

Supporting Document C-5

Forum Summaries

Water Assembly Mailers



Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly
partnered with the Mid Region Council of Governments

Community Conversations

Your Ideas Contribute to Developing Regional Water Management Plan

You attended a public meeting as part of the 4th or 5th Community Conversations that were held in the Middle Rio Grande region in March and September 2002. At these meetings the Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly accepted your ideas and listened to your opinions about water management for the region. You may have participated in an exercise to balance the water budget, and you may have “voted” for your most liked and least liked alternatives to be included in the Middle Rio Grande Water Management Plan. All public input has been documented and is being integrated into the water planning process. Once the regional plan is complete, it will be integrated into a statewide plan to help us manage our most precious resource.

Those of you who attended the 4th series had the opportunity to use a model specifically designed to complete the Water Balancing Exercise. As attendees quickly learned, creating a balanced water budget is no easy task! Managing water will require us to consider all uses and to potentially make some very difficult decisions about how water is allocated and used. For example, one group discovered that they could come very close to balancing the water budget IF they allowed for no population growth. Another interesting result was that most of the groups maintained agricultural use at roughly its current level.

At the 5th round of Community Conversations the Water Assembly presented a list of 44 water management alternatives that had been gathered from previous public input. Meeting attendees had the opportunity to “vote” for those alternatives that they believed were most favorable and those that they preferred not be included in the regional plan (remember the blue and black dots?). People could also submit their preferences by mailing in a pre-printed postcard to the Water Assembly. The results from the meetings and the postcards are reported in this special mailing. The matrix included here lets you see which alternatives received positive responses, which received negative responses and which are controversial or completely ignored. Additionally you can compare the results from the various parts of the region, as well as compare responses from the meetings with those received on postcards.

The Water Assembly, working with its partner the Mid Region Council of Governments, is dedicated to ensuring that all voices in the region have a say in developing the water management plan and thank you for your participation in the process. We look forward to seeing you at future Community Conversations as we move toward preparing the final plan.



