a regular part of the execution of the Department's duties.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GUIDING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS AND THE IDEA THAT ALL WILDLIFE ARE PUBLICLY OWNED?

I'm one of our anglers and hunters. There's nothing to disagree with here. Viewing wildlife as a public resource is central to the more than 160,000 resident and nonresident anglers who spend \$268 million a year on fishing-related activities. The state also has 87,600 hunters who spend \$345.5 million a year on hunting-related activities. As your Governor, I will fight hard to protect the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

#### DO YOU THINK THE STATE'S NONRESIDENT QUOTA FOR MOST BIG GAME SPECIES IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? WOULD YOU SUPPORT ANY CHANGES IN THE QUOTA LAW?

I would like to see tourism expand. I would be in favor of increasing the percentage of the quota given to non-residents who contract with a New Mexico outfitter. Right now 84% of the licenses to New Mexico residents, 10% to nonresidents who've contracted with an outfitter and 6% to nonresidents who have not contracted with an outfitter. I would support raising the quota for nonresidents contracting with a New Mexican outfitter to 20%, while lowering or eliminating the percent reserved for nonresidents who have not contracted with a New Mexican outfitter.

I would also like to see the drawing odds adjusted to include the date an applicant last received a license. The longer a person goes without being awarded a license, the greater their odds of success should be. This will help ease the transition to awarding more licenses to nonresidents, by increasing chances for being awarded a license if a person misses out in a prior year.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE CURRENT PRACTICE OF ISSUING BIG GAME HUNTING AUTHORIZATIONS THAT ARE VALID ON BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND?

I support the practice of issuing big game hunting authorizations that are valid on both public and private land where the private lands are participating in the Plus and Open Gate Programs.

#### WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE EFFORTS TO MODIFY THE STATE'S STREAM ACCESS LAW TO BE MORE IN LINE WITH THE NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT'S RED RIVER VALLEY DECISION?

Fully support it. Public waters should be open and available for the public to enjoy, as protected by New Mexico's Constitution. Please see the answer to question #1 for more detail.







## 2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE GOVERNOR



### JOE CERVANTES DEMOCRAT

Joe grew up in La Mesa, NM to a family of farmers who instilled the value of hard-work, dedication and serving others. His upbringing inspired Joe to serve others with his talents and passion: earning a degree in architecture and law and becoming a successful attorney, businessman and political figure.

While serving in State House and Senate, Joe has successfully passed bipartisan laws by working with legislators and overcame gridlock to enact important legislation. Joe has led the fight for transparency and accountability by passing the laws that opened the state budget process to the public, ensured Lottery profits are invested in college scholarships, and protected whistleblowers who courageously exposed government wrongdoing. Joe fought to increase classroom time spent teaching students and worked with educators to modernize teaching methods.

With over three decades of creating successful businesses, as Governor, Joe will help New Mexicans get jobs that help them get ahead in life and bring opportunities to our youth by securing them promising jobs. Joe will fight the crime in our communities, safeguard our water and natural resources, and reinvest in the education of our future generations.

Bio provided by candidate

#### WHAT ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO NEW MEXICO HUNTERS AND ANGLERS?

Hunters and Anglers prioritize the preservation of New Mexico's natural environment in order to sustain their lifestyles. They demand and deserve bipartisan policies that strongly support for public land conservation, management and funding. Other important issues that need to be on the table are the protection of habitats, maintaining the health of streams and wetlands, and expand our focus on sustainable energy development that also maintains the balance for wildlife and their habitats

#### WHAT QUALIFICATIONS WOULD YOU LOOK FOR IN INDIVIDUALS YOU WOULD NOMINATE TO SERVE ON THE STATE GAME COMMISSION'S FIVE REGIONAL SEATS?

The candidate would need to have a firm grasp of conservation and renewable energy needs in our state, either through education or practical experience. The candidate should possess an strong understanding of the law and policies that revolve around habitat, water and land management. It would be ideal to have a candidate possess a passion for the environment and a strong spirit to protect New Mexico from environmental corrosion through poor legislation and management.

