Nuestro Pueblo

A PUBLICATION OF 1000 FRIENDS OF NEW MEXICO • SUMMER/FALL 2005

Water
The Key to New Mexico's Future

Conservation: A Big Piece of the Puzzle

Consuelo Bokum

Last winter was a "wet" winter. How many people in New Mexico think that this signals the end of the drought? Or that meeting demand with available water supply is no longer a problem? Not many would be my guess.

The historical data is sobering. According to Charlie Lyles, director of the National Weather Service Forecast Office, New Mexico was in drought 56% of the time between 1896 and 2003. Tree ring and other data show drought periods lasting from 20 to 70 years. Even before the "wet" period ended around 1996, some municipalities were realizing that they didn't have enough water supply to meet ever-increasing water demand.

As significant is the fact that during a period of greater than average precipitation from the mid-1970's to the mid-1990's, many communities were also dependent on groundwater, depleting a generally non-renewable water supply that will be more important as the state's population grows and dry years continue.

There are not many easy or cheap ways to close the widening gap between water supply and demand. Some options for increasing supply, such as building dams, have become less feasible and rarely appear on lists of strategies for coping with inadequate water supply. Technology is always an option, but most experts predict these solutions will provide less than a fraction of the relief that is needed in the next decade or so in most communities. Transferring water from agriculture

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Support our work protecting New Mexico's resources.
See page 7 to find out how you can help.

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Grow Smart

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Every year the skies open, and water falls on our homes, farms, ranches, reservations and public lands. Is it enough water? As Edward Abbey noted in his book Desert Solitaire, "There is no shortage of water in the desert but exactly the right amount, a perfect ratio of water to rock, of water to sand, insuring that wide, free, open, generous spacing among plants and animals, homes and towns and cities, which makes the arid West so different from any other part of the nation. There is no lack of water here, unless you try to establish a city where no city should be."

If, as Abbey states, we have just the right amount of water, then the real question becomes how do we, as a community, choose to use it? If we do not make conscious decisions about our water use, then the growth market and its demand for land and housing will simply make those decisions without us. If we are not involved in those decisions, the day will come when our farms are dry and gone, the history and culture of our farming communities is found only in libraries, and there are increasing limits on industrial and urban water use. Unless we actively participate in the daily decisions being made about how our water is used, then the current pattern of land use and water consumption will continue. We can complain all we want, but if we are not involved in community decisions on water use, the pattern will not change. To once again quote Edward Abbey's Desert Solitaire, "…the pattern is fixed and protest alone will not halt the iron glacier moving upon us."

In New Mexico today, your neighbor can drill a well for a house even if it's clear that the new well will dry up your well or force you to spend money to drill deeper for good water. Our local governments and water utilities urge citizens to conserve water at the same time they are approving massive, sprawling growth on undisturbed land at the edges of our cities. And as you are reading this, there are interest groups fighting our state's right to control water quality, arguing that federal law limits our local right to decide whether higher standards should apply in New Mexico. The iron glacier is in motion, and the growth and sprawling subdivisions do not stop to rest.

1000 Friends of New Mexico works every day to impact these and other water decisions being made throughout New Mexico. Indeed, water and the impact land use has on our water supply are key to *1000 Friends'* Smart Growth advocacy work. Water is such an important Smart Growth issue that we dedicate one newsletter each year just to water topics. This is the second Nuestro Pueblo to focus on water issues. We hope it will help you better understand the water challenges facing New Mexico and how your voice can be heard when decisions are made on these important issues. If you like what you read, please use the form on the membership page to join *1000 Friends*. If you are a member, thank you for your support and any additional support you can give to help protect our water for generations to come.

Randolph "Dolph" Barnhouse

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about Nuestro Pueblo

We call our magazine Nuestro Pueblo because our focus is on the places where New Mexicans live and work. For some, it is New Mexico's larger cities, and for others, it is rural communities. Our organization is New Mexicans working toward growth management that will benefit people throughout the state, creating plans for the future with respect for our past.

Letters and submissions from 1000 Friends *members are invited.*

Consuelo Bokum, *Editor*
Pat Channon, *Assistant Editor*
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***Artwork at left is a detail from a 1996 painting by Helen Maffei Bongiovanni,* Nuestro Pueblo**

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1000 Friends of New Mexico
works to ensure that,
as our communities grow,
they do so in ways that
create economic, social, and
environmental benefits
for all New Mexicans.

