

**MINUTES OF THE
2,233rd REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

MARCH 9, 2026

Directors having been duly notified; Chairman Kelly called the regular meeting to order at 3:03 pm. The following Directors and Staff were present:

DIRECTORS		STAFF	
John P. Kelly, Chair	Present	Jason Casuga	Chief Engineer/CEO
Colin T. Baugh, Vice Chair	Present	Lorna Wiggins	General Counsel
Brian Jiron, Director	Present	Jeff Wechsler	Chief Water Counsel
Stephanie Russo Baca, Director	Present	Pamela Fanelli	Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
J. Chris Lopez, Director	Present	Eric Zamora	Director of Technical Services
Micheal T. Sandoval, Director	Present	Christine Nardi	Director of Human Services
Karen Dunning, Director	Present	Amanda Molina	Director of Communications
		Casey Ish	Director of Lands & Conservation

The following names of individuals were interested viewers, callers and/or participants:

Anne Marken, MRGCD	Joe Maez	Chris Sichler
Matt Martinez, MRGCD	Paula Sichler	Vincent Sanchez
Richard DeLoia, MRGCD	Rick Miera, Corrales	Bern Miera, Corrales
Cecilia Howard, Corrales	Mike Gadler, Los Padillas	Mel Knight, Corrales
Angel Madera, MRGCD	Jason Howard, Corrales	Jerome Cordova, Bosque
Frank Reinow, Los Ranchos	Jorge Garcia, CESOSS	Laurie Stout, Corrales
Josh Gamboa, MRGCD	Henry Romero	John Edward, Los Ranchos
Herman Trujillo	Santiago Maestas, SVRAA	Joe Sanchez
Nat Chakeres, OSE	Hannah Riseley-White, ISC	Luke Smith, Wilson & Co
Sharon Wirth, ISC	Sharon Kindel, OSE	Angelina Jimenez, MRGCD
Troy Howard, Corrales	Antoinette Ramos, MRGCD	

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Frank Reinow, Village of Los Ranchos Trustee, led the Pledge of Allegiance at today's meeting.

Chairman Kelly declared a quorum, and the meeting was publicly noticed. This meeting was a hybrid meeting. Rollcall votes will not be necessary for regular motions.

AGENDA ITEM NO.2 - APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA .

Jason Casuga informed the Board that the Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Indian Affairs would not be in attendance, so he asked to strike Item 9.

See also Appendix I.

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA WITH THE ABOVE CHANGES**. Seconded by Director Dunning. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 - CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Consideration/Approval of Payment Ratification – February 2026**
- b. **Consideration/Approval of February 2026 Invoice for Wiggins, Williams & Wesenberg, PC**
- c. **Consideration/Approval of February 2026 Invoices for Spencer Fane LLP**
- d. **Consideration/Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting – February 9, 2026**
- e. **Memo on MRGCD Approved Licenses for February 2026 (For Informational Purposes Only)**

Director Dunning asked about the approved licenses. She asked if Western New Mexico Communication are paying the new rates.

Mr. Ish answered yes.

Director Lopez made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA**. Seconded by Director Russo Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 - CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF PROCLAMATION ACKNOWLEDGING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ROSS ENGINEERING LINEAGE AND THE ROSS HOWARD COMPANY AND FORMALLY THANKING MS. CECILIA MARTINEZ HOWARD FOR HER PRESERVATION EFFORTS OF HISTORIC SURVEYS AND RECORDS - Doug Strech, Systems and Data Integration Program Manager

Mr. Strech asked for approval of the proclamation acknowledging the historical significance of the Ross Engineering lineage and the Ross Howard Company. He thanked Ms. Martinez Howard for her preservation efforts of the historic surveys and records. He noted that through this effort with Ms. Cecilia Howard, along with her sons Troy and Jason Howard, and the MRGCD's own effort, a significant portion of the historic surveys and records have been reviewed and preserved.

Chairman Kelly asked Mr. Strech to read the proclamation.

See Appendix II.

Mr. Strech presented the proclamation to Ms. Martinez Howard, Troy Howard, and Jason Howard.



Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROCLAMATION**.
Seconded by Director Lopez. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Ms. Martinez Howard thanked her sons, who suggested they donate all the maps, Mr. Casuga, and Mr. Strech. She shared they distributed the maps to several agencies.

Chairman Kelly thanked Ms. Martinez Howard and her family.

Director Dunning stated they had two trustees from the Village of Los Ranchos that were not one of agencies mentioned, but they were interested in getting some of those documents. She said Mr. Strech said he would look into that.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 - REPORT ON THE 2026 NM LEGISLATIVE SESSION - John Thompson, MRGCD Lobbyist