Management Alternative Preferences

Alternative Action (Abbreviated text)	"Dot" votes														Card votes							
	L. L.		Bern.		S. Val.		R. R.		AIPCC		Belen		Totals		Val.		Bern.		San.		Totals	
	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L
Increase Water Supply																						
Implement local and regional watershed management plans. (A-66)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0
Restore bosque habitat/manage vegetation to reduce evapotranspiration. (A-1)	14	0	19	0	8	0	16	0	6	0	14	0	77	0	3	0	12	1	4	2	19	3
Establish erosion prevention measures/use soil and vegetation management techniques to reduce runoff/increase infiltration. (A-33)	1	2	3	0	2	0	3	1	2	0	1	0	12	3	0	1	6	1	3	3	9	5
Enhance/expand local government storm water management plans/programs to control runoff, minimize erosion, enhance infiltration, and prevent pollution. (A-34)	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	5	2	0	1	1	0	1	3	2	4
Continue evapotranspiration studies and apply findings to vegetation management programs in the water planning region. (A-40)	0	0	1	3	1	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	3	8	0	1	1	5	0	2	1	8
Create constructed wetlands for groundwater recharge, water harvesting, habitat improvement, hydrological management. (A-36)	2	2	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	8	3	1	1	2	3	0	2	3	6
Develop economic potential of non-native species removal, harvesting, and output of products by local industries. (A-2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	2	2	0	2	2	6
Reduce evaporation in storage reservoirs by retaining water at higher elevations or latitudes, or by reducing surface areas. (A-45)	3	0	2	0	3	0	8	1	4	3	3	0	23	4	6	0	9	3	5	0	20	3
Increase monitoring/modeling of surface water system to improve water management at the watershed level, retain excess water flow from Elephant Butte during wet cycles. (A-38)	3	0	1	0	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	9	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	5	0
Inject water treated to drinking water standards for aquifer storage in appropriate locations. (A-46)	4	0	2	4	0	1	6	3	0	3	1	6	13	17	1	3	3	5	2	2	6	10
Encourage on-site rainwater harvesting. (A-44)	0	0	1	1	2	0	6	2	0	0	3	0	12	3	2	1	1	2	4	1	7	4
Promote on-site residential/commercial greywater reuse/recycling. (A-24)	1	0	2	0	3	0	5	1	2	0	3	0	16	1	3	0	6	2	4	0	13	2
Reuse treated wastewater for non-potable uses. (A-27)	1	0	2	0	2	0	7	0	3	0	2	0	17	0	2	1	5	1	4	0	11	2
Utilize technological advances for treating deep saline and brackish water for potable or non-potable use. (A-39)	0	2	0	0	0	1	4	2	1	3	0	0	5	8	1	4	2	10	4	0	7	14
Acquire additional water rights without condemnation, and import water from other basins where possible. (A-69)	0	2	4	0	0	6	2	1	0	17	1	1	7	27	1	2	3	11	2	5	6	18
Conduct research on innovative water supply enhancement techniques such as weather modification. (A-42)	0	5	0	8	2	6	0	13	0	8	0	1	2	41	0	8	0	18	0	4	0	30
Decrease or Regulate Water Demand																						
Implement local water conservation plans/programs in all jurisdictions, including drought contingency plans. (A-18)	10	0	6	0	1	0	7	1	5	0	5	0	34	1	6	0	7	0	4	0	17	0
Examine pricing mechanisms, adopt most effective at conserving water. Mechanisms include: a) reflect water's true value; b) moderately increasing block price schedule; c) steeply increasing block price schedule; d) other incentives/subsidies. (A-21)	0	3	0	0	2	1	2	11	7	0	1	17	12	32	0	4	7	4	4	2	11	10
Offer subsidies for adopting water efficient technologies and utilizing water saving devices. (A-22)	7	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	12	2	1	0	1	2	2	1	4	3
Establish region-wide educational programs, including public and private school curricula, to encourage water conservation. (A-56)	2	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	3	2	0	9	3	3	0	3	0	2	0	8	0
Develop/employ alternatives to maximize irrigation efficiency on irrigated land. (A-10)	8	0	1	0	5	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	17	2	3	0	6	0	2	0	11	0
Meter and manage surface water distribution flows through all irrigation systems. (A-7)	3	6	1	6	0	1	3	1	1	4	1	2	9	20	4	5	4	2	2	2	10	9
Develop conveyance alternatives for water transportation in agricultural irrigation systems. (A-9)	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	8	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	8	7
Fund acequias to develop/implement conservation programs. (A-60)	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	2	2	1	0	0	9	5	1	1	2	7	2	2	5	10
Meter all water supply wells, including domestic wells. (A-8)	1	12	0	19	0	5	3	8	5	5	1	14	10	63	3	4	5	6	2	5	10	15
Reduce allowed pumping from domestic wells, restrict domestic wells where surface waters or aquifer could be impaired. (A-61)	0	4	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	5	2	11	1	5	1	4	0	2	2	11