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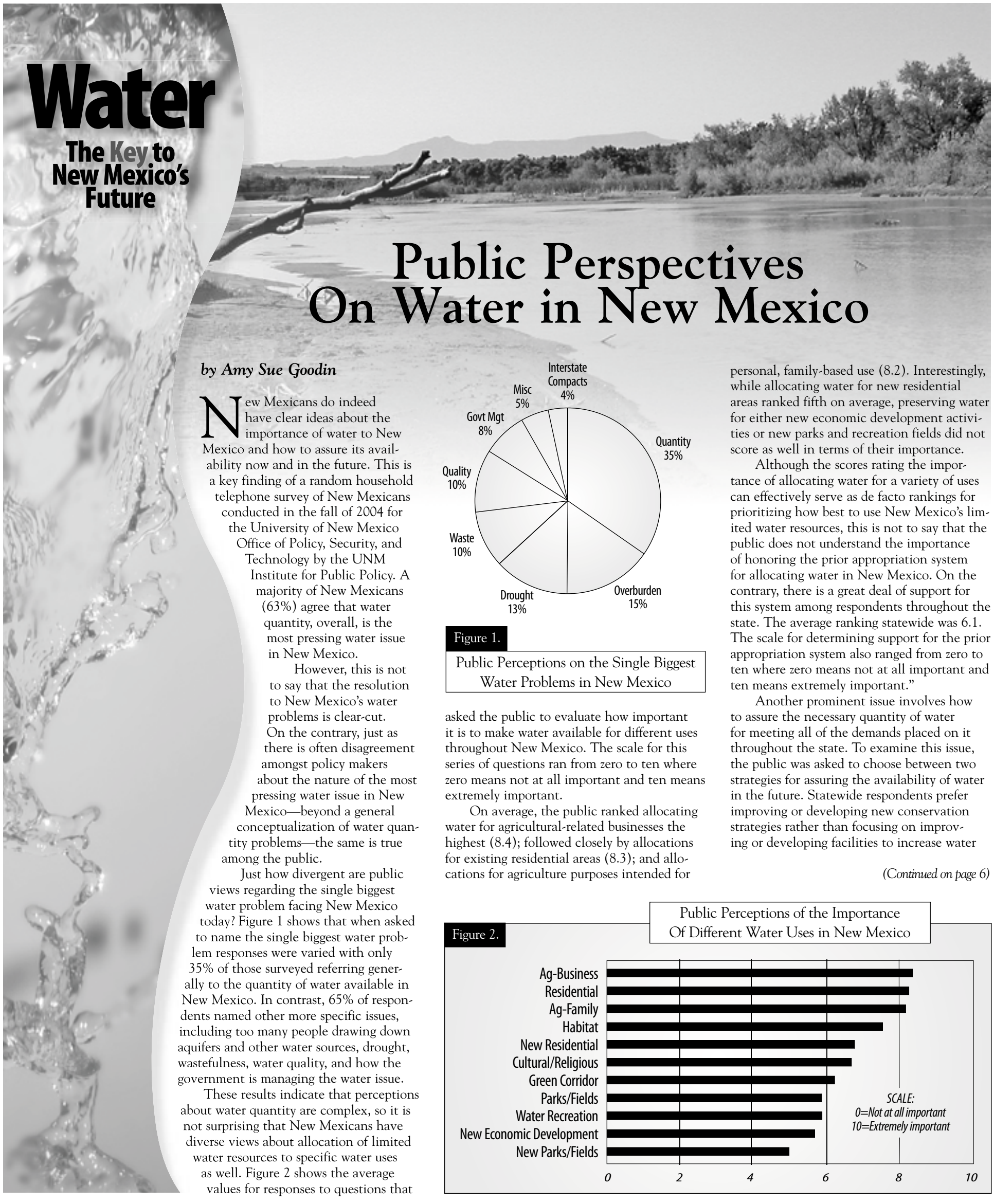

Water
The Key to New Mexico's Future

Public Perspectives On Water in New Mexico

by Amy Sue Goodin

New Mexicans do indeed have clear ideas about the importance of water to New Mexico and how to assure its availability now and in the future. This is a key finding of a random household telephone survey of New Mexicans conducted in the fall of 2004 for the University of New Mexico Office of Policy, Security, and Technology by the UNM Institute for Public Policy. A majority of New Mexicans (63%) agree that water quantity, overall, is the most pressing water issue in New Mexico.

However, this is not to say that the resolution to New Mexico's water problems is clear-cut. On the contrary, just as there is often disagreement amongst policy makers about the nature of the most pressing water issue in New Mexico—beyond a general conceptualization of water quantity problems—the same is true among the public.

Just how divergent are public views regarding the single biggest water problem facing New Mexico today? Figure 1 shows that when asked to name the single biggest water problem responses were varied with only 35% of those surveyed referring generally to the quantity of water available in New Mexico. In contrast, 65% of respondents named other more specific issues, including too many people drawing down aquifers and other water sources, drought, wastefulness, water quality, and how the government is managing the water issue.

These results indicate that perceptions about water quantity are complex, so it is not surprising that New Mexicans have diverse views about allocation of limited water resources to specific water uses as well. Figure 2 shows the average values for responses to questions that asked the public to evaluate how important it is to make water available for different uses throughout New Mexico. The scale for this series of questions ran from zero to ten where zero means not at all important and ten means extremely important.

Figure 1.

Public Perceptions on the Single Biggest Water Problems in New Mexico

On average, the public ranked allocating water for agricultural-related businesses the highest (8.4); followed closely by allocations for existing residential areas (8.3); and allocations for agriculture purposes intended for personal, family-based use (8.2). Interestingly, while allocating water for new residential areas ranked fifth on average, preserving water for either new economic development activities or new parks and recreation fields did not score as well in terms of their importance.

Although the scores rating the importance of allocating water for a variety of uses can effectively serve as de facto rankings for prioritizing how best to use New Mexico's limited water resources, this is not to say that the public does not understand the importance of honoring the prior appropriation system for allocating water in New Mexico. On the contrary, there is a great deal of support for this system among respondents throughout the state. The average ranking statewide was 6.1. The scale for determining support for the prior appropriation system also ranged from zero to ten where zero means not at all important and ten means extremely important."