Mr. Thompson gave a report on the 2026 New Mexico Legislative Session. He said they had 688 bills introduced, but only 368 germane, which translated into a higher than normal 20% pass rate. He stated the governor has until March 11th to act on legislation that was signed, and anything not acted upon will be considered a pocket veto. He shared that as of an hour ago, she acted on 48 of 74 bills passed, but no action on the budget, capital outlay, or the omnibus tax package that passed. He expressed several funding issues that were pursued this year, as well as some water policy related measures. He voiced that their primary issue was seeking funding directly in the budget for Bosque management projects, which they were successful in doing, as there was \$7 million in House Bill 2 for Bosque management purposes. However, there were changes made when House Bill 2 made it to Senate to that language and there an increase from \$7 million to \$9 million, as well as language dealing with river channel maintenance in the Main Stem and tributaries of the Rio Grande in partnership with ISC. He stated there is nothing more challenging than trying to get a direct appropriation in a budget bill and they were successful in doing that. He noted they got an extension to 2029 on the funding, with language opening a door to come back and access more funding in the future. He thanked the legislative allies that helped them get there, and said the District received \$200,000 for the Vecinos Del Bosque, which was fractional of what they requested but a really good start. Mr. Thompson said capital outlay was at the same level as last year, but there is a strong push on anything water related in different established programs. He voiced that House Bill 63, the annual Water Trust Board bill, passed, and House Bill 109 was passed and signed, which removes the legislative requirement for Water Trust Board projects until the end of 2029. He talked about House Bill 111, which increases the penalty for illegal use of water and is now \$3400 a day. That bill was passed and signed, and he noted it does not include over-diversion. He added he was watching House Bill 207, regarding rulemaking surrounding produced water, which was tabled, but he felt they will continue to see more discussion around potential uses for produced water. He also briefly talked about House Bill 37, the second rendition regarding manmade infrastructure failure and assessment of property taxation, Senate Bill 193, regarding acequia and ditch infrastructure transfers, and Senate Bill 145, dealing with audit changes for all state agencies, all of which failed or tabled. Mr. Thompson explained it was forecasted that entering into the Legislative Session they would see revenues plateau or drop as a result of lowering oil prices, which were set at \$57 a barrel, but now they are over \$120. He said \$20 million dollars was added to the New Mexico Match Fund, \$100 million to the Water Trust Board, \$10 million to the River Stewards Fund, and \$13 million to the Strategic Water Reserve.

Chairman Kelly asked about the makeup of the Water Trust Board members and who selects them.

Mr. Thompson's understanding was that it is a broad variety of people and believed the State Engineer appointed them but was not completely sure on that.

Chairman Kelly commented they have a big siphon going in Sandoval County, they are going to be awarding a contract for the Loretta Dr Project and did \$5 million in construction the last month. He expressed they are an agency that can take capital outlay and Water Trust Board grants and turn them into projects on the ground.

Mr. Casuga stated they got Bosque money, leaving it open for potential seeking additional funding, which resonates with a lot of the interim committees they went through. He voiced that he hopes they are turning their attention to a resource that needs to be protected but needs to continue to be invested in.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 - REPORT(S) FROM THE WATER OPERATIONS

a. Report on Water Supply Conditions - Anne Marken, River Operations & Telemetry

Ms. Marken gave the Board a water supply update. She voiced that snowpack in the basin relevant to Middle Valley water supply was at or below 50% of the 30-year median, and the further south they go the worse it gets. She shared the recent warm weather resulted in some low elevation snowmelt, resulting in 2.5 inches of snow water equivalent melting at the Rio Chama Sub Basin since February 24th. She noted the rate of melting slowed a little bit at the end of last week with the cooler weather, but she expects melting to resume with forecasted warmer temperatures. She displayed a graph from the NRCS Taos Powderhorn SNOTEL site, which is at higher elevations, with a snow water equivalent there holding stable but there is not a lot of moisture up there. She shared that river flows have increased with the recent low elevation snow melt, providing more water than anticipated for season startup. At the Otowi Gage, flows have increased by 200 CFS since February 24th, and the flow is measuring 800 CFS. She expressed that in April, when Colorado begins their irrigation season, the amount of water crossing the state will decrease, which will reduce Middle Valley water supply. Mr. Marken explained the river needs to remain connected prior to spring runoff peak to try to prevent multiple river channel drying events in the spring. She expects the Middle Valley could see initial river channel drying in mid to late April in the San Acacia Reach, and even without the Compact storage restrictions, the District likely would not have been able to store water due to the poor snowpack conditions and limited runoff expected from the Rio Chama. Based on current snowpack in the San Juan Basin, MRGCD expects to receive 30% of a full allocation, amounting to about 6200-acre feet, an equivalent of 8 days of a 400 CFS release. She said MRGCD will operate as a run of the river system for most of the season and irrigators should expect extended periods between irrigation deliveries after spring runoff and prepare to be in P&P only operations for some amount of time this summer. Ms. Marken stated the NWS one week forecast shows chances for precipitation for today and tomorrow, but the rest of the week is expected to be hot and dry. The seasonal outlook through May indicates above average temperatures and below average precipitation.

See also Appendix III.

Director Dunning commented there was an article in the Washington Post about a European weather prediction group saying they believe this year will be a major El Nino year. She asked if in an El Nino year they get more precipitation.

Ms. Marken responded that in La Nina years they typically have drier and warmer winters, and cooler and wetter winters in El Nino. She added they were moving into an ENSO-neutral pattern that she was optimistic about.