#### HUNTERS AND ANGLERS PROVIDE A SIGNIFICANT MAJORITY OF THE FUNDING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH. DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE EXEMPT FROM STATE BUDGET CUTS, BUDGET INCREASE CAPS AND FURLONGHS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

The Department of Game and Fish is an integral piece of the conservation and environment protection puzzle in New Mexico. Under my administration, I will fight to keep the state and federal government from "government shutdowns" that harm millions of state and federal employees nationwide and punish hard-working citizens because lawmaking bodies cannot find bipartisan solutions. I will strive to find more soluble methods of balancing, maintaining and allocating state funds to avoid budget cuts that only harm various programs vital to our state's prosperity.

#### DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH'S CURRENT OPERATING BUDGET (APPROXIMATELY \$40 MILLION) IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? ARE THERE ANY AREAS OF DEPARTMENT SPENDING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE INCREASED OR REDUCED?

Public lands provide positive net outcomes for the American economy and encourage recreation and tourism to the state. It is imperative that the Department of Game and Fish and other departments that contribute to the preservation of our public lands and other conservation efforts have adequate funding and personnel to maintain these lands. I would like to see an investment in educational programs about wildlife and conservation, incentives to farmers and rancher to implement conservation on private lands and I support funding that helps reach our policy goal of 80% dependence on renewable energy by 2040.

#### WHAT, IF ANYTHING, WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO INCREASE OR DECREASE THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH BUDGET?

I would fully fund this office with revenue from our licensure programs and prioritize funding to ensure compliance, conservation and responsible sportsmanship.

#### WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH?

Agencies, such as the Department of Game and Fish, play a vital role in wildlife and recreation management that fosters a healthy relationship between humans and the biodiversity in New Mexico. Agencies must provide the best biological and legal solutions to ensure our lands and wildlife are protected. The change that would bring these solutions to the forefront are through stable and equitable funding for conservation efforts and proper allocation of said funds; under my administration, adequate and secure funding, increase in trained personnel education would be at the forefront of changes made to the agency to ensure efficiency and sustainable development efforts and enforcement.

Agencies at the federal, state, and provincial level function as agents of the trustees providing the best available biological and social science to the decision makers. Broad, stable, and equitable funding would enable greater focus on biodiversity conservation and landscape approaches. Traditional uses and users would remain an important funding source.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GUIDING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS AND THE IDEA THAT ALL WILDLIFE ARE PUBLICLY OWNED?

I support that wildlife should remain a public trust of the state and federal government. This allows for government agencies to continue to ensure that wildlife conservation maintains proper funding and oversight for its' protection.

#### DO YOU THINK THE STATE'S NONRESIDENT QUOTA FOR MOST BIG GAME SPECIES IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? WOULD YOU SUPPORT ANY CHANGES IN THE QUOTA LAW?

I have supported and will continue support the existing quota. I would be willing to examine the current quotas and data and work with experts to modify as necessary.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE CURRENT PRACTICE OF ISSUING BIG GAME HUNTING AUTHORIZATIONS THAT ARE VALID ON BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND?

As long as hunters, private landowners and public management agencies (BLM, etc.) are meeting the guidelines of proper hunting rules and regulations, the authorization of such hunting is validated. This type of authorization has helped maintain recreational hunting as well as maintain a balance of eco-diversity of wildlife and habitat conservation in New Mexico. If the Department of Game and Fish continues to monitor and enforce guidelines that maintain the equilibrium between recreation and conservation, it will receive support.

#### WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE EFFORTS TO MODIFY THE STATE'S STREAM ACCESS LAW TO BE MORE IN LINE WITH THE NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT'S RED RIVER VALLEY DECISION?

I believe our water, including streams and rivers, are a public resource and public property and should be treated as such. Private companies should not have the ability to preclude access to our streams.





## 2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE GOVERNOR



### MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM DEMOCRAT

A 12th-generation New Mexican, Michelle learned about our shared responsibility to look after others from her family. Michelle is a caregiver for her aging mother Sonja, who herself was an advocate for children with disabilities. A widow who raised her two teenage daughters as a single mom, Michelle advocates for families across the state every day. As New Mexico's Secretary of Aging, Michelle went undercover to expose abuse of seniors in nursing homes and made changes to ensure that the people who helped build our families and communities have the respect they deserve. As Secretary of the Department of Health, Michelle recruited doctors to underserved rural communities and doubled New Mexico school-based health centers. Michelle currently serves in Congress where she has passed legislation to build stronger communities by investing in law enforcement training, our local tribes, and in better public schools.