Another prominent issue involves how to assure the necessary quantity of water for meeting all of the demands placed on it throughout the state. To examine this issue, the public was asked to choose between two strategies for assuring the availability of water in the future. Statewide respondents prefer improving or developing new conservation strategies rather than focusing on improving or developing facilities to increase water

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Figure 2.

Public Perceptions of the Importance Of Different Water Uses in New Mexico

Agricultural Water Conservation: Complexities and Opportunities

Sterling Grogan

Agriculture is arguably the largest single user of water in New Mexico. While the contribution of agriculture to the state's economy is significant, the contributions of other commercial and industrial activities as well as urban uses are growing faster than agriculture. As a result, there is increased interest in transferring agricultural water to other uses, and considerable attention is now being paid to the implementation of agricultural conservation technologies so that "conserved" water can be made available for other purposes. The purpose of this article is to shed light on some of the constraints and opportunities associated with agricultural water conservation.

The first important constraint is that most agricultural water users own senior water rights, and for many that water right may be as important to their net worth or estate as the value of their land. Thus any discussion of water conservation must include the cost of adequate compensation to water rights holders for any water made available for other purposes, whether though conservation or by other means.

Second, a little-understood fact is that much of the water categorized as being "used" by the agricultural sector may in fact be recycled at least once and used for multiple purposes. Although water is lost to evaporation or seepage along the way to irrigate a crop, some water not consumed by crops leaves farms through surface irrigation systems, seeps through a drain or canal to recharge the shallow aquifer, and some returns to nearby streams or rivers. Consequently some of the "diverted" water may provide water to riparian vegetation, support wildlife and habitat, or recharge the shallow aquifer and thus be available for later use by humans.

Lastly, most water used for agriculture in New Mexico is surface water. (The biggest exception is the water from the Oglalla aquifer, which is pumped for crops on the eastern plains.) In our desert state, the supply of surface water is substantially reduced in times of drought. Thus, the Elephant Butte Irrigation District was able to provide farmers with less than a third of their allotment in the last year; the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, for the third consecutive year, imposed strict scheduling and rotation requirements on farmers to reduce the use of water; and in the Carlsbad Irrigation District, farmers in 2004 received about 60% of their normal full supply.

Of course, along with that reduction in diversions came a substantial reduction in return flows to the river and a reduction in the amount of water recharged to the shallow aquifer from the irrigation canal system. One result is that in those reaches of the middle Rio Grande where natural losses from the river channel to seepage and evaporation are high, and where irrigation return flows have historically provided an important fraction of the river flow during dry periods, recent dry periods have seen much less water in the river.

Over the last several years, irrigation and conservancy districts in New Mexico have reduced water use with technological improvements, ranging from laser-leveling of fields and lining of canals to installation of drip and sprinkler irrigation systems. However, not all conservation technologies will work everywhere. Drip irrigation, for example, may be limited by soil conditions, crop requirements and other factors. An experimental drip irrigation project in Socorro County was discontinued despite three years of good production because of repeated damage to the buried water lines by gophers. Moreover, increasing the efficiency of an irrigation system can have the negative consequence of reduced flows in rivers.

There are still additional opportunities for the agricultural sector to conserve water, but New Mexico will need to consider several important policy and institutional issues.

First and foremost, new technologies are usually expensive. Most farmers and ranchers have neither the capital resources nor the profitability to justify such investments or to make tax incentives and low interest loans attractive. As a result, the state may need to get more creative about incentives.

Water markets might encourage and support agricultural water conservation. Allowing agricultural water rights holders to realize income from their "conserved" water, through either temporary or permanent transfers, may be an important incentive for conservation. At the same time, it is important that the state establish and enforce appropriate regulatory mechanisms that support water markets while protecting citizens' values and quality of life. Without those protections, there is great concern that New Mexico will lose the valuable cultural and historical traditions of its acequias, farms, and ranches.

Water banking can also support agricultural water conservation and help facilitate appropriate uses for "conserved" water. Two water banks already exist, one in the middle Rio Grande and one in the lower Pecos. Although controversial, some observers have also called for the state to establish or facilitate a neutral institution that would either support agricultural water rights holders wishing to bank temporarily their "conserved" water or acquire water rights to be used to support the state's water conservation and management goals.

Regardless of the tools used to regulate the uses to which conserved water may be put, there is already wide discussion of some potential uses for that water. These include restoration or remediation of wildlife habitat, especially in areas where aquatic or riparian endangered species are present; temporary leases to overcome drought-induced shortages of municipal and industrial water; and water to meet the obligations of interstate compacts.

New Mexico could benefit from a well-reasoned agricultural water conservation program. To create one, the state might consider the following actions that could lead eventually to a comprehensive conservation strategy not only for agriculture, but also as a model for other important sectors of the economy.

• Bring together New Mexico State University and other institutions in the West that are already achieving important advances in agricultural water conservation to educate farmers, agricultural leaders, and public officials in New Mexico about water conservation measures and their costs and benefits.

• Inventory, analyze and report on agricultural water uses and the changes that those uses have undergone recently due to economic, technological, legal and other influences, including the Federal Endangered Species Act, drought, urbanization, and river compacts.

