

## **2018 New Mexico State Water Plan Charter**

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### **Project Objective Statement:**

The purpose of the 2018 New Mexico State Water Plan Charter is to develop a framework for the 2018 New Mexico State Water Plan, which will be designed as strategic management tool and completed by June 2018.

### **High-Level Milestone Targets of the State Water Plan:**

- Planning for the State Water Plan
- Implementing a Public Involvement Plan
- Developing a Draft State Water Plan
- Developing a Final State Water Plan

### **Project Background:**

It is the intent of the legislature that the Interstate Stream Commission, in collaboration with the Office of the State Engineer and the Water Trust Board, prepare and implement a comprehensive state water plan. (72-14-3.1(A)) The first State Water Plan was completed in 2003.

The State Water Plan Act shall be periodically reviewed, updated and amended in response to changing conditions (72-14-3.1(H)). By requiring a regular update process every five years, the Legislature has recognized that the State Water Plan is an evolving document.

As such, the Interstate Stream Commission will develop the 2018 New Mexico State Water Plan in response to changing conditions, including those discussed in the 2013 State Water Plan Review and additional changes since then.

### **Objective of the State Water Plan:**

The State Water Plan Act (72-14-3.1(B)) states the following purpose.

The state water plan shall be a strategic management tool for the following purposes:

- (1) promoting stewardship of the state's water resources
- (2) protecting and maintaining water rights and their priority status;
- (3) protecting the diverse customs, culture, environment and economic stability of the state;
- (4) protecting both the water supply and the water quality;
- (5) promoting cooperative strategies, based on concern for meeting the basic needs of all New Mexicans;
- (6) meeting the state's interstate compact obligations;
- (7) providing a basis for prioritizing infrastructure investment; and

- (8) providing statewide continuity of policy and management relative to our water resources

In addition to the primary objectives listed in the statute, establishing some goals and /or priorities in conjunction with other agencies regarding each of the eight listed purposes should be considered.

**Guiding Principles:**

- The State Water Plan is a goal-oriented, living document, reflecting changing conditions, reviewed and updated every five years.
- It provides guidance to inform new and existing state or regional level policy, programs, and projects. Additionally, it provides examples of successful water planning projects or initiatives that can be effectively replicated or refined at the grassroots and local level.
- The State Water Plan provides relevant, systematic, watershed-wide, local-knowledge-based strategies and cases studies for water conservation and water sharing during times of drought and shortage.
- A public involvement plan for the State Water Plan will also be developed to solicit input, to encourage community participation, and to ensure an accurate reflection of today's water topics, which will inform goals and strategies for planning over the next five years.
- The State Water Plan intends to unify and increase coordination among the 16 planning regions, state agencies and tribes, pueblos and nations.
- The State Water Plan serves as a catalyst for future funding of water projects and provides information to support projects that align with the State's water policies at the grassroots, local, state and federal levels.
- The State Water Plan is significantly informed by the 16 most recent Regional Water Plans and embraces the key water issues and key strategies for regional collaboration.
- The State Water Plan does not change or create any existing laws, regulations, or requirements.
- The Interstate Stream Commission Planning staff continues to engage with water stakeholders to identify water issues, establish goals, and recommend implementation strategies.

## **Consultation:**

### *Tribal Consultation*

The State Water Plan Act states the Interstate Stream Commission and the Office of the State Engineer shall consult directly with the governments of Indian nations, tribes and pueblos to formulate a statement of policy and process to guide:

- 1) Coordination or integration of the water plans of Indian nations, tribes and pueblos located wholly or partially within New Mexico with the state water plan; and
- 2) Final adjudication or settlement of all water rights claims by Indian nations, tribes and pueblos located wholly or partially within New Mexico. (72-14-3.1 (E)).

### *Government Agencies*

The State Water Plan Act says that the plan will be developed in collaboration with the Office of the State Engineer and in consultation with other government agencies as appropriate. (72-14-3.1(C)).

State agencies to be consulted with:

- New Mexico Environment Department
- New Mexico Department of Agriculture
- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

State agency coordination and collaboration during the development of the State Water Plan is valuable as it will contribute to developing a State Water Plan that is meaningful to a variety of users, particularly for government agencies investing in water.

## **Utilization of the State Water Plan:**

The legislature requires that the ISC prepare, adopt and implement a State Water Plan. (72-14-3.1(A),(C),(G)). The ISC adopted the original State Water Plan in 2003 and is now in the process of reviewing, updating and amending that plan as required by the State Water Plan Act. (72-14-3.1 (H)).

The 2018 New Mexico State Water Plan serves as a strategic tool for guiding water management decisions. Once finalized and adopted, the ISC will work toward employment of the plan statewide as a framework for assisting with these types of decisions. Goals are set forth but the process of determining how to meet those objectives should be decided by those who can implement the strategies. The ISC itself is not responsible for meeting those goals, but rather for insuring those who can carry forth goals and objectives are aware of them as well as the tools discussed and work outlined in the plan.

## **Customer Benefits:**

- Provides tools to support management of state's water resources
- Identifies issues and data gaps to enable the development of better information
- Highlights New Mexico's need for water, making it unavailable to Texas or other states
- Identifies the need for funding for water infrastructure

- Identifies the need for funding to continue to do water planning
- Legislature may use the State Water Plan as tool to make decisions about water management priorities and or investments

**Supporting Documents:**

While the Charter provides a high-level description and framework for the State Water Plan, it also identifies the need to develop other supporting documents to provide detailed information describing how to develop specific components or processes related to the State Water Plan. The following documents need to be developed to complement the State Water Plan Charter:

1. Table of Contents for the State Water Plan
2. Strategy for integrating the Regional Water Plans into the State Water Plan
3. Public Involvement Plan
4. Comparative Analysis of State Water Planning Efforts in Seven Western States
5. Internal Work Plan for the development of the State Water Plan

**Estimate Start Date for planning for the State Water Plan:** November 2016

**Estimated End Date to complete State Water Plan:** June 2018, no later than December 2018