Bio provided by candidate

#### WHAT ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO NEW MEXICO HUNTERS AND ANGLERS?

Recently I was fortunate to spend time at a meeting with a group of long-time hunters and anglers. In addition, while on the campaign trail many others who hunt and fish have given me an insight into their desires and concerns. First and foremost is reasonable access to public land. Many prime hunting areas are surrounded by private land, and roads that counties used to maintain have been abandoned or are being purposely taken out of commission at the request of some private landholders. This makes what should be public land effectively private. I will work with the State and Federal land management and wildlife entities to identify landlocked areas and develop a plan to address this issue.

In terms of fishing, the greatest impact right now is our drought. Because of this, the Department of Game and Fish is considering reducing bag limits and imposing size restrictions. This will impact those families that fish to put food on the table. Access to public waters that flow across private land is a major concern to anglers as well as private land owners. The current law, as well as previous legal case history, has created a conflict that the next governor will need to address.

#### WHAT QUALIFICATIONS WOULD YOU LOOK FOR IN INDIVIDUALS YOU WOULD NOMINATE TO SERVE ON THE STATE GAME COMMISSION'S FIVE REGIONAL SEATS?

I would look for a diverse set of individuals with a clear vision for improving wildlife management in New Mexico and promoting policies that ensure a robust wildlife population and fair access to lands over the long run, who have a clear understanding of the value of data and science, who will embrace and implement a public input process that encourages participation and is open and transparent when decisions on wildlife policy are made. Members should represent diverse experience in wildlife management, conservation, and hunting and fishing, while also bringing to the table a distinct understanding of their region's unique dynamics and needs. Given that this department operates as an enterprise, some commissioners should have knowledge and experience in business, finance, and accounting.

Finally, anyone appointed should understand that by working with responsible sportsmen and anglers we can sustain hunting and fishing traditions, promote wildlife, and support New Mexico's outdoor recreation economy.

#### HUNTERS AND ANGLERS PROVIDE A SIGNIFICANT MAJORITY OF THE FUNDING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH. DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE EXEMPT FROM STATE BUDGET CUTS, BUDGET INCREASE CAPS AND FURLOUGHS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

NMDGF is responsible for creating and using its own revenue. Unlike other agencies, it does not receive money from the state's general fund. This independence allows it to work with federal grants and engage closely with non-profit partners. The department should be allowed to continue to sustain its important operation with these funds during times of austerity.

#### DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH'S CURRENT OPERATING BUDGET (APPROXIMATELY \$40 MILLION) IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? ARE THERE ANY AREAS OF DEPARTMENT SPENDING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE INCREASED OR REDUCED?

Without having had the direct conversations with the Agency Director and other key employees, it is difficult to assess the state of program funding and where gaps might exist. If funding proves too limited for certain programs, I will support responsibly utilizing cash balances or license/permit revenues that exceed expenditures to ensure the department is achieving its goals.

#### WHAT, IF ANYTHING, WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO INCREASE OR DECREASE THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH BUDGET?

As stated above, much of this assessment must occur in partnership with the staff and leaders at the department. I want to ensure that we are participating in important federally supported efforts like habitat restoration, which benefit not just game but entire ecosystems. Generally, we must ensure that wherever possible we are utilizing available federal grants and non-profit support in important department efforts.

#### WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH?

First, I am aware of concerns that the current department has not effectively solicited public input or provided sufficient transparency. We need a more open and friendly department that is responsive to the concerns of hunters and anglers while providing them the information they need to understand the department's operations.

Second, bills have been introduced in recent years that would expand and/or alter the scope of operations for the department. Expanding the department's mandate to cover all wildlife across the state would be an important step. I will work to evaluate this change, solicit public and stakeholder input, and ensure any such change is coupled with adequate funding for the department to meet its goals.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GUIDING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS AND THE IDEA THAT ALL WILDLIFE ARE PUBLICLY OWNED?

I agree that New Mexico wildlife is held in trust by the residents of this state. And given this concept, much work needs to be done to ensure that wildlife populations are properly managed for current and future residents of New Mexico. New Mexicans are the primary beneficiaries of access and use of our wildlife, and commercial activities relating to wildlife are properly regulated.