• Use the agricultural water supply, demand and future use information in the approved regional water plans and the State Water Plan to produce a "background report" for a statewide public workshop on agricultural water conservation directed at developing recommendations for a comprehensive state policy and guidelines for conservation, marketing and water banking.

Sterling Grogan is the Biologist/Planner for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.

DID YOU KNOW?

In some areas, the Rio Grande water table has dropped as much as 200 feet.

A five-minute shower uses 25-35 gallons of water.

About 30 gallons of water are needed to wash a load of laundry in a standard top-loading washer.

Two-thirds of the people in the world use less than 13 gallons of water a day.

On the average, each American uses about 160 gallons of water a day, at a cost of 27 cents.

You could survive about a month without food, but only 5 to 7 days without water.

Water used for agriculture recharges the aquifer and supports wildlife habitat.

The Drought's Over—Forget Water Conservation?

Jean Witherspoon

Every time we get a couple months of rain or snow, headlines tell us the drought of the last few years is over in much of the West. Indeed, many parts of the Southwest have received enough precipitation this winter and spring not only to alleviate the immediate supply needs, but also to partially refill the low levels in lakes and reservoirs. So has the need to conserve lessened in any way? And are we really out of the drought?

All extended periods of drought, like the 20- to 40-year drought predicted in New Mexico, have wet periods. It's too soon to tell whether the state is still in an extended drought. But, even if the state has a number of wet years, the overall forecast is for drier weather while demands are increasing. Population growth, while it has slowed in many portions of the Sun Belt, is still occurring at 3% to 10% per year. Most people don't want massive transfers of agricultural rights to urban use, rivers are already over-appropriated, many reservoirs are still far below normal, and new supplies are extremely limited. Conservation has to be part of the solution.

While urban and domestic use is a small percentage of overall use in most western states—only about 11% in New Mexico—urban areas have led the way in demonstrating that conservation can achieve dramatic results. Many major urban areas, including Seattle, El Paso, Denver, and Albuquerque, have achieved 30% or better reductions in per capita use. This has occurred concurrent with natural drought that has dramatically decreased precipitation for many of the last ten years.

In Seattle, Washington, which most people are surprised to find needs conservation, water use has been cut dramatically over the last twenty-five years. Over that period, the motivation for conserving has varied from avoiding the cost of new facilities to ensuring that water remains in the rivers for salmon, and the reductions have been significant. By finding additional ways to reduce usage, the city hopes to avoid increasing production for another ten to twenty years. To date, Seattle has saved over 267 billion gallons of water or about 820,500 acre feet.

El Paso, Texas has reduced usage from 230 gallons per capita per day in 1978 to 140 gallons per capita per day in 2004. Water utility officials estimate they've saved $300 million in infrastructure costs through this reduction in usage.

Denver, Colorado initiated a conservation program around twenty years ago. The effort, which focused primarily on voluntary and education measures, was forced to change dramatically in 2001 due to the extreme drought. With the addition of mandatory measures, higher cost measures like rebates, and drought rates, usage dropped dramatically (see Chart).

Albuquerque's sole source of water supply to date has been ground water. Usage has been reduced from 250 to 177 gallons per capita per day. Albuquerque's conservation program, which was adopted only ten years ago, has already saved over 54 billion gallons of water (167,250 acre feet), the equivalent of a year and a half's production. Despite a service population growth rate around 3%, production is at mid-'80's levels; per capita usage is at an amazing late-'50's level (see Chart). Albuquerque recently adopted a 40% goal which should continue to reduce production through 2015. Albuquerque also intends to begin using surface water by 2007, providing a "window" of significantly reduced ground water pumping to allow the aquifer water levels to partially recharge.

Each of these cities and their conservation efforts is unique. Annual rainfall ranges from 9 inches in Albuquerque to 37 inches in Seattle. Initial usage rates ranged from 253 gallons per capita per day in Denver to 154 in Seattle. What unites these cities is a community-supported commitment to reduce usage significantly through conservation programs supported almost entirely through utility revenues. Logically, as water becomes more limited, rates rise, though three of these cities' commodity rates do not exceed $3.50 per 1,000 gallons, a bargain compared to other potable liquids and compared to most other urban areas. While further reductions and price increases may be required, these cities have been able to greatly extend the water supply currently available to them for decades.

How can this kind of success be extended to other towns? Many of the smaller communities in New Mexico simply do not have adequate resources to address the issue. Losses through leaks and other non-revenue uses may be as high as 40% to 50%. Rates may be so low that incentives for conservation are beyond their reach. State-level resources, such as the Water and Wastewater Revolving Loan Fund, must be broadened to allow for conservation measures at the same time that the state-level funding sources require conservation program implementation to determine fund eligibility. And we must better utilize the water we receive through reuse and rainwater harvesting. The solutions are available if we are committed to protecting our limited water resources so the quality of life in the future can be similar to ours.

Jean Witherspoon served as Albuquerque's Water Conservation Officer from 1992 to 2002 and as President of the New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance in 2003-2004.

Drainage canal shows evidence of recent rain, slightly less rare this summer.

Figure 1.