b. Report on Water Distribution - Matt Martinez, Irrigation Distribution Manager

Mr. Martinez reported on water distribution. He said ISOs returned from winter break on February 9th, and they participated in several days of structured training covering basic personnel and training rules, District history and mission, canal operations and water data, and water policy and irrigation recordkeeping. He stated at the annual ISO meeting, they discussed snowpack conditions, poor streamflow forecasts, what outlooks may mean for irrigation this season, and the importance of focusing on delivering water efficiently and equitable as possible, maintaining professionalism, and meeting organization expectations. They experienced a significant wind event on February 17th, that created challenges for canal preparation and had limited opportunities for ditch burning due to continued breezy conditions. He showed a short video to the Board capturing what their crews have been dealing starting up the system. He noted startup operations require a great deal of coordination and effort and acknowledged their field crews for their hard work, as well as division managers. He shared that they implemented a staggered startup plan moving south to north and the increased river flow allowed them to accelerate the startup in some locations. They charged a few critical path canals in the south, including west side of the Belen Division, Socorro Division, and southern parts of the Albuquerque Division, as well as incorporating the Corrales Service Area, and transitioned to the east side of Belen Division ahead of schedule. He said they anticipate ramping up diversions at Angostura to charge the Albuquerque Main Canal and several laterals in the upper part of the system at the end of the week. He stated they expect to make a wider push into the north Albuquerque system next week and may also bring portions of the Cochiti system online if conditions allow. Mr. Martinez shared it is normal to encounter setbacks as canals are charged and structures are tested under flow for the first time after several months being out of service, and this year has been no different. Crews are working diligently to make repairs and work to resume operations. He thanked Ms. Molina in always keeping the public informed on those things. He stated that irrigation will begin when they do not interfere with canal charging operations, and early snow melt and pre-spring runoff allowed them to accelerate canal charging, operate more canals concurrently, and open deliveries earlier than expected. However, supply conditions will likely tighten as they head into April. He said where water is available, ISOs are taking requests and contacting irrigators to determine who is ready to take water and right now conditions are allowing some flexibility in how they rotate water through the system as long as it does not delay irrigators waiting for water. They will do their best to get water to new seed when needed but cannot make any guarantees. He went over the MRGCD irrigator tips for the 2026 season the ISOs have been circulating to their irrigators.

See also Appendix IV.

Director Russo Baca thanked the crews for working really hard.

Director Jiron commented he had some farmers down south say there were guys asking for water that had last year's spring alfalfa planted or winter crops, as there was water in the system but they were not allowed to irrigate. He asked if it was possible to let them irrigate when the system is charged and it is passing by them.

Mr. Casuga responded when they are charging the system, the answer might be no, because they are trying to move enough water down to keep it charging. He said they went through a process in 2022 where they talked to the public about prioritizing new seed and winter wheat and he was told it was not his job to tell people have to farm. He stated that in the rotation process, they call and ask people if they want water when it is available. He shared a farmer has a right to say whether or not they think their crop needs it or not. He shared he learned his lesson from when they tried prioritizing new seed and new crop in 2022, and received public outlash they should not be doing that. He added this is the least ideal way to run the system, as it was designed to be able to store water, divert, and put water across more canals.

Vice Chair Baugh expressed it seems like they are in a pre-spring runoff. He asked if that meant after charge up, there would be a higher chance to have water and pressure that parcientes could irrigate. He asked him to speak to Bernalillo County on that.

Mr. Martinez answered he saw the early snowmelt as an opportunity to accelerate their startup plan and try to get water throughout the system a little earlier than anticipated based on February flows. He felt they owed it to their irrigators who are ready to make it available. However, the extra water now means water is not available later in the spring.

Chairman Kelly inquired if this year's crew of ISOs are made up of a lot of new ISOs.

Mr. Martinez responded a majority of their ISOs returned and are currently down two in Belen and one in Cochiti, but they have a lot of interest in those areas. He was encouraged by the attitude and effort he has seen from the team this year.

AGENDA ITEM NO.7 - REPORT(S) FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER/CFO - Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM

a. Report on the Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Report -Alan "A.J." Bowers, Carr Riggs & Ingram

Mr. Bowers gave the report on the Fiscal year 2025 Financial Report and audit for June 30, 2025. He said they did single audit compliance testing for each major federal program and tested for the compliance with NM State audit rule. He went over the timeline of the audit with the Board, noting the federal compliance supplement delays and deadline extensions to January 20, 2026 for the financial statement and February 9, 2026 for the single audit. He reminded the Board of the auditor's responsibility under the US & Government auditing standards, as well as management responsibility. He stated the independent auditor's report shows an unmodified opinion on the financial statements, so there were no areas where they could not form an opinion or obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence. They also found the financial statements were presented fairly in accordance with U.S. GAAP and there were no audit areas where an opinion could not be rendered. The GAGAS Report on Internal Control over Financial reporting and on compliance with other matters showed negative assurance and no findings noted. The Uniform Guidance Report on Major Program and Internal Control over Compliance showed an unmodified opinion.

See also Appendix V.

Director Russo Baca thanked Mr. Bowers for his time and work.

Chairman Kelly commented they have a clean audit once again, and he thanked Ms. Fanelli, Mr. Casuga, and their staff for their hard work. He thanked Mr. Bowers as well.

b. Report on Finance Committee Meeting, March 9, 2026 - Chairman Kelly, Vice Chairman Baugh, and Director Russo Baca

Chairman Kelly shared they had a Finance Committee Meeting before this board meeting where they discussed the Debt Policy and resolved questions the committee had with Ms. Wiggins present. They also looked at Resolutions M-03-09-26-236 and BA-03-09-26-112.

c. Consideration/Approval of Debt Policy

Ms. Fanelli explained the reason they created the Debt Management Policy was to set clear and practical guidelines for how MRGCD plans and manage long term obligations and it identifies the permitted uses of debt, affordability targets, maturity targets, and identifies the debt limit set in Article 73-16. She said it also clarifies the BOR contracts set in Article 18 are not subject to the debt limit and identifies a path for increasing a debt limit if needed. She noted the current debt limit is \$22.8 million. She added it identifies the processes for selling bonds as well.

