

# Rio Puerco Alliance Summer Youth Project August / September 2015



Ojo Encino youth were busy this summer completing a variety of low-tech erosion projects as part of the Rio Puerco Alliance's Navajo Summer Youth Project, maintaining and shoring up one-rock dams and other erosion control structures. The participants completed a description after their work was complete, reporting "This year was a great year – we learned a lot of new things. We had a lot of fun, it was a great experience."



The RPA has worked on various types of restoration projects to positively impact the Watershed. One of its most successful has been its Navajo Summer Youth Project. This provides training, supervision, and youth salaries for students at Eastern Navajo chapters, most notably Ojo Encino and Torreon, with students also coming from Counselor, Pueblo Pintado, and White Horse Lake. Students construct and maintain water harvesting and erosion control structures. Students from earlier programs have gone on to college and then have become supervisors and trainers during their summer vacations. The RPMC and RPA have been working for over 12 years with the Eastern Navajo Chapters to maintain and fund a summer program during which at least 12 students work for eight weeks on

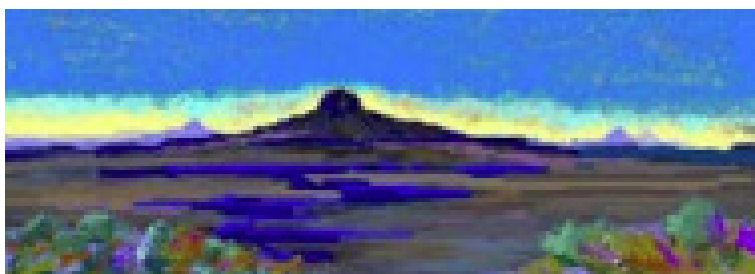


## Rio Puerco Watershed



erosion control and other water harvesting projects. This program has had remarkable success in a number of areas. It has kept a high proportion of Navajo youth—who have one of the highest unemployment rates in the state—employed during the summer. It has taught those kids about their watershed and instilled in them an interest in further education about watershed issues, among other things. Over the course of the 12 years, students have installed over 2,000 structures—one-rock dams, media lunas, headcut control structures, and Zuni Bowls. The USGS has monitored the success of these structures and discovered that areas treated with them retain 60-66% more sediment than untreated areas. In other words, these low-cost projects, using only Navajo Youth and rocks, have a significant, measurable effect controlling erosion and improving water quality!

Good job to our 2015 participants and looking forward to 2016!



For more information about the Rio Puerco Alliance and our projects, visit our website: [www.riopuercoalliance.org](http://www.riopuercoalliance.org) Or email Executive Director Barbara Johnson at [lunah3@comcast.net](mailto:lunah3@comcast.net)