Albuquerque Per Capita Use & Production

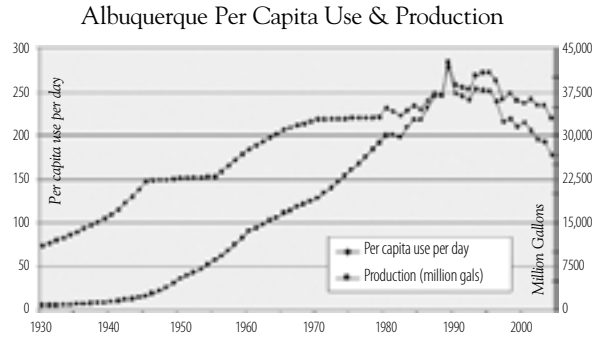


Figure 2.

Seattle, WA — Population Versus Production

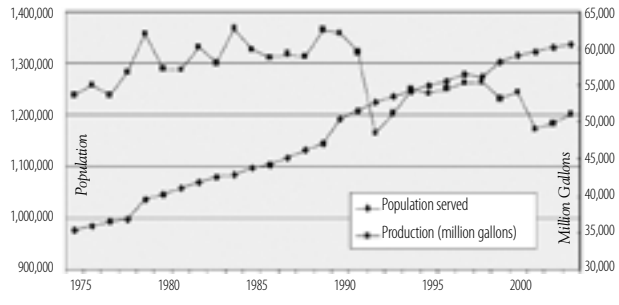
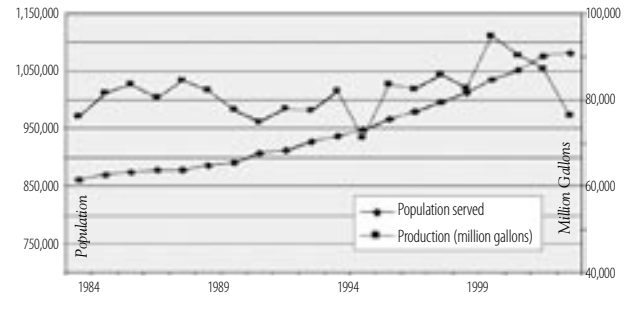


Figure 3.

Denver, CO — Population Versus Production



Denver source: Cris Call, Denver Water

Congratulations to Consuelo Bokum

for being elected to the Buckman Direct Diversion Project Board. The Buckman Direct Diversion Board will be focused on ensuring the $120 million project to divert water from the Rio Grande to Santa Fe is completed on time and as economically as possible.

Free Conservation Materials Available

AliceDarilek

Are you planning a water-related workshop or other event, or otherwise want to educate or encourage wise water use practices in your community? Then check out the wide variety of free water conservation materials available for distribution from the Water Use and Conservation Bureau of the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer.

The bureau has been involved in promoting water efficient use for the last ten years and offers a wide variety of public information and educational brochures, curricula, guides and manuals to drinking water suppliers, community organizations, schools and individuals. A series of brochures on water efficient landscaping outlines the proper plants, irrigation systems and practices that result in beautiful and colorful but water-wise landscapes appropriate for New Mexico. Brochures on water efficient toilets, clothes washers and leak repairs target indoor water use. There are also brochures on the topics of rainwater harvesting and gray water use.

The Rio! Water Detective and Learning to Xeriscape school curricula provide hands-on activities and background information on water use, conservation and the principles of water efficient landscaping for elementary and high school students. A Water Conservation Guide for Public Utilities outlines the steps to be taken in developing a community water conservation plan, as well as a drought contingency plan.

To find out more about these materials, or place an order for them, go to the OSE website at www.ose.state.nm.us/water-info/conservation, call 1-800-WATER-NM, or email waternm@ose.state.nm.us.

Drought Group Considers Conservation Actions

Alice Darilek

As the drought, population growth and water pollution continue to diminish New Mexico's already limited water supply, several organizations are working on ways to make our use of that supply more efficient. The Drinking Water Work Group of the Governor's Drought Task Force is one of those organizations.

When the Drinking Water Work Group was formed in the late 1990s, its primary function was to respond to drought-induced water shortages in communities with vulnerable water supplies. The group spent most of its time responding to these crises by making sure that there were enough truck tankers and personnel to haul emergency water supplies to communities and that communities were well informed about how to respond to drought situations.

Once that job was tackled, the group turned its attention to helping make communities better prepared for future droughts, with the hope that a better state of preparedness would reduce the number of crises in which communities found themselves without drinking water. This direction included the implementation of water conservation activities.

Over a year ago, the Drinking Water Work Group formed several subcommittees and directed them to prepare recommendations for various water conservation actions that could be taken to reduce water use. These subcommittees have completed their initial recommendations and are now in the process of prioritizing the recommendations for presentation to the Drought Task Force.

Included in the list of recommendations being considered are measures to prepare a model landscaping code that cities and counties could adopt; provide water conservation audits and training workshops for industrial, commercial and institutional building managers; initiate a state-supported system to provide rebates for plumbing fixture retrofits on a community basis; change state building codes as needed to encourage the installation of water-efficient fixtures, appliances and water reuse systems; provide technical assistance to communities for the preparation of water conservation and drought contingency plans; and begin a statewide media campaign to encourage wise water use. For more information, click the drought icon on the homepage at www.ose.state.us.

DID YOU KNOW?

75% of the Earth's surface is covered by water.

The Earth's water volume totals about 344 million cubic miles. Of this:

- 93% is sea water
- 2.5% is in aquifers deep below the Earth's surface
- 2% is frozen in the polar icecaps.
- Less than .2% passes through the planet's lakes and streams. Just over .01% is atmospheric moisture.

