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Melanie A Kenderdine, Cabinet Secretary-Designate
Benjamin Shelton, Acting Deputy Cabinet Secretary
Laura McCarthy, State Forester

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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New Mexico State Forester selected for Earth Science Award
Laura McCarthy to be honored at the State Capitol Rotunda

SANTA FE – New Mexico State Forester Laura McCarthy is recognized for consistently relying on earth science to develop policies for protecting New Mexico’s forests and watersheds.

She will receive the 2024 Earth Science Achievement Award from the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources in a noon ceremony as part of Earth Science/New Mexico Tech Day in the Capitol Rotunda on Monday, Feb. 17.

“We are pleased to honor State Forester McCarthy with this award,” said **NMBGMR Director and State Geologist Dr. Mike Timmons**. “It recognizes her many years of work and leadership advocating for science in decision-making and policy, especially in watershed science and protection in New Mexico.”

As New Mexico State Forester since 2019, McCarthy is responsible for forest management on 43 million acres of state and private lands. Under her leadership, the State Forestry Division has doubled in size, modernized its business systems, and taken on the challenges of postfire recovery and reforestation of burned areas with the year 2100 climate in mind. She is committed to an ecosystem-based approach to forest health, drawing on her decades of experience as a forester, wildland firefighter, and policy advisor.



New Mexico State Forester Laura McCarthy

"No one deserves this award more than our own State Forester," said **EMNRD Sec. Designate Melanie Kenderdine**. “Her track record of cutting-edge leadership, advocacy and putting science first in policy decision making policy—whether related to wildfire threats or watershed protection—warrants recognition.”

“I am honored by this award,” said **State Forester McCarthy**. “I commend the NM Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources for spotlighting the necessary connection between earth science and environmental policy, and its positive effects on New Mexico’s forests and people.”

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