Alternative Action (Abbreviated text)	"Dot" votes												Card votes									
	L. L.		Bern.		S. Val.		R. R.		AIPCC		Belen		Totals		Val.		Bern.		San.		Totals	
	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L	M	L
Change Water Uses																						
Develop markets for locally-grown produce, low-water alternative crops. (A-11)	3	1	2	0	3	2	0	5	3	5	0	0	11	13	1	1	3	4	1	3	5	8
Adopt policies to integrate land use and transportation planning and water resource management in all jurisdictions. (A-30)	7	5	7	2	4	0	6	4	11	0	4	0	39	11	6	3	11	3	3	0	20	6
Increase building densities and infill development through land use policies and regulations. (A-28)	2	2	1	1	0	1	0	14	1	2	1	3	5	23	1	2	6	4	0	5	7	11
Water Rights Regulation																						
Identify, quantify, and adjudicate water rights and wet water quantities. (A-71)	6	1	2	0	2	0	4	8	3	0	2	0	19	9	5	0	4	3	3	1	12	4
Change state law to include in-stream flow as beneficial use. (A-63)	2	16	2	2	2	2	5	5	3	1	0	10	14	36	0	5	11	1	3	4	14	10
Address groundwater/surface water interactions in the statutes for administering water rights. (A-144)	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	1	1	2	0	3	1
Active water resource management by the OSE/ISC. (A-143)	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	3	7	1	0	2	4	2	1	5	5
Establish more equitable accounting for evaporative losses in Rio Grande Compact water. (A-51)	4	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	2	0	7	0	15	2	1	0	4	1	0	0	5	1
Water Quality Protection																						
Identify, protect and monitor areas vulnerable to contamination; restrict groundwater supply wells in sensitive areas. (A-47)	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	1	1	0	5	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0
Enforce wellhead protection programs on all public water supply wells. (A-50)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	1	0	1	6	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	3
Expand centralized wastewater collection and treatment systems into all areas of urban and suburban development. (A-26)	0	5	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	4	8	0	0	3	2	1	0	4	2
Implement Plan & Manage Water Resources																						
Establish regional water management authority to administer or assist in a water banking program. (A-67)	0	1	0	3	0	0	5	0	1	2	0	9	6	15	0	4	2	5	1	3	3	12
Preserve, but continue to draw deep-well water for drinking purposes only. (A-15)	5	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	8	2	2	2	5	3	3	0	10	5
Develop growth management plan to: 1) reduce water consumption; 2) minimize impact on water resources; 3) encourage conservation-oriented economic development and 4) ensure adequate water supplies for proposed development. (A-52)	3	1	6	2	1	0	3	0	10	0	9	1	32	4	7	3	10	6	2	2	19	11
Ensure public involvement in water planning by continuing regular public information/dissemination programs and public relations campaigns, and citizen planning committees. (A-53)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	5	3	0	4	5
Establish/integrate a regional Geographical Information System database of publicly accessible information on water resources and photo imagery. (A-73)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	4	0	1	1	8	0	1	1	3	0	2	1	6
Funding																						
Establish dedicated/continuing funding for Regional Water Planning at local, regional and state levels. (A-58)	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	3	4	0	3	1	5	1	0	2	8
Establish a State-based water severance tax for water projects, planning and conservation. (A-59)	0	7	0	8	0	2	5	5	1	3	0	2	6	27	1	1	3	3	1	5	5	9

Reading the Matrix

Results from "dot" voting at meetings in Los Lunas (L.L.), Bernalillo (Bern.), Albuquerque's South Valley (S. Val.), Rio Rancho (R.R.), All Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (AIPCC), and Belen are shown here. The 'M' column reflects the number of blue dots placed on that alternative indicating a most preferred alternative; the 'L' column reflects the number of black dots indicating a least preferred alternative. The "Card votes" columns show the responses on post-cards returned to the Water Assembly from Valencia, Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties.

The text for the alternatives is abbreviated to save space for this mailing and the parenthetical reference (e.g. A-44) refers to the iden-

tification number used in organizing the alternatives throughout the planning process.

Full Reports

This mailing provides highlights from the Community Conversations. To see the full reports from the meetings, including complete text for the alternatives, please go to the Water Assembly web site: www.WaterAssembly.org OR contact the Mid-Region Council of Governments at 247-1750 to request the documents.

Future Water Assembly Activities

Regional Forum

January 25, 2003

Learn the results of the technical feasibility study for the management alternatives.

6th Community Conversations

March 2003

Attendees will focus on reviewing and critiquing scenarios for water management.


7th Community Conversations

Date to be announced

This series of meetings will present the draft Middle Rio Grande Regional Water Plan.