#### DO YOU THINK THE STATE'S NONRESIDENT QUOTA FOR MOST BIG GAME SPECIES IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? WOULD YOU SUPPORT ANY CHANGES IN THE QUOTA LAW?

I believe the resident quota is too low. When you combine the number of licenses issued to non-residents through the public draw along with the number of private land licenses issued, non-residents receive a higher share of licenses than in any other western state. A thorough review of the public and private land systems laws and regulations must be initiated in order to develop an equitable solution that respects New Mexico residents. Non-residents provide a great deal of revenue to the Department of Game and Fish as well as to New Mexico's outdoor recreation economy. Because of this we must proceed cautiously and find a reasonable balance.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE CURRENT PRACTICE OF ISSUING BIG GAME HUNTING AUTHORIZATIONS THAT ARE VALID ON BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND?

These authorizations were created to assist with depredation issues. In addition, there are legal mechanisms in place to address these issues through the depredation program. Because of this, some hunters have expressed concerns that these types of authorizations have been expanded beyond their original intent and in some cases are being abused. I would like to visit with wildlife managers to discuss this issue and find a solution that prevents abuse while protecting the rights and access of smaller landowners, especially in Northern New Mexico.

#### WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE EFFORTS TO MODIFY THE STATE'S STREAM ACCESS LAW TO BE MORE IN LINE WITH THE NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT'S RED RIVER VALLEY DECISION?

The current law and previous case law seem to be in conflict. My immediate obligation is to uphold the law until the law is changed or further clarified while working the Attorney General to resolve this conflict.

In the longer term, I am concerned about the prospect of lengthy litigation on issues such as the definition of "navigable." As a twelfth generation New Mexican, I understand the importance of protecting access to our state's streams and public waters. I'll work with public lands advocates, anglers, sportsmen, and all those impacted to address the issues that limit this access.







## 2018 NEW MEXICO CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE GOVERNOR



### STEVE PEARCE REPUBLICAN

A former Air Force combat pilot and small business owner, Steve Pearce serves New Mexico's Second District in Congress. Born into a large working class family, Steve grew up in Hobbs, New Mexico, and attended local public schools before receiving his degree in Economics from New Mexico State University and his MBA from Eastern New Mexico University.

He has been married to his wife Cynthia for nearly 37 years, with whom he operated a small New Mexico business, creating 50 jobs in their community. Steve is running for Governor of New Mexico to fix our education system, help lift families out of poverty, tackle the crime plaguing our communities, and create good paying jobs for New Mexicans.

Bio provided by candidate

#### WHAT ISSUES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO NEW MEXICO HUNTERS AND ANGLERS?

First and foremost, protect the Second Amendment. It should go without saying that our State must protect and preserve the right of New Mexicans to own firearms. This is the only way to ensure future generations can continue to enjoy the natural treasures the State offers.

Next, access. New Mexico is home to some of the nation's best hunting and fishing. Yet, with nearly 30% of the State owned by the federal government, the State must work in coordination with all levels of government to safeguard anglers, hunters, and all recreationalists' ability to access these lands and the treasures they hold.

Finally, conservation. The State must work with NMDGF, as well as the hunting and angling community to safeguard wildlife and access for future generations to enjoy.

#### WHAT QUALIFICATIONS WOULD YOU LOOK FOR IN INDIVIDUALS YOU WOULD NOMINATE TO SERVE ON THE STATE GAME COMMISSION'S FIVE REGIONAL SEATS?

To begin, all members of the Commission should be sportsmen. The Game Commission's responsibility makes it essential that each member understand and respect hunting and fishing.

With multiple ecosystems, our State needs a State Game Commission as diverse as the wonders it holds. The Game Commission has a good balance now. I believe the Game Commission would best be served with a mix of individuals ranging from ranchers, farmers, landowners along fishing waterways, grazing specialists, and staunch supporters of the 2nd Amendment. I also believe it is vital for the preservation of the cultural heritage of our State to have Native American inclusion on the Game Commission.

#### HUNTERS AND ANGLERS PROVIDE A SIGNIFICANT MAJORITY OF THE FUNDING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH. DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE EXEMPT FROM STATE BUDGET CUTS, BUDGET INCREASE CAPS AND FURLOUGHS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

NMDGF is self-sufficient with permits and licensing fees and federal grants. With little to no investment from the General Fund, attempts to raid money out of NMDGF should not be allowed.