Chairman Kelly voiced the \$22 million debt limit was established in the Master Plan of the District, and right now they are at about 40% of that, and there is a procedure to increase that, but they see no reason for that.

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY WITH THE DIRECTION TO THE CHIEF ENGINEER/CEO TO ENSURE IT IS UPDATED AS APPROPRIATE.** Seconded by Vice Chair Baugh. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

d. Consideration/Approval of Resolution M-03-09-26-236 Disposal of Obsolete Items

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION M-03-09-26-236 DISPOSAL OF OBSOLETE ITEMS.** Seconded by Director Dunning. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Director Dunning was glad they are donating some of this to the Valle Vista education project.

e. Consideration/Approval of Resolution BA-03-09-26-112 Adoption of Amended Budget for Fiscal Year 2026 (07-01-25 to 06-30-26)

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION BA-03-09-26-112 ADOPTION OF AMENDED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026 (07-01-25 TO 6-30-26.** Seconded by Director Dunning. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 - ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR (Comments are limited to three (3) minutes)

Joe Maez

Mr. Maez stated he lives next to the drainage ditch behind Wells Fargo in Bosque Farms and their neighborhood is having a problem with the drainage ditch that clogs up around every two months that has been going on for the last 10 or more years. He explained it starts clogging one month after the crews come out and clean it out. He said the drainage ditch overflowed a few years ago. He expressed h when it clogs up 2 or 3 feet from the top, it causes a terrible stench for the neighborhood with the stagnate water. He added that sometimes children start playing next to the drainage ditch and the water gets 6 to 7 feet high, and he worries they may fall in and would have a hard time getting out. Another problem is the ditch banks are deteriorating badly, which could be a danger to vehicles passing by. He believes when they replaced the culvert around 15 years ago, they may have left the culvert too high, as it did not clog up often before that. He suggested to Director Jiron previously that fixing that would save the Conservancy thousands of dollars.

Chairman Kelly voiced he would speak with Director Jiron and they will speak with their division manager down there regarding that.

Jerome Cordova

Mr. Cordova commented there are rumors that where they are allotted and guaranteed 3-acre feet of water, there is a district out there with 4-to-4.5-acre feet, so he was not sure they were not the same. He owns property off of Feeder 3, and said they are doing a great job with the construction off of Feeder 3, but he noticed the property to the north has encroached the easement of the Conservancy District. He stated he has been cleaning it a little at a time because people have been parking there and trying to break into his property, but now it is turning into a little park. He asked if the Conservancy was interested in selling it or allowing him to finish cleaning it and fence it and letting MRGCD maintain the easement to keep people away from there. He added he also owns a property off of Willow Way and the Belen Drain, where there is a barbed wire fence that he would like to replace with pipe. He asked for permission to do that.

Chairman Kelly stated Mr. Ish would be his primary contact on that, but they will look at the fence. He said they do not want to sell any right-of-way until the project is completely done down there.

Jorge Garcia

Mr. Maestas, CESOSS, discussed the Primera Agua event they will be hosting on March 29th, where they are having the Comanchitos do their dance, acequia music, and blessings. He said it will bring an opportunity to create a gateway for Atrisco and the communities and showcase the beautiful things the region has to show. He stated they are going to be presented a proposal of sorts to the partnership to think differently about economic development. He brought flyers and a concept paper going back to the agreement they have.

See also Appendix VI.

Santiago Maestas

Mr. Maestas, South Valley Regional Association of Acequias, expressed they participated in the Acequia Limpias on all five acequias, and he thanked the legislators from the South Valley for the \$75,000 appropriated for acequias in Bernalillo County. He shared they are initiating a water right transfer process from the Pajarito Acequia, and he passed out an information bulletin prepared by CESOSS on their behalf.

See also Appendix VII.

Vincent Sanchez

Mr. Sanchez expressed he was there to remind everyone that communication is a valuable skill for municipalities and his experience with MRGCD's communication has been very good. However, he has not witnessed municipality to municipality or utility communication, and his personal issues are adjacent and overlapping in those responsibilities of agencies. He explained that when a ditch bank has a hazard, MRGCD is responsible to fix the problem, but if a municipality does not enforce the zoning easement that affects MRGCD's access, it reduces the ability to do its required duties. He hoped people remember that as their ISOs or engineers are looking at drawings, they are able to see how the accesses are being affected.

John Edward

Mr. Edward, Los Ranchos resident and newly elected Board of Trustee Board Member, stated he heard El Vado was in dire need of construction and repair that has taken a long time, so he requested they make that a priority. He voiced they will be making a strong point moving forward that they want to be an active, engaged, participating partner regarding the land and water and that relationship. He said he would like to see the MRGCD come to their meeting and have a voice, and he does not want the land to be cut up and turned into pavement and have MRGCD lose relevance. He stated he shares the camaraderie and spirit of what the water, river, and ditches represent with serving a multipurpose factor of their community. He thanked the Board for their time and service.

Chairman Kelly commented they value their relationship with the Village of Los Ranchos and they can certainly improve things.

Dave Montoya

Mr. Montoya shared it is a unique situation for the volunteer group to follow up on the Old Chamisal clearing, as it is an MRGCD acequia and the work was supposed to start in February, but things were delayed. He asked what the status was on that. He stated they formed a group that will take it on and the planting on the MRGCD ditch, as well as a little extension on the MRGCD ditch. They will connect to an area of 4 or 5 acres, where they intend to plant with native grasses and utilize the silt and clay. He said they are hoping to get the work done by mid-summer or very early fall so they can utilize some of the late runoffs and get everything planted. He commented that he farms about 12 acres. He was told when they first planted, they are prioritizing the water delivery for fall planting and winter wheat, but now he has heard something a little bit different. He voiced that it is very important, as they will lose their crop.