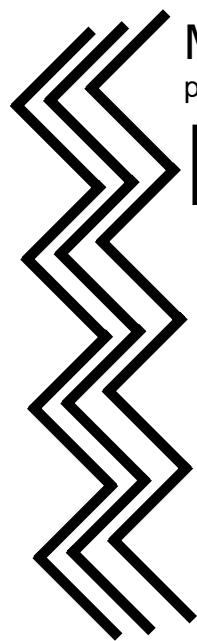


For more information consult the Water Assembly web site:
www.WaterAssembly.org

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Thank you for helping to develop our regional water plan through an open, inclusive and participatory process.



Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly
partnered with the Mid Region Council of Governments

Regional Forum

More than 100 interested Middle Rio Grande residents attended the March 1 Regional Forum. The agenda included presentations about the technical feasibility of the potential actions to be included in the regional water plan. Attendees then participated in small group discussions to rank various alternatives. Each small group considered nine of the 44 alternatives and ranked them into one of the following categories:

- 1—Impossible
- 2—May Be Necessary
- 3—OK
- 4—Good To Do
- 5—Must Do

Following are the alternatives that the groups put into each of these five categories. For many alternatives group members unanimously agreed on a ranking. For others there were competing opinions about how to rank the alternative. In these cases the majority vote determine the ranking.

Must Do

- | | |
|--|---|
| Irrigation Efficiency (A10) | Storm Water Management (A34) |
| Instream Flow (A63) | Active Water Resource Management (A143) |
| Public Involvement (A53) | Conservation Incentives (A22) |
| Maintain Water Resource Database (A73) | Wetlands (A36) |
| Wellhead Protection (A50) | Water Harvesting (A44) Not unanimous. |
| Bosque Management (A1) | Aquifer Storage (A46) Not unanimous. |
| Urban Conservation (A18) | Education (A56) No comments. |
| Reuse Treated Effluent (A27) | Domestic Well Controls (A61) Not unanimous. |
| Conjunctive Management (A144) | Water Quality Protection (A47) |
| Agricultural Metering (A7) | Growth Management (A52) |
| Reservoir Management (A45) | Regional Water Planning Program (A58) |

Good To Do

- | | |
|---|--|
| Watershed Plans (A66) | Reuse Greywater (A24) |
| Domestic Waste Water (A26) | Low Water Crops (A11) |
| Desalination (A39) | Water Banking Authority (A57) Not unanimous. |
| Urban Water Pricing (A21) | Evaporative Loss Accounting (A51) Not unanimous. |
| Surface Modeling (A38) | Importation of Water (A69) Not unanimous. |
| Vegetation Management (A40) Not unanimous. | In-fill Density (A28) Not unanimous. |
| Preserve Deep Water for Drinking (A15) Not unanimous. | |



OK

Acequia Conservation Programs (A60)

Vegetation Removal Products (A2)

Conveyance Systems (A9)

Water Rights Adjudication (A71)

Water/Bank/Authority (A67)

May Be Necessary

No alternatives received this ranking.

Impossible

Weather Modification (A42)

Severance Tax (A59) Not unanimous.

Ambiguous/Non-Graded

Soil and Vegetation Management (A33) No ranking. Discussion of wise management of river, bosque; legislation to promote efficient landscaping, xeriscape requirements; large users as models; desire for technical analysis be done.

Extreme Within Group Split

Metering Water Supply Wells (A8) Group split on good/bad. Agreement on beneficial data of use, 3 af/yr very high; but metering costs/regulation expensive; metering good for leveling playing field, planning future; incentives use; political football.

Notable Comments

Key Issues: must acknowledge, address water shortage, water waste; must include all stakeholders in process, make decisions with an awareness of impacts on neighbors; public education, critical; solutions often costly; a living process.

Plenary Session

Following the small group sessions, attendees returned to a plenary session to report back the ranking results and to discuss the alternatives.

Attendees raised numerous issues including:

- Regional self-sufficiency
- Need for good data
- Realities of drought & water scarcity data

- Adjudication issues
- Metering and domestic well consumption issues
- Subsidence resulting from aquifer depletion
- Lack of participation by the Pueblos
- Senior users/Priority users
- Coming together to cooperate and be neighborly, not pitting interests against each other, allowing for water affordability and availability for all.

