

State of New Mexico  
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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**Susana Martinez**  
Governor

**David Martin**  
Cabinet Secretary-Designate

**Brett F. Woods, Ph.D.**  
Deputy Cabinet Secretary

**Tommy Mutz, Division Director**  
State Parks Division



## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Contact: Beth Wojahn 505-476-3226; E-mail: [beth.wojahn@state.nm.us](mailto:beth.wojahn@state.nm.us)  
Jim Winchester 505-231-8800; E-mail: [jim.winchester@state.nm.us](mailto:jim.winchester@state.nm.us)

# New Mexico State Parks Honors Excellence *28 Awardees*

**Albuquerque, NM** – The New Mexico State Parks Division honored 28 volunteers and staff at an awards ceremony during their Annual Fall Training in Albuquerque on November 6<sup>th</sup>. The awards celebrated achievement in customer service, team and individual achievement, and time in service.

“It is my pleasure to give out these coveted awards to very deserving folks working in our New Mexico State Parks,” said Division Director Tommy Mutz. “Our volunteers, seasonal workers, and full-time employees continually provide first-class recreational and educational experiences while promoting public safety at each and every one of our parks” he said. “We are truly grateful for their hard work and dedication.”

The Governor’s Award, the Division’s highest honor, went to Robert Mclvor from Sugarite Canyon State Park for flawlessly stepping up and taking on park superintendent duties. He planted more than five thousand seedlings in the fall of 2012 in response to the Track Fire. Mclvor was instrumental in working with the local community to increase visitation and activities in the park by instituting a new Adventure Race to the park’s event calendar—Master of the Mountains.



Governor’s Award Winner, Robert Mclvor



Cheryl Moline, Secretary’s Award Winner

The second highest honor, the Secretary’s Award, went to Cheryl Moline from Navajo Lake State Park. Moline spearheaded and organized the annual CAST for Kids program and volunteered to

manage all aspects of interacting with the San Juan River and Navajo Dam River Guides, which was no easy task.

Director's Awards recognize employees who set and exceed high standards in performance of duties. This year, four individuals throughout the division were selected for recognition: Marcos Lopez, a Park Technician at Hyde Memorial State Park; Bryon Pippin, the State Park Fiscal Officer; Mark Leyba, a Park Technician at Rio Grande Nature Center State Park; and Park Ranger, Blake Ingram from Bottomless Lakes State Park.

Santa Rosa Lake State Park won the coveted Exemplary Park Award for ramping up the rigor when lake levels were low. Park team members and volunteers creatively added innovative park events like the Outdoor Youth Challenge and Acoustics Under the Stars, and continued successful outreach education within surrounding communities.

Customer Service Awards were given to three employees: Ramon Lopez from Brantley Lake State Park; Kim Sanchez, State Park Financial Specialist; and Julie Kulhan from Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park, the first seasonal worker to win an award.

The prestigious Ranger of the Year Award was presented to Derek Drew from Navajo Lake State Park for his excellence and diligence while providing marine control coverage, law enforcement in the park, and becoming the local expert on the park's complex water system.

Two groups garnered the Life-Saving Award. At Ute Lake State Park, Marine Enforcement Officer Rick Martin, Park Superintendent Rodney Paris and Regional Manager Jared Langenegger spearheaded the rescue of a woman who had fallen 30 feet off a cliff. At Elephant Butte Lake State Park, Marine Officer Chris Bolen and Law Enforcement Ranger Jake Morales rescued two gentlemen from a sinking air boat during 25-mile-per-hour winds.

Volunteers serve a critical role in New Mexico State Parks, and the Division benefited from more than 300,000 volunteer hours this year. The Volunteer of the Year Award went to four outstanding people who donated their time and talent: Bobbi Widick from Conchas Lake State Park; Lee and Gloria Stanley from Elephant Butte Lake State Park; and Ray Bowers from Leasburg Dam State Park.

The Friends of Mesilla Valley State Park in Las Cruces and the Friends of Elephant Butte Lake State Park in Truth or Consequences were awarded the Partnership Award.

Finally, Division Director Tommy Mutz and Deputy Director Jerome Madrid honored seven retirees and 39 people receiving 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25-year service pins.

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*The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.*