Chris Sichler

Mr. Sichler talked about the 3-acre foot on-farm delivery. He thanked the state engineer and director from ISC for taking the time to come to the meeting and listen to them. He objected to the 3-acre foot number, as they have historically been delivered more water than that. He said they were tasked with putting water to beneficial use and they have done that, and short of adjudication they do not know what that number is and have to adjudicate to figure it out. He noted that in the lower valley, they had a similar number of 3.5-acre feet on-farm delivery, but after adjudication they wound up with 4.5-acre feet and pecan farmers would up with 5.5-acre feet by showing they put that water to beneficial use. He felt they would be able to show similarly in this valley that they used more than that. He added that in the lower valley, they had a higher return flow given to them for on-farm deliveries, which he could also see happening here. He acknowledged there was a big push because of the Compact debt and trying to solve this problem, but farmers are not the problem. He mentioned in 1953, they had a 500,000-acre foot debt to Texas, so they built the Low Flow Conveyance Channel, which paid back that debt and the District was putting more agriculture into production and it did not effect it. He

suggested fixing the river system and using the channel to fix the problem now, and that the state engineer and ISC must have MRGCD's back on that.

Chairman Kelly commented that Mr. Sichler sent a letter to BOR, which he read. He asked if Mr. Sichler wanted to mention any highlights from that to the members who may not have read it.

See also Appendix VIII.

Mr. Sichler voiced that he sent it to the acting commissioner of BOR. He believed if they could use the channel to get certain waters through it, they could at least stop increasing the debt to Texas. He felt with the administration they have right now in place, they are saying they want to get things done, so he wanted to write a letter and had a lot of people sign onto it who agreed with it. He hoped it helps the District in their negotiations.

Martin Haynes

Mr. Haynes voiced this whole issue is rising because of the debt, and the state is starting to realize they have problems, as they are the ones responsible for the debt. He noted this board and irrigators with MRGCD should not be the ones carrying that burden. He mentioned House Bill 111, which increases the penalty to \$3000 a day. He said there are illegal diversions going on by the federal government and asked them to think what would happen if that got levied upon the federal government and what the state would end up with. He stated this board as a Conservancy District is not responsible for meeting any Compact requirements, especially upon the irrigators. He pled with the board to remember what they are here for and that they meet the mission in the mission statement and the statutes levied upon this board.

Michael Gadler

Mr. Gadler, Los Padilla resident, voiced they have irrigated the area for a long time and always done it the same way with flood irrigation. He said some parts of the world have changed their method irrigation to a modernized drip irrigation, but he did not see many experiments happening here in this part of the MRGCD. However, there are pecan orchards that could be benefited by that kind of irrigation. He noted that study needs to be done and this organization can do that. He added there is \$100 million available in Santa Fe for a project on the ground just like a drip irrigation would be in this area, and MRGCD are the people to do that.

Cecilia Rosacker

Ms. Rosacker, Lemitar irrigator, commented she wanted to better understand what is happening on the Lemitar Main Canal with the linings that have become compromised and when they will be able to get water and how the issue will be addressed.

Chairman Kelly responded they are taking action to restore that section of channel to an earth line channel and deliver water as soon as they can. He stated they had a little construction hiccup but they will get water delivered down there in spite of some of the detachment of that liner.

Chairman Kelly

Chairman Kelly stated they solicited for people to apply to be on the Urban Advisory Committee and the response was not as robust as they hoped, so they extended the application time for another month. He said they are looking for 8 to 10 people to help with those issues.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 - UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE ENGINEER - Elizabeth Anderson, State Engineer, Hannah Riseley-White, Interstate Stream Commission Director

Nat Chakeres presented on the 3-acre foot Farm Delivery Requirement (FDR). He explained the reason they talk about pre-1907 water rights is because in 1907, the water code went into effect, making it so that anybody wanting to start diverting water after that needed a permit from the state engineer. He said in 1918, they set by regulation a net duty of 3-acre feet per water per acre as the cap for surface deliveries as demonstrated by state, private, and government tests. He stated that in 1928, MRGCD's report of the chief engineer acknowledged the 3-acre feet and incorporated that.

See also Appendix IX.

Mr. Chakeres discussed the comments and questions made during Items from the Floor. He felt the speakers all made excellent points. He said the comment that some people have been delivered more may be the case, as MRGCD has considerable discretion to deliver waters to its lands in its statute that is very complex, and the state engineer has never regulated on-farm deliveries in the MRGCD system and do not plan to do that. He said if they do not get out of the Compact debt, they will track every acre foot that gets delivered and have conversations with MRGCD if it looks like they will get close to the 200,000-acre foot delivery, but they are not imminently violating that at this point. He understood some farmers to the south have been adjudicated larger farm delivery requirements, and it is true the farm delivery requirement will be determined in an adjudication. He expressed the State's position for surface water deliveries at 3-acre feet per acre was the only lawful allowable FDR that ever existed, so any further deliveries to land would not establish a higher water right. He noted that in EBID, the delivery on land for surface water is 3-acre feet per acre, and the reason some people are hearing higher numbers is because the state engineer did not declare the ground water basin down there at the same time they declared it here.