Individual Comments on the Alternatives

In addition to the small group rankings, each Forum attendee could submit individual comments on each alternative. Twenty attendees responded. These alternatives received the most comments:

Alternative	Total Comments
Watershed Plans (A66)	16
Reuse Greywater (A24)	16
Bosque Management (A1)	15
Reservoir Management (A45)	15

Many of the comments were clearly supporting or opposing the various alternatives. Others were mixed responses or questions about the alternative. The alternatives that received the most positive comments included:

Alternative	Positive Comments
Reuse Greywater (A24)	14
Urban Conversation (A18)	11
Growth Management (A52)	11
Metering Water Supply Wells (A8)	10
Education (A56)	10

The alternatives that received the most negative comments included:

Alternative	Negative Comments
Weather Modification (A42)	10
Import Water (A69)	7
Desalination (A39)	4
Reservoir Management (A45)	4



While participant feedback is crucial to the planning process, the small number of respondents makes it impossible to use these comments in any statistical manner. It is worth noting, however, that many of the negative comments centered on avoiding alternatives perceived to be “technical fixes” to water management. Additionally, the alternative for Reusing Greywater received many, and mostly positive comments. This may be partially because the topic was heavily covered in the media and the State Legislature passed a bill to allow greywater use in its most recent session.

Get the Details

This mailer provides a snapshot of the information that was generated at the Regional Forum. For complete reports and more details, go to the Water Assembly web page:

www.WaterAssembly.org



Comparing Forum Alternative Selection to 5th Community Conversation “Votes”

In September 2002 Middle Rio Grande residents attended the 5th round of Community Conversations and had the opportunity to “vote” for their most and least preferred alternatives. Residents could also mail in their votes. Comparing the results from those votes to the ranking results from the Regional Forum uncovered several interesting issues.

The alternatives Aquifer Storage (A46), Domestic Well Controls (A61), Agricultural Metering (A7) and Instream Flow (A63) all received a “Must Do” ranking during the Regional Forum, but were among the least preferred options in the 2002 voting.

Additionally, the alternative Land Use (A30) received a “Good To Do” ranking at the Forum, but was a strongly preferred option in the earlier voting. Water Rights Adjudication (A71) received only an “OK” ranking at the Forum but was strongly supported by residents at 2002 meetings.

There are numerous possible explanations for the discrepancies between the Forum results and the earlier “voting” results. One possibility is that people have changed their views about some alternatives after having received additional information concerning the feasibility for each alternative. It is also possible that the demographics of those attending the Forum were different than the demographics of those who attended the 5th Community Conversations and/or submitted cards with their alternative preferences.

The diverse and perhaps changing opinions about how best to manage our water for the future makes it even more imperative that everyone attend the 6th series of Community Conversations and the next Regional Forum. At these meetings, Middle Rio Grande residents will make the final decisions about which alternatives are combined into a scenario to form the basis of the regional water management plan.

Wrapping Up

The Water Assembly volunteers and all of the contributing agencies and organizations are in the final phases of developing the regional water management plan. There are few remaining opportunities for you to ensure that your opinions are integrated into the plan. The 6th series of

Community Conversations and the June Regional Forum will determine the framework for the plan.

Mark your calendars and do not miss these crucial meetings that will enable us to balance our water use with a renewable supply.



Future Water Assembly Activities

6th Community Conversations

April 2003

Attendees will have the opportunity to use the model developed by the Water Assembly and Sandia National Laboratories to critique water management scenarios. There will be orientation sessions prior to each meeting for folks who are just joining the planning process.

Regional Forum and Annual Assembly

June 7, 2003

Attendees will select a preferred scenario to become the framework for the water plan. This is the *final* decision-making stage for developing our plan.


7th Community Conversations

Date to be announced

This series of meetings will present the draft Middle Rio Grande Regional Water Plan.



For more information consult the Water Assembly web site:
www.WaterAssembly.org

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