

# **Appendix A**

Middle Rio Grande Regional Water Plan Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives

July 2003

# MIDDLE RIO GRANDE REGIONAL WATER PLAN

## MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Preamble:

The development and implementation of the Regional Water Plan is intended to support policies, programs and projects that meet the goals of the plan. Recognizing the limited resource and consistent overuse of the region's water, the following mission and supporting goals are established for the regional water plan.

### Mission Statement:

**Balance Water Use with Renewable Supply.**

### Goals with Subordinate Objectives:

**Goal A: Ensure that the Mission is fulfilled through fair, open and inclusive public planning and implementation processes.**

- A.1 Obtain and use sound scientific data as a basis for planning.
- A.2 Communicate, cooperate, collaborate, and compromise among all stakeholders.
- A.3 Plan for and manage existing and future water and land use together for the sustainable long term, without restricting the choices available to future generations.
- A.4 Pursue sufficient funding from federal, state, local, and private sources for the planning process.
- A.5 Design a plan with clear, unambiguous, well-defined words, concepts, and products.
- A.6 Maximize public participation, information availability, and publicity in planning.
- A.7 Maximize communications with tribes concerning data, needs, and rights.

- A.8 Maximize public/private partnerships to effect implementation of water plans.
- A.9 Coordinate among the Middle Rio Grande regional water plan and the planning efforts of upstream and downstream water planning regions.
- A.10 Ensure that the water plan leads to a real and quantitatively verifiable balance between water use and renewable water supply.

**Goal B: Preserve water for a healthy native Rio Grande ecosystem.**

- B.1 Develop a comprehensive management plan for the Rio Grande through coordination of relevant government and private entities.
- B.2 Establish criteria to meet the definition and requirements of a healthy river to be defined in the regional water plan.
- B.3 Identify and pursue opportunities to increase watershed yield where ecologically and economically feasible.
- B.4 Encourage the vitality of endangered species and comply with the federal Endangered Species Act.

**Goal C: Preserve water for the region's agricultural, cultural, and historical values.**

- C.1 Implement programs to restore and expand agricultural markets for local produce.
- C.2 Identify and promote best agricultural practices, products and efficiencies.

**Goal D: Preserve water for economic and urban vitality.**

- D.1 Develop goals for economic development that are consistent with the region's water supply.
- D.2 Identify and promote water-efficient economic activity.
- D.3 Provide water for existing residents, businesses and institutions throughout the region.

- D.4 Promote transition from unsustainable ground water use to renewable supplies.

**Goal E: Preserve water for the qualities of life valued by residents in the region.**

- E.1 Ensure an adequate supply of water for indoor uses.
- E.2 Respect diversity in defining quality of life and water requirements.
- E.3 Consider water-related impacts of plan recommendations on the ability to make future choices.
- E.4 Preserve water for outdoor recreational activities such as fishing and rafting.
- E.5 Preserve water for community parks and sports fields.
- E.6 Preserve water for riparian and open space areas.
- E.7 Consider the geological and structural integrity of the aquifer to protect residents from aquifer depletion and land subsidence.

**Goal F: Develop broad public and official awareness of water facts and issues, especially the limited nature of water resources.**

- F.1 Fund and develop a public water education program with elements directed to children, adults, and decision-makers.
- F.2 Base the water education program on understanding of:
  - a. Scientific knowledge;
  - b. Legal issues;
  - c. Environmental restraints, conservation programs, consumptive use, economics, and responsible resource management; and all cultural values.
- F.3 Focus of the education program should be to develop:
  - a. An informed and active citizenry;

- b. An engaged general political will;
- c. Consensus based on informed understanding of issues; and
- d. A major funding commitment for implementation of the plan.

**Goal G: Conserve water.**

- G.1 Optimize water conservation in all sectors
- G.2 Improved water use efficiencies
- G.3 Implement technological innovations
- G.4 Reduce evaporation and other losses
- G.5 Pursue legal and code reforms
- G.6 Develop and implement economic incentives
- G.7 Encourage efficiencies for irrigated turf, recreation, and landscaping
- G.8 Promote recycling and re-use of water
- G.9 Encourage metering and measuring.

**Goal H: Promote a system of water laws and processes that support the regional water plan and its implementation.**

- H.1 Establish a process for coordinating and integrating planning and management of water among private, local, state, tribal, and federal entities.
- H.2 Ensure that New Mexico meets its compact obligations while fulfilling New Mexico water needs.
- H.3 Strive to protect existing water rights by resolving issues through negotiation and mediation.
- H.4 Protect existing and potential aquifer recharge windows.

- H.5 Build a public consensus regarding water laws which need to be kept intact and those which need to be revised on issues including but not limited to:
- a. Water transfers;
  - b. “Use it or lose it” laws, other laws, and policies that discourage conservation;
  - c. Domestic wells;
  - d. Gaps and overlaps in laws;
  - e. Growth effects on water;
  - f. Enforcement mechanisms;
  - g. Water trusts;
  - h. Water banking;
  - i. Water markets;
  - j, Acequias; and
  - k. Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo rights.
- H.6 Support holistic and best management practices for river and integrated water resource management.
- H.7 Price water fairly to all users.
- H.8 Wherever possible, protect aquifers by managing ground water as a reserve rather than as a primary source of water, establishing limits on its use, and protecting aquifer water quality.
- H.9 Develop drought plans and flood plans to minimize economic disruption.
- H.10 Change laws, ordinances, and policies to promote water conservation.

**Goal I: Provide appropriate water quality for each use.**

- I.1 Ensure compliance with water quality standards.

- I.2 Establish criteria and a management plan(s) to control water quality degradation from upstream activities.
- I.3 Ensure proper well construction and plugging of abandoned wells.
- I.4 Limit use of septic systems and private wells where the health of the aquifer is a concern.

**Goal J: Manage water demand consistent with the stated mission.**

- J.1 Manage all water uses to protect and enhance water resources and decrease water consumption.
- J.2 Promote responsible growth and development based on renewable water resources (approved by the Mid Region Council of Governments' Water Resources Board).
- J.3 Limit the use of private wells for outdoor watering where users with prior rights are impaired.
- J.4 Establish policies for managing the consumptive use of water.

**Goal K: Balance growth with renewable supply** (approved by the Water Assembly Action Committee)

- K.1 Promote responsible growth and development based on renewable water resources (approved by the Water Assembly Action Committee, not approved by the MRG Water Resources Board).

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**Definitions Specific to These Goals and Objectives:**

“Land use” means the characteristics of a geographic area consisting of natural as well as man-made features.

“Renewable” means capable of being replaced by natural ecological cycles or sound management practices.

“Sustainable” means the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

“Water consumption” means use of water that depletes available supply.