



Water Wise Community Brief

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Tour Held Along Middle Rio Grande to View Proposed Habitat Restoration Work Sites



Airboat participants learn about the habitat restoration project from Chris Stageman of the Interstate Stream Commission staff.

Interstate Stream Commission staff on June 28.

"The tour was an opportunity for the staff to brief key individuals about the project and solicit comments for use in completing the project design," said Interstate Stream Commission Rio Grande Basin Manager Rolf Schmidt-Petersen.

Attending the tour were representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the New Mexico Environment Department, U.S. Fish

and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District,

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Participants whisk down the Rio Grande on an airboat to view in-channel islands that are being studied as part of the Interstate Stream Commission's habitat restoration project.

An airboat tour to view proposed habitat restoration work sites along the Middle Rio Grande in Albuquerque was hosted by

Conceptual Proposal to Aamodt Settlement Agreement is Released to the Public

Public meetings were held in July in Tesuque and Pojoaque to discuss a Conceptual Proposal to the Aamodt Settlement Agreement. The proposal modifies the terms of a preliminary settlement reached early last year, which was agreed upon by Pueblo and non-Pueblo water-right owners in the Nambe, Tesuque, Pojoaque, and San Ildefonso area.

The Aamodt adjudication, the longest-running lawsuit in the federal court system, will determine the quantity and priority date of all water rights in the basin. Parties to the

lawsuit have been in court-supervised mediation for more than four years. The mediation resulted in last year's settlement agreement.

The Conceptual Proposal addresses many concerns expressed by area water-right owners in the basin. Under the proposal, non-Pueblo well owners would not be required to hook up to a central water system, and must



Settlement Judge Michael Nelson addresses the crowd about the Conceptual Proposal at a public meeting in Tesuque on July 12.

agree to some limitations on well use.

It also addresses importing additional water to meet needs in the basin, while stipulating that water will not be exported outside of the basin.

If the case goes back to court, the court will allocate amounts and determine priority dates defining rights to the existing supply.

The State Engineer has already increased the direct supervision of water use in the valley through Active Water Resource Manage-

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Commission Honors Philip Mutz



Honoring Philip Mutz at the award ceremony were (l-r): Interstate Stream Commission Director Estevan López, State Engineer John D'Antonio, Philip Mutz, Interstate Stream Commission General Counsel Tanya Trujillo, and Interstate Stream Commission Chairman Jim Dunlap.

Upon retiring from his post as New Mexico Compact Commissioner to the Upper Colorado River Compact, former State Engineer Philip Mutz was honored by the Interstate Stream Commission on June 16, 2005.

The Commission approved a resolution honoring Mutz for more than 35 years of service to the Office of the State Engineer, the Interstate Stream Commission, and the State of New Mexico.

Mutz served as the State Engineer as well as the Interstate Stream Commission Engineer during his 35 years with the agency.

In addition, he worked as the New Mexico Commissioner to the Canadian River Compact.

Mutz has an impeccable reputation within the engineering, hydrological and legal communities and has provided invaluable assistance protecting New Mexico's interests in the Canadian and Colorado basins.

Over the years his contributions have extended to each stream system in the state. 💧

State Engineer John D'Antonio has been appointed as the New Mexico Compact Commissioner for the Upper Colorado River Basin Commission.

His position became effective on July 8, 2005 and will run through June 30, 2007. 💧

New Water Master Hired for Rio Hondo



Stuart Hanson began his position as water master in the Hondo Basin region on April 9. Hanson is in charge of administering and distributing surface and groundwater in the basin on a daily basis.

From 2003 to 2005, Hanson was a project manager for M&H Energy Services in Roswell, New Mexico.

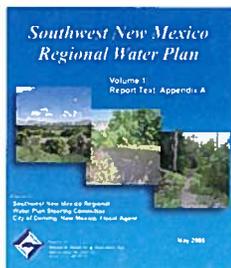
He has worked in various consulting and exploration jobs in the Roswell area from 1972 to 2003.

In 1971, Hanson began his career as a hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey in Lansing, Michigan where he worked for one year. He spent two years as a Staff Sergeant in the United States Army from 1967 to 1969.

Hanson earned a bachelor of science degree in geology in 1967, and a master of science degree in geology in 1971 from Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. 💧

Interstate Stream Commissions Accepts Southwest New Mexico Regional Plan

In its continuing effort to protect water resources and to plan for future water demands in a specific region



of the state, the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission accepted the completed Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan on June 16.

The plan discusses the physical availability of water, water rights, and legal issues that affect the availability of water. It also projects future demands for water, as well as alternatives for meeting future demands in the region.

The Commission has worked for many years with the water planning regions of the state to assist them in preparing their own regional water plans. Once

regional water plans are completed, they are reviewed by the Interstate Stream Commission staff and must be accepted by the Commission.

"As water demands continue to grow in light of a highly variable supply in New Mexico, it is a priority of the Interstate Stream Commission to provide opportunities to involve the public in developing water management and conservation strategies within their regions," said

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New Water Master Appointed to the Gila River Stream System



Charles Jackson is the new water master for the Gila River, San Francisco River, and San Simon Creek Systems in New Mexico.