Only 3% of the Earth's water can be used as drinking water.

6.8 billion—gallons of water Americans flush down their toilets every day.

1.2 billion—number of people worldwide who do not have access to clean water.

The United States consumes water at twice the rate of other industrialized nations.

Most of the world's people must walk at least three hours to fetch water.

Each day almost 10,000 children under age five in third world countries die as a result of illnesses contracted by use of impure water.

During the 20th century, water use increased at double the rate of population growth; while the global population tripled, water use per capita increased by six times.

By 2025 water shortages will occur in 52 countries affecting 2/3 of the world's population.

National Water Efficiency Organization Considered

Alice Darilek

A series of stakeholder workshops was held across the U.S. in May to get responses to the idea of forming a new national organization to promote water efficiency from water suppliers, manufacturers, builders and developers, environmental groups and government agencies. A model being considered is the national Consortium for Energy Efficiency that conducts research and is involved in other activities to encourage energy conservation.

Led by the California Urban Water Conservation Council, which hosted the workshops, many conservation professionals see a need for a nationwide organization to conduct water efficiency research and coordinate partnerships that help promote wise water use. The stakeholder workshops, held in Boston, Seattle, Atlanta, Phoenix, Austin, and Irvine, California, were structured to learn what participants thought was important in such an organization. The Council is also conducting a nationwide web survey of stakeholders to gather additional information and later this summer will conduct three focus groups to get feedback on proposed organizational designs. The product of this effort will be a report summarizing all the options and making recommendations.

For more information about the workshops and related activities, go to www.cuwcc.org.

Alice Darilek has served as the Water Conservation Coordinator at the Office of the State Engineer for over a decade. She created the NM Water Conservation Alliance and has served as Chair of the state's Drinking Water Group.

(**CONSERVATION,** *continued from front cover)*

to meet increasing municipal demand is controversial. Few people are willing to consider growth management. That leaves water conservation as one of the more viable options. As noted in an article in this issue, a poll found that a majority of New Mexicans support water conservation over developing new infrastructure.

But, even water conservation can be controversial. Water restrictions can result in dead and dying landscapes. Raising the cost of water to lower demand is frequently unpopular. There is a long list of water conservation measures to be considered, some of which are usually financed by local government (such as retrofit programs.)

Because water conservation is a key component in our water future, it is the focus of this issue of *Nuestro Pueblo*.

(**PERSPECTIVES,** *continued from page 3)*

usability and availability; 55% of respondents prefer the former strategy while 45% opted for the latter strategy. The exception to this finding is at the regional level where respondents in the southeastern part of the state generally preferred the strategy of improving or developing infrastructure to increase the availability and usability of water in New Mexico.

How should the costs for developing and implementing these types of programs be covered? When juxtaposing such options as increasing taxes, issuing bonds, or increasing water use costs, respondents favor using bonds to cover these types of costs. Increasing taxes tends to be the least desirable option. Nevertheless, the average scores for the three issues were above the scale midpoint of 4—on a scale from one to seven where one means strongly oppose and seven means strongly support—indicating at least a modicum of support for employing each of the three options to cover the costs of program development and implementation.

What does this information tell us? All in all, this study shows that while water issues are complex, the public understands the exigencies that affect water policy in New Mexico. The information presented also shows that the public can and does make informed decisions about the requirements for assuring a viable water future in New Mexico and how to pay for program development and implementation costs to assure that this goal is met.

Contact Information: Amy Sue Goodin, Associate Director of Research, UNM Institute for Public Policy; 1805 Sigma Chi Rd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106; 505-277-1099; http://www.unm.edu/~instpp

Resources

Albuquerque Alliance for Active Living
<www.1000friends-nm.org>

Albuquerque Light Rail
<www.ABQRTP.com>
or call Bill Slauson, Albuquerque Transit Department, at 724-3125

"Livability! A New Mexico Task Force Report," Governor's Task Force on Our Communities, Our Futures
<www.state.nm.us/clients/dfa/Files/LGD/PLAN/PDF/livability.PDF>

Planned Growth Strategy
www.cabq.gov/council/pgs.html

Smart Growth Development Services
E-mail, tomsantafe@att.net.
Phone: (505) 988-1838

Smart Growth Leadership Institute
<www.sgli.org/index.html>

MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Do you have friends who would like to know about 1000 Friends of New Mexico?

Let us know who they are, and we will send them our newsletter, *Nuestro Pueblo,* and a note saying that you thought they would be interested in knowing about us.

Choose from these easy ways:

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Fax us at (505) 248-1361
Go online to www.1000friends.com for membership information

Membership Benefits

A subscription to *1000 Friends'* quarterly newsletter, *Nuestro Pueblo;* invitations to *1000 Friends'* growth forums, special events, and annual Members Meeting; AND your voice joins those of *1000 Friends'* other members in protecting our land and legacies.

Consider leaving a legacy for New Mexico.

Writing *1000 Friends of New Mexico* into your will or estate plan can honor your dedication to our state's special way of life and provide an opportunity for savings on capital gains and estate taxes.

You should discuss the best strategies for you and your family with an attorney or estate planning advisor. For gifts that will take effect after your lifetime, *1000 Friends of New Mexico* could be named as residual beneficiary or contingent beneficiary.