Director Russo Baca asked for clarification that in the Middle Valley, they have a supplemental groundwater permit but it is still at the 3-acre feet limit.

Mr. Chakeres answered yes.

Chairman Kelly asked if he was saying they cannot stack a groundwater right on the surface water right.

Mr. Chakeres responded if they want to move a water right from one area to stack in another place where they are not taking the delivery from the move from area, that is a possibility depending on the details, but if someone has a supplemental well, the total amount they can get from both surface and groundwater is 3-acre feet per acre. He added if it is a pre-basin well, they would look at the water use up to the basin declaration date to see if they went over the 3-acre feet.

Vice Chair Baugh asked Mr. Chakeres to broadcast dialed down definitions of consumptive depletion uses and what those ratings can be, as when they get the delivery, there is a ratio number of used and a ration number of returned.

Director Russo Baca also inquired if he would explain the hydrographic survey.

Mr. Chakeres answered the FDR is a total amount of water at the farm headgate that is delivered, and of that amount some of the water gets returned to the system, depending on the crops, climate, soils, and how level the farmland is. He noted the same reports generating the 3-acre foot FDR showed an average consumptive use of 2.1-acre feet, so .9 was on average

District wide going back into the system. He said if a water right is transferred from Ag to a fully consumptive use type of permit, they only allow that municipality to pump 2.1-acre feet.

Vice Chair Baugh asked him to speak to the fact that sometimes the flow return is higher than .9 depending on the crop or soil.

Mr. Chakeres responded that is true, as sometimes it could be higher or lower.

Mr. Casuga shared it is worthwhile to look at A while they look at C. He said at the time, the total annual consumptive use of the river water was 3.9-acre feet per acre irrigated, but that includes river losses. He stated if the State is jumping onto 3-acre feet per acre, will they have a conversation about what the river consumes now.

Mr. Chakeres answered they need to have that conversation. He agreed they need to use the Low Flow effectively and make sure the river consumption does not rob them of whatever they are trying to deliver to Elephant Butte.

Mr. Chakeres voiced they are available to talk to anybody and they are happy to answer any questions people have any time.

ISC Director Riseley-White appreciated the Board for having them and their ordering of the agenda. She went over updates and ongoing initiatives. She voiced they are very concerned heading into the season with what they are seeing, and she noted five of the hottest years on record occurred in the last eight years. She stated they are at 124,000 feet of debit and are expecting to incur about 8,000-acre feet of additional debit for last year. She added that the engineer advisors from the three states will meet this month to finalize that accounting, and the Rio Grande Compact Commission Meeting will be on April 17th, in Santa Fe. She thanked District staff for more active engagement with the State over the last several months to plan and prepare for conditions. She shared they were excited to receive the \$9 million for Bosque Management in partnership with MRGCD. She clarified to the extent they are encouraging and actively looking towards the metering order water use, it is imperative they double down at the state on system losses. She added they will need to have all tools available to them and be creative in crafting and implementing solutions given where they are headed. She expressed they have increased data collection throughout the District in the last several years.

State Engineer Anderson reiterated the appreciation for the partnership they have with the District. She said in regard to the metering order, they are still working on the timeline and extent, but they will be back with more information to share on that. She explained they cannot manage what they cannot measure, so having that data will help with that. She shared they got funding this year from the legislature for measurement and metering. She talked about the legislative session outcomes, including the budget and enforcement bill. She stated they got funding for staffing, and they will really be focusing on the administration piece. She added they are very excited to get the Enforcement Bill through, which will provide more ability for them to manage against illegal water diversions.

Mr. Casuga commented that in a previous year, there was language put in to differentiate between whether or not they over-irrigate and don't have a water right versus if they over-irrigate and they do to protect water right users from broad civil penalties versus those who do not have water rights. He asked the state engineer to go over that.

State Engineer Anderson stated one of the main areas of interest for the bill was whether or not they could enforce against people who have legal water rights who just over-diverted, and the

answer is no. She said the bill puts into statute a practice they had for years of just requiring those water rights to repay in water instead of paying in monetary penalties. She said that protects people with water rights and the point of the legislation was to conserve the resource.

State Engineer Anderson voiced they were excited to get funding for Lower Rio Grande settlement implementation for the Texas v. New Mexico settlement during this legislative session, and there is a lot of work underway south of Elephant Butte to implement the settlement. The legislature showed their support for that through their funding. She stated that for regional planning, they got more funding from the legislature to continue the important work happening with the Water Security Planning Act, as well as funding for the 50-year Water Action Plan. She added the Strategic Water Reserve was supported this year and they had the implementation of Indian Water Right Settlements.

Director Russo Baca asked them to recap on the Middle Rio Grande metering order, as she wanted people to be clear on what is being metered.

Mr. Chakeres answered it will just be groundwater metering and does not do anything about what the District is metering.

Director Sandoval asked if that would apply to tribal lands.

State Engineer answered no.

Director Dunning inquired, since there are so many non-permitted wells, especially in the South Valley, will they make an effort to identify those and make sure they go through a permitting process after the fact and then have them be metered once they are permitted.

State Engineer responded ultimately yes, as their ongoing efforts will always be about identifying illegal diversions. She said there are more teeth against that now in the enforcement bill, and they will be working with people to try and make sure the wells out there are permitted.

