



Office of the Governor
MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nora Meyers Sackett
Press Secretary, Office of the Governor
nora.sackett@state.nm.us
(505) 690-7313

November 17, 2021

Gov. Lujan Grisham announces new cross-cutting administration leadership
Broadband, infrastructure and water to be focuses of new appointees

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced today the appointment of three administration leaders who will focus on key state priorities including broadband, infrastructure and water.

Martin J. Chavez is the state's new infrastructure advisor. Chavez's work will include working with communities large and small around New Mexico to determine priorities for billions of dollars in federal infrastructure funding. In addition to pandemic aid funding, President Biden on Monday signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which is anticipated to bring in over \$3.7 billion in infrastructure investments in New Mexico. He has begun work this month.

Mike Hamman is taking the role of the state's water advisor. Hamman will work closely with federal, tribal, state and local agencies to ensure the state's water infrastructure is prepared for and resilient to the effects of climate change and across industry and communities to develop policies that set New Mexico toward responsible and conservative water management practices. An integral piece of the state's strategy involves the development of a 50-year water plan, which Hamman will coordinate among the state's water agencies, complete and implement. He will begin work in his new role in January 2022.

Matt Schmit is the broadband advisor to the new state [Office of Broadband Access and Expansion](#), which will centralize and coordinate broadband activities across state government agencies, local governmental bodies, tribal governmental organizations and internet service providers. Per the authorizing legislation for the state Broadband Office, Schmit will develop a three-year broadband strategic and operational plan providing guiding principles and operational criteria for significant broadband deployment and expansion for New Mexico. He will begin work in December.

"Each of these individuals are consummate experts in their fields," said Gov. Lujan Grisham. "We have so much incredible work happening across the state right now in each of these areas,

and by bringing in this group of cross-cutting leaders, we are taking that work and collaboration to the next level.”

Chavez, the former mayor of Albuquerque who has also served as a state senator and Worker’s Compensation Administration director, is an expert in technology and telecommunications infrastructure, sustainability and city planning. As mayor of Albuquerque, he initiated and oversaw the construction of the San Juan/Chama water project, among the largest public works projects in New Mexico history, which diverts water from the Rio Grande to the city. The project drastically improved aquifer conditions and prevented a water shortage in Albuquerque. As executive director of the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives USA, Chavez oversaw seven field offices dedicated to sustainability and addressing climate change with local governments across the country. Chavez is a member of the National Board of American Rivers and a past member of Board of Directors of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. Born and raised in Albuquerque, Chavez is a graduate of the University of New Mexico and the Georgetown University Law Center.

“I share Gov. Lujan Grisham’s vision to make the most of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity by taking actions that truly transform the lives of all New Mexicans,” Chavez said. “As the Governor with the most experience in state government in our history, I’m thrilled to be working with her and her administration.”

Hamman currently serves as the chief engineer and chief executive officer for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District overseeing river flood control, drainage and irrigation that includes managing 30,000 acres of bosque lands and coordinating with multiple jurisdictions at the local, state and tribal levels to deliver water to 60,000 acres of irrigated farmlands. Prior to that, Mike worked for 17 years at the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, ending his tenure there managing multiple federal water projects from the San Luis Valley in Colorado to Fort Quitman in Texas. He also worked for the Interstate Stream Commission, the City of Santa Fe and the Jicarilla Apache Nation, where he was instrumental in the development of the Nation’s \$45 million water and wastewater treatment and delivery systems project. He has served on the Interstate Stream Commission since 2019. Hamman was raised in Taos and has a degree in civil engineering from the University of New Mexico.

“Increasing temperatures are already impacting our arid climate, and we have to take action to mitigate these impacts. It will require a ‘whole-of-government’ approach in partnership with state, federal and tribal agencies, water user groups and New Mexico communities,” said Hamman. “I am grateful to our Governor for providing me the opportunity to assist my fellow New Mexicans in securing a resilient water future in the face of current and future water resource challenges facing every region in our great state.”

Schmit has served as director of the Illinois Office of Broadband since 2019. His responsibilities there have included the administration of \$400 million in grant funding, community broadband planning and capacity programming and the state’s digital equity and inclusion program. Prior to that, Schmit worked as an independent technology and economic development consultant and in various leadership and research roles at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis from 2005 through 2018. From 2013 through 2016 he was a member of the Minnesota state senate, representing a district in the southeastern part of the state, where he led a 20-city statewide outreach and engagement tour focused on soliciting public input on broadband internet access and availability, leading to creation of a state broadband office. He graduated from St. John’s University in Minnesota with an undergraduate

degree in political science and earned a master's in public policy from the University of Minnesota.

"Recent federal investment in broadband gives states, local communities, and internet service providers an unprecedented opportunity to close the digital divide through universal access, adoption assistance, and skills building," Schmit said. "No state stands to benefit more from this investment than New Mexico, and I am eager to see this promise become reality."

#