1000 Friends of New Mexico is a not-for-profit corporation.

What is Smart Growth For New Mexico?

- Create walkable neighborhoods.
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.
- Use public funds responsibly and efficiently.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices.
- Mix land uses.
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- Foster distinctive, attractive places with a strong sense of place.
- Manage water resources efficiently.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
- Ensure the integrity of historic and cultural places.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.

For more information on this and other smart growth issues, visit our website at www.1000friends.com or the Smart Growth Network at www.smartgrowth.org.

Pass this on to a friend!

YES! I want to be one of New Mexico's 1000 Friends.

1000 Friends of New Mexico's success depends on the generous support of our members and friends. Membership dues are for one calendar year.

Personal memberships begin at $50.00 • Corporate/Organizational Memberships begin at $100.00

Name
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Business organization
City State Zip
Phone E-mail

❒ My check is enclosed. Amount _____
❒ Please charge my ❒ Visa ❒ MasterCard

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City of Las Cruces Water Conservation

Joshua Rosenblatt

The Las Cruces City Council has formally passed a resolution adopting a Long Range Water Conservation Program for the state's second-largest city. Phase 1 of the program will have an extensive public and school outreach program.

The initial goal of the program is the reduction of summertime consumption of outdoor irrigation water that doubles the demands on the water system. The City has adopted a "lead by example" approach and will systematically identify underutilized lawns on City properties to convert to xeriscape landscape. Identified sites will provide demonstrations of water wise, "lush and lean" landscapes appropriate to Las Cruces. These locations also will allow for further comparison of conversion costs to actual water savings.

The City of Las Cruces has a strong computer framework base and metering program. Background consumption information is being joined with current meter readings to set a measure of monitoring conservation program performance from the onset. A unique initiative that is underway incorporates Geographic Information System (GIS) locations on all city water meters, which allows for tracking consumption and monitoring patterns by various geographic sectors within the City, not simply by single rate class. Infrastructure age, socio-economic strata, census information, and other GIS information can be overlaid to see what patterns, consumption trends or shifts may result from customer response to new water conservation initiatives.

Additional large-scale reuse and reclamation studies are underway and will be developed further.

Joshua Rosenblatt is Las Cruces' new and first full-time water conservation coordinator. He can be reached at 505-528-3549.

Water Conservation Helps Meet Growing Water Demands

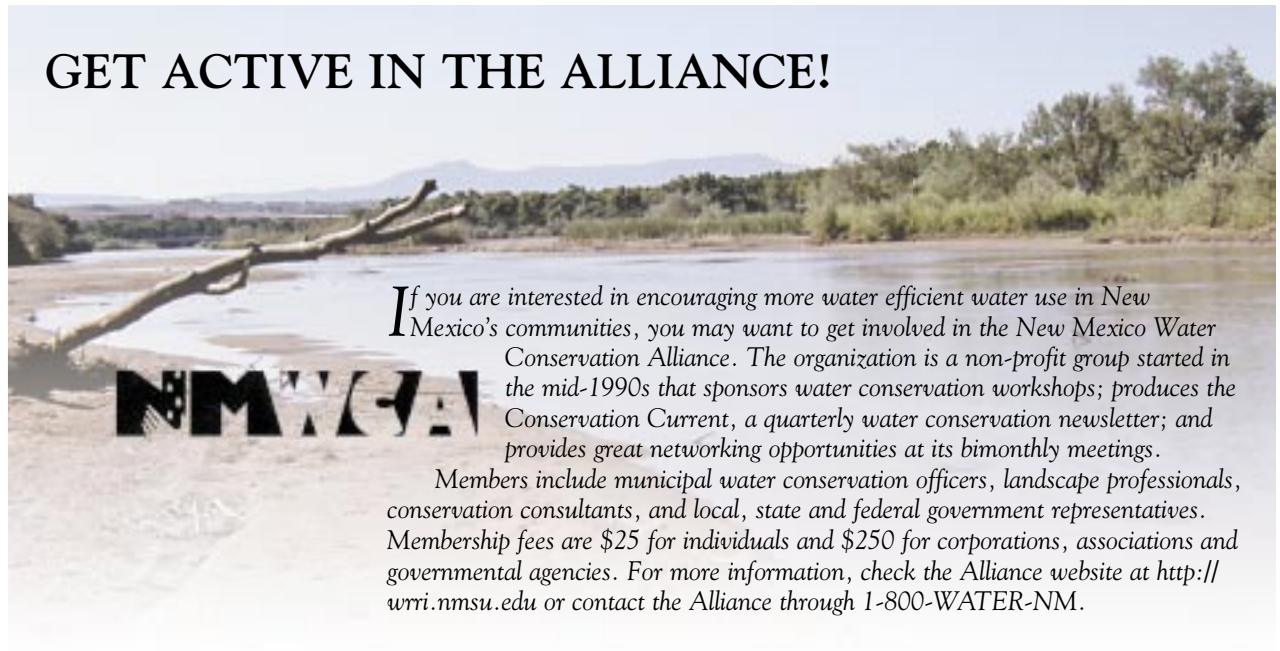
Lorrie Skeie-Campbell

To help ensure a sustainable water supply and to enhance quality of life, the City of Rio Rancho Water Conservation Office promotes the efficient use of water resources through community education and outreach. As one of the Southwest's fastest growing communities, Rio Rancho can delay the need for expansion of its water and wastewater infrastructure and related costs through water conservation.