Vice Chair Baugh commented it was encouraging to see them come back with some answers to an important question. He wondered how they could work better together in a proof-of-concept way with the conjunctive use between ground and surface to get the net 3-acre feet. He noted it would be nice in times like this to have some groundwater to come offset some of that. He said it would be interesting to collaborate with them on how the Middle Valley could come up with projects on that.

State Engineer Anderson responded she would be interested to talk more about that.

Vice Chair Baugh added the farmers know the area really well down south and are excited to be speaking about creative ways to get the debt paid down. He reiterated the use of the Low Flow strategically around monsoons to capture water heavily deposited. He asked for a brief synopsis of how they calculate the debt.

ISC Director Riseley-White said they would be happy to come back and give a longer presentation on the Compact itself, but it is not a set amount of water that stays the same every year. She stated what they owe to Elephant Butte is a Compact obligation that is determined by what flows pass the Otowi Gage, so sometimes higher flow years are sometimes the hardest for them to meet their deliveries under. But when there are really low flows with high demands and riparian evapotranspiration, they have a lot of challenges getting water to Elephant Butte.

Chairman Kelly expressed that in January, they were in the middle of a comment period on the Bureau's project that nobody liked. He asked if they made comments and if they are in line with the MRGCD.

ISC Director Riseley-White responded it was important they were paying attention to that specific project. She said the federal government dedicated \$143 million to the first phase of that project to improve the river channel in the San Acacia Reach. She said their comment to pay close attention to the Compact implications of the project and hit a pause button to do that, and based on the request from them, MRGCD, and EBID, there was an extension of time for public comment. She stated that also provided an opportunity to have more intensive conversation with Reclamation about the analysis they did and how important it is to ensure their EIS process reflects and calls out the need to look at Compact deliveries to build it into the adaptive management protocol for the project. She felt they engaged in some productive conversation with Reclamation that she is hopeful will result in a better plan for the work to come.

Chairman Kelly thanked them for coming and stated that sometime mid-summer might be a good time to have a presentation on the Compact.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10 - REPORT(S) FROM THE CHIEF PROCUREMENT OFFICER - Richard DeLoia

a. Consideration/Approval for Award of Investment Services/Advisor

Mr. DeLoia presented for approval for the Investment Advisory Services RFP. He said requests for proposals were advertised on February 1st and 5th, and three were received by the deadline on February 24th. The Committee ranked all three firms and recommended award to Government Portfolio Advisors on a one-year contract not to exceed four years per the New Mexico State Procurement code.

Chairman Kelly expressed he is on the selection committee and this firm has been advising them the last four years and have good knowledge of MRGCD, and the value of the contact is around \$12,000.

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO APPROVE AWARD A CONTRACT TO GPA FOR INVESTMENT SERVICES**. Seconded by Director Russo Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Chairman Kelly noted Director Sandoval had to leave the meeting due to cultural duties at the Pueblo.

b. Consideration/Approval of Loretta Road/Alameda Intersection Improvements

Mr. DeLoia presented for approval for the Loretta Road/Alameda Intersection Improvements Project, which was funded through Capital Appropriation Grants G3731, G3729, and G3757. MRGCD staff recommended award to Star Paving for \$982,234.38, with tax. He stated Star Paving's bid was listed with an incorrect tax rate of 6.3125%, but they were notified and accepted the correct tax rate of 6.1875%. He said the award was recommended by Bohannan Huston.

Director Dunning understood engineer's estimates seldom come in what the bid is, but said that was a large difference. She asked why it came in so much higher than anticipated.

Mr. Zamora could not answer specifics on that, as they only had one bidder with no comparative values. He noted the original bid with the single bidder was much higher and they were able to negotiate the price down a little bit.

Chairman Kelly pointed out the engineer is looking at data going backwards to look at estimated unit prices and this contractor is looking forward for the next six months during the course of the job and probably wishing he put a lot more in there for diesel fuel. He said Star Paving is qualified to do this type of work.

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE AWARD FOR THE LORETTA ROAD/ALAMEDA INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT**. Seconded by Director Lopez. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11 - REPORT(S) FROM THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT - Christine L. Nardi, MBA

a. Introduction of MRGCD New Hires

Ms. Nardi introduced MRGCD's new hires and staff changes, including a new Human Resources Coordinator in the General Office, a mechanic transfer from the ER&T Division to the Belen Division, a new medium equipment operator and field maintenance tech, and a new field maintenance tech in the Albuquerque Division.

b. Employee Recognition

Ms. Nardi voiced the employee she was going to recognize had to leave and asked if they could table it for next month so they can acknowledge her in person and present her with a certificate.

Chairman Kelly agreed and suggested putting it towards the front of the agenda.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12 - REPORT(S) FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LANDS & CONSERVATION - Casey Ish

a. Update on River Mile 163 Restoration and Public Access Discussion

Mr. Ish expressed the memo contains a staff recommendation, site map, and photos collected by Mr. Padilla. He shared that at the last meeting, a constituent came during public comment with concerns about vehicular access to the River Mile 163 Corridor post-construction and post-planting and restoration work. He said they sat down with Right-of-Way staff and Bosque Management staff and came up with a staff recommendation to create a temporary soft barrier to some of the recently replanted areas to hopefully mitigate some of those vehicular problems without discouraging foot traffic. He noted the memo currently just called out one location, but they identified two other locations north and south, with a total of 1000 feet temporary fencing to be installed parallel to the levee on the west side of the river and across points where BOR had ingress and egress locations. He hoped that would encourage people with a Bosque access key to refrain from driving within the Bosque in those areas; however, once the

river dries, they will lose control of that area from anyone driving up the river into that site.

