



# News Release



## The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

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## MRGCD Board Chairman Goes Planking in Florida

Albuquerque – Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Board Chairman, Derrick Lente, secured a commemorative plank bearing the name of the *Valle De Oro National Wildlife Refuge* to the memorial walkway at Pelican Island, Florida.

The *Valle De Oro NWR*, located in the heart of the Conservancy District in Bernalillo County, became one of the latest refuges to be honored at the walkway.

Lente, who was hand-picked by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to serve on the Valle De Oro creation commission, joined the Secretary in bolting down the new plank.

Commemorative planks for each of the nation's 561 national wildlife refuges, wildlife management areas and conservation areas form a walkway at Pelican Island, the first national wildlife refuge established in 1903 by President Theodore Roosevelt.

The *Valle De Oro Refuge* was established at the old Prices Dairy land in southern Bernalillo County, abutting the MRGCD owned and managed bosque on the east side of the Rio Grande.

The *Valle De Oro Refuge* is a 30-million dollar project and is the first urban wildlife refuge in the southwestern United States.

**About the MRGCD:** The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District has been promoting sustainable agriculture for the past 85 years. The District delivers water to about 65,000 acres of cropland in the Middle Rio Grande Valley. That water is reused time and time again. It waters crops, sustains the cottonwood bosque along the Rio Grande, helps sustain the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow and recharges the aquifer. The District owns 30,000 acres of bosque in the valley, a stretch of land that provides unprecedented recreational opportunities and an irreplaceable swath of greenbelt in New Mexico largest metropolitan area. The District was formed in 1925 to alleviate flooding and to reclaim farmland in the valley. Its boundaries stretch 150 miles from Cochiti to the northern boundary of the Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, running through Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia and Socorro Counties. It operates more

than 1,200 miles of canals, laterals and drains, which are used to convey water to and from cropland. The District is funded by water service charges and property assessments on the benefited lands within its boundaries.

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