Through water conservation education, reduction in the per capita water usage creates a more sustainable supply of our limited water resources for all residents of our growing community. Since 1999, water usage has decreased by 21% from 207 gallons per capita per day gallons per person per day to 163 gallons per person per day in 2004; and during the same 5-year time period, the number of water accounts served increased by 30%.

Lorri Skeie-Campbell served as Rio Rancho's Water Conservation Officer from 2002 to April of 2005. She is now a conservation consultant with Resource Wise.

GET ACTIVE IN THE ALLIANCE!



If you are interested in encouraging more water efficient water use in New Mexico's communities, you may want to get involved in the New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance. The organization is a non-profit group started in the mid-1990s that sponsors water conservation workshops; produces the Conservation Current, a quarterly water conservation newsletter; and provides great networking opportunities at its bimonthly meetings.

Members include municipal water conservation officers, landscape professionals, conservation consultants, and local, state and federal government representatives. Membership fees are $25 for individuals and $250 for corporations, associations and governmental agencies. For more information, check the Alliance website at http://wrri.nmsu.edu or contact the Alliance through 1-800-WATER-NM.

1000 Friends of New Mexico Joins in Two Lawsuits

Water has always been subject to contention, and contention in the legal arena is no exception. Important issues are at stake in two recent legal proceedings, and *1000 Friends* has filed an amicus of the court in one and seeks to intervene in another.

The Office of the State Engineer ruled in favor of a transfer of surface water rights from the Rio Grande to Placitas where the applicant will drill a new well. The protestants are appealing, and *1000 Friends of New Mexico* along with the New Mexico Acequia Association and Amigos Bravos filed an amicus arguing that approval of the transfer was in fact a new appropriation of water in an area far from the location of the water right transferred and that the Office of the State Engineer did not adequately address impacts on existing water rights. *1000 Friends of New Mexico* thanks Peter White for representing them in this case.

The second case is referred to in the letter from the board president. In June, 2005, the New Mexico Mining Association, New Mexico Homebuilders Association, New Mexico Oil & Gas Association, New Mexico Cattlegrowers Association, New Mexico Woolgrowers, Chino Mines, and Phelps Dodge filed a lawsuit in the New Mexico Court of Appeals against the Water Quality Control Commission in opposition to the WQCC's decision to keep jurisdiction over waters in New Mexico.

Amigos Bravos, *1000 Friends of New Mexico* and others have asked the court to let them intervene. We support the right of New Mexico to retain jurisdiction over large quantities of New Mexico's water in order to protect water quality. *1000 Friends* thanks the Western Environmental Law Center for representing the interveners.

High and Dry in New Mexico

1000 Friends' own Consuelo Bokum joined Ali MacGraw, Stewart Udall and others in High and Dry: Drought in New Mexico, a documentary that was aired three times on KNME-TV in April, 2005. The documentary examines whether New Mexico can sustain its rapid population growth and development and looks at wise water use, conservation methods and solutions. The special tells New Mexico's water story through the eyes of the people most affected, including an acequia mayordomo in La Cienega, water managers and citizens in Alamogordo, a life-long rancher near Carlsbad, a young couple living "off the grid" in Northern New Mexico, water activists in Cerrillos, a Native American concerned that the historical water-saving ways of his ancestors have disappeared, and water-conscious builders of various projects. Actress Ali MacGraw, a Santa Fe area resident, narrates the work.

Broadcast journalist and filmmaker Joe Day researched, wrote, and produced the documentary because he was concerned that "there is a real question whether New Mexico can continue to support indefinitely an ever-growing population with the state's limited water supply."

For a copy, send a check for $20 to Joe Day, Daylight Productions, 209 Rancho Alegre Rd., Santa Fe, NM, 87508, and indicate whether you want the copy in VHS or DVD.

Domestic Well Update

A priority for the real estate, homebuiders, and cattlegrowers' lobbyists was killing this year's version of a bill that would have allowed the state engineer to prevent new depletions in vulnerable areas. For the fourth year in a row, they were successful. Governor Bill Richardson and State Engineer John D'Antonio have committed to using their administrative powers to accomplish the same objectives as those that would have been achieved had the domestic wells bill passed. There's more on the bill and why it is important at www.1000friends.org.

The Domestic Well bill had broad-based support from diverse groups: AARP, Border Ecology Project, Center of Southwest Culture, Conservation Voters New Mexico, Elephant Butte Irrigation District, Gila Resources Information Project, Hagerman Irrigation Company, Jemez y Sangre Water Planning Council, Lincoln County Planning Department, Mexicano Land Education and Conservation Trust, New Mexico Chapter of the American Planning Association, New Mexico Conference of Churches, New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau, New Mexico Public Interest Research Group, New Mexico Wildlife Federation, Office of Social Justice Archdiocese of Santa Fe, *1000 Friends of New Mexico*, Pecos Valley Artesian Conservancy District, Pueblo of Nambé, Pueblo of Pojoaque, Pueblo of San Ildefonso, Pueblo of Tesuque, Puesta del Sol Homeowners Association, Rio Grande Restoration, Santa Fe County, Sierra Azul Homeowners Association, Sierra Club, Taos County Planning Department, and West Santa Fe Association.