Should a review of NMDGF take place, the exposure to the Department should never be more than the General Fund appropriates to NMDGF. Further, any reduction that is made should not be a greater percentage than what the other agencies are facing.

#### DO YOU THINK THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH'S CURRENT OPERATING BUDGET (APPROXIMATELY \$40 MILLION) IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? ARE THERE ANY AREAS OF DEPARTMENT SPENDING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE INCREASED OR REDUCED?

NMDGF has a good reputation, and is running well. This points to the budget level being appropriately balanced to the needs of the Department. In the past few years, NMDGF has seen an abundance of applicants for its open positions. The education programs are having success in educating New Mexicans, as well as getting into schools to promote safe hunting and fishing for future generations, but these efforts could always be expanded to continue to promote the wonder of our State. NMDGF continues to face the habitats programs head on and have been successful in balancing access and conservation to game and fish. The Department is working, it does not need a shake up, it needs to focus on continuing to succeed in its mission.

#### WHAT, IF ANYTHING, WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO INCREASE OR DECREASE THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH BUDGET?

NMDGF has recently implemented a small fee increase to keep up with inflation, this is an appropriate action for the Department. I would not recommend the Department approach the State Legislature looking to augment the budget with additional General Fund money. The budget of NMDGF has faced attempts to raid the funding in the past, conversations to add additional General Fund money has the potential to generate further questions.

If the federal government increases existing funds or sets up new programs to assist State game and fish agencies, NM would have to work to capitalize on adding these new sources of revenues.

#### WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH?

I believe every agency within the government should have regular checks for efficiencies and duplications, NMDGF is no exception. Currently, the Department seems to be operating effectively within its mission. Expanding education to more communities and schools is always something I will promote and work to achieve. Habitat health and access must also continue to be a main focal point for NMDGF.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NORTH AMERICAN MODEL OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GUIDING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS AND THE IDEA THAT ALL WILDLIFE ARE PUBLICLY OWNED?

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation is built around seven principles, not simply the notion that all wildlife are public. At its core, the NAMWC aims to protect access and availability to hunting and fishing for this generation, as well as future generations. This is something I believe every hunter and angler can agree with.

#### DO YOU THINK THE STATE'S NONRESIDENT QUOTA FOR MOST BIG GAME SPECIES IS ABOUT RIGHT, TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW? WOULD YOU SUPPORT ANY CHANGES IN THE QUOTA LAW?

New Mexico is a special place. The lands and wildlife we hold dear are some of the best in the nation. NMDGF must always prioritize New Mexican's access to hunting and fishing, while also ensuring that fellow anglers and hunters around the nation can enjoy our beautiful State.

The quota is set by law and seems to be in good balance. Hunting licenses are given out by lottery, which is administered through computerized algorithms. Additional focus should be given on making sure the law is being enforced as written. I support the preferences that are given to veterans, younger generations, and the disabled – these seem to be appropriately leveled and within the mission of NMDGF.

Finally, the quota recognizes the key role outfitters and guides play in our economy and conservation plans.

#### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE CURRENT PRACTICE OF ISSUING BIG GAME HUNTING AUTHORIZATIONS THAT ARE VALID ON BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND?

It is an important part of our State game and fish strategy, but must continue to remain only part of a broader approach. NMDGF must have an appropriate balance between public and private land authorization to safeguard all New Mexican's ability to access and participate in big game hunts. NMDGF working with private land owners to establish a permitting process does increase big game opportunities in the State, and aids in the management of our big game species. This cannot, however, come at the expense of the equal opportunity that the State lottery system provides.

#### WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE EFFORTS TO MODIFY THE STATE'S STREAM ACCESS LAW TO BE MORE IN LINE WITH THE NEW MEXICO SUPREME COURT'S RED RIVER VALLEY DECISION?

Balance is the cornerstone of any stream access law in New Mexico. New Mexican anglers have a Constitutional right to the use of the State's waterways and streams. At the same time, landowners do have the right of private property. These are competing interests that require the correct balance to be found. Land owners should not be preventing access to public lands; at the same time, anglers should not be accessing private property without permission. The checkerboard makeup of our State does not aid in this challenge. Working to implement better signage, and understanding of the rights is the first step to help solve this problem.