On July 13, 2005, Sixth Judicial District Court Judge J.C. Robinson signed three orders submitted by the Office of the State Engineer recommending Jackson for the position.

As the court-appointed water master, he will administer the court's Final Decree in that area by ensuring that the limitations set by the district court are not exceeded.

Jackson currently serves as acting district manager for the Office of the State Engineer's District III Office in Deming.

He earned a bachelor of science degree in agriculture and extension education from New Mexico State University in 1989. In 2005, he received a master's degree in public administration from New Mexico State University.💧

Office of the State Engineer Wins Two Public Relations Awards

For the second year in a row, the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer received two "Cumbre Awards" from the New Mexico Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (NMPRSA).

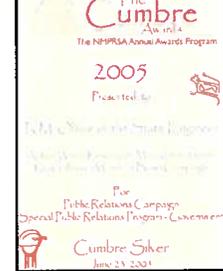
The Office of the State Engineer received a second place "silver award" in the government-special public relations program category for "Active Water Resource Management in the Rio Gallinas: A Critical Basin Campaign."

In the category of government-institutional promotions, a third place "bronze award" was received for the public relations campaign for "A Joint Media Event: The Impact of Drought on Recreational Opportunities in New Mexico."

The Cumbre campaign awards are given for outstanding achieve-

ment in a public relations campaign for writing, design production, and management of materials consisting of more than one communication tool, program or component.

The campaign must also include planning and evaluation activities.



ment in a public relations campaign for writing, design production, and management of materials consisting of more than one communication tool, program or component.

The Cumbres are an annual statewide competition, which recognizes public relations excellence in producing campaigns and strategies. "These awards are significant because they evaluate and acknowledge our agency's efforts to effectively communicate our initiatives with the public," said Planning and Communication Division Director Karin Stangl.💧



Conservation Tips for Watering

- ◆ Avoid daytime watering. The best time to water is before sunrise.
- ◆ Adjust your sprinklers to water plants only.
- ◆ Don't water when it's windy or raining.
- ◆ Install a shut-off nozzle for your hose.
- ◆ Use drip and other conservation irrigation methods on gardens, flowers, shrubs, and trees.



Source -- *Lean & Green: A Simple Guide to Waterwise Lawn Care*

(Regional Plan -- continued from page 2)

Interstate Stream Commission Director Estevan López.

The Southwest New Mexico Region, which includes Catron, Grant, Hidalgo, and Luna Counties, is one of 16 water planning regions in the State of New Mexico.

Key alternatives identified for meeting the projected gap between supply and demand in the region include: municipal conservation and management, agricultural water conservation, watershed management, enhancement of

surface recharge, water for natural riparian and aquatic habitat on the Gila and San Francisco Rivers, aquifer storage and recovery of Gila River flows, water banking, and groundwater development.

Work on the Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan was coordinated among representatives of the cities, counties, municipalities, and agricultural and mining water users. The City of Deming was the fiscal agent for the project.

Most of the surface water supply

in the region is for agriculture use. Municipalities and other entities use groundwater. The plan addresses projected demand for public water supplies and other needs as they are expected to grow in the next 40 years.

The plan was developed with grants from the Interstate Stream Commission totaling more than \$369,890.💧

ment (AWRM). One objective of AWRM is to protect senior water rights by enforcing the legal limits on water use. At the appropriate time, AWRM will expand to enforce the settlement or a court judgment.

The federal government has maintained that the settlement as presently configured has a price tag higher than they are willing to accept. Negotiations with the Department of Interior are underway and will continue throughout the mediation process.

A negotiated settlement ultimately depends on public support, which will be instrumental in determining settlement funding.

The Conceptual Proposal negotiated among the Pueblos of Nambe, Pojoaque, Tesuque, San Ildefonso, and various non-Pueblo water right owners from the basin is viewed as the basis from which to fashion a final settlement.

Santa Fe County will be primarily responsible for design and construction of a pipeline to serve non-Pueblo users in the basin. The state will provide funding to address impairment of non-Pueblo groundwater uses as a result of new Pueblo water use, until the regional pipeline is operational.

New non-Pueblo uses of water would require a transfer of water rights and an agreement to hook up to the county water utility when it becomes available.

Specific conditions to govern the use of water between the Pueblo of Tesuque and the Rio de Tesuque Association acequias (or ditches) will be addressed in the settlement agreement.

The Settlement Agreement and Conceptual Proposal are posted on the Office of the State Engineer website at: www.seo.state.nm.us

the City of Albuquerque, Santa Ana Pueblo, and representatives from U.S. Senators Pete Domenici and Jeff Bingaman's offices.

Work proposed by the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission would improve the river system by reshaping river banks and islands to allow an increased number of flows so that additional habitat is created for both the Rio Grande silvery minnow and Southwestern willow flycatcher.

Funding for the habitat restoration project will come from the State of New Mexico, the New Mexico Water Trust Board, and the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program.

Four phases of the project are proposed over four years, based on availability of funding.

**Water Wise
Community
Brief**



Make every drop count!

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