b. Consideration/Approval of Tract D1B1 & D1B2 being designated as Surplus Lands - Mike Padilla, ROW Supervisor

Mr. Padilla explained that staff are requesting their consideration and approval to deem a 16- by 980-foot strip of land, approximately 1.33 acres, as surplus. In December 2025, the MRGCD Mapping Team received a plat for review in Valencia County, and the Right-of-way Department identified an existing fence encroaching. He said the 16-foot strip was a part of the Gabaldon Lateral Extension, and the current property owner requested the District sell him the property. After looking into it, they identified it is not needed for the operation and maintenance of the Los Chavez Interior Drain and no other partner agencies reached out for a trail system. Therefore, they are asking for Board approval to declare it surplus and authorize staff to initiate the land sell process.

Chairman Kelly said it looked like the property owners title company missed something.

Mr. Padilla answered yes, the property owner said he did a title search but they did not go back the full 100 years they exist, only 50, and they did not find they had fee ownership within that 16-foot strip. He stated since they already have a survey hand, they would like to use that and got to the appraisal value and then sell it for the appraised value contingent on the DFA approval.

Chairman Kelly asked if the property owner would be dealing with his title company to make him square.

Mr. Padilla responded yes.

Mr. Casuga added they are following their documented disposal process.

Director Dunning commented it sounded like he wanted to buy the property because of the encroachment in the neighboring property. She asked if they would get reimbursed if decided not to buy it after the appraisal, and would they go back and get the encroachment removed.

Mr. Padilla stated before they issue a PO, they collect the funds from the landowner to start the appraisal process, but he if backs out, they will work with him to move the fence encroachment to the legal boundary.

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO APPROVE DECLARING D1B1 AND D1B2 AS SURPLUS LANDS**. Seconded by Director Russo Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 13 - REPORT(S) FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES - Eric Zamora, PE

a. Off Season Maintenance and Construction Updates

Mr. Angel Madera gave an update on the Socorro Main Canal Channel Lining Phase IIB Project. He stated the in-channel work was completed February 16th and substantial completion March 15th. He said currently billed to date is \$4,783, 632.42 and they are

finalizing change orders and last pay application. They completed 1.1 channel lining, turnout replacements, new long-crested weir, check structures, and the Rubicon gate installation at two headings.

Mr. Zamora gave an update about the failure at the concrete canvas at the Lemitar Main Canal. He said they saw some separation of the seams near the new weir within the concrete canvas. He stated right now they are doing what they can to get water back in the canal by Sunday/Monday and reached out to the contractor and looking for solutions. He added they have a proposal anticipated tomorrow for repair solutions, including the possibility of leaving a section unlined through the summer and doing a repair later on.

Director Dunning voiced concern this may fail in other places.

Mr. Zamora responded this is Phase II of the lining project, and Phase I and the test section they did two years ago are still holding up very well. He said they are going to investigate some circumstances that may have led to this specific failure, but they want to say at this point without a little more data. He assured them their focus is on a solution rather than blaming anyone for the failure.

Mr. Casuga pointed the circumstances here are unique in the distance of the fabric to a hydrologic structure with a lot of energy. He did not think they had seen anything like this across the rest of the project and this is not the first time putting it in; however, this is in proximity to a structure that produces a lot of energy as water moves through it. He said they may find the need to modify the design of the structure and leave more concrete in to let the energy out before transitioning.

Mr. Madera displayed photos of some of the structures put in. He then discussed the Belen Highline Canal Overflow Structure #2. He voiced they had substantial completion on February 18th and all concrete work was completed on February 10th. Billed to date is \$1,074, 065, and the new overflow structure was completed.

Ms. Antoinette Ramos updated the board on the Low-Flow Conveyance Channel Phase 2 Project. She said construction work was completed and they are currently working on closing out the project. She noted the original contract was \$6,209,717.50 and the final contract amount was \$6,490,217.50. She displayed a video showing the existing condition and the work that was ongoing for Phase 2.

Mr. Casuga expressed they will be finishing with the State's money and what they do not get done will be MRGCD crews and/or potential maybe future money from the state to keep going.

Chairman Kelly asked if the \$7 million from the state's scope was broad enough to allow them to work on extending this work.

Mr. Casuga responded they spent it all, as it was done with ARPA money. He added the new funding from this session was for the Bosque itself and the river conveyance piece was to the Rio Chama.

Ms. Ramos showed pictures before the dredging and mowing and end of project.

Vice Chair Baugh asked what boundary they stopped at.

Mr. Casuga explained they are not to San Antonio, but south of Socorro, so they still have a way to go, but the money got them really far. He added he will be motivating the state to be a long-term partner on this and will always advocate for more money, but this is a good opportunity for their crews to do continuous work and show how much they can get done. He stated if they use the Low Flow, it gets rehabilitated but they have to show they can maintain it. He added they are exploring options and thinking of new ideas to try to go forward, but he wants to show the state they are doing plenty of the work themselves while they are asking for the money.

Vice Chair Baugh asked if the maintenance would fall on MRGCD to maintain on what they just did.

Mr. Casuga answered yes, MRGCD entered into an agreement with the federal government to maintain it.

Ms. Ramos went over the Loretta Road Improvements Project. She said the opening was conducted on February 2nd, with one received bid, which was approved earlier in the meeting. She stated they will now work on pre-construction and get it going as soon as they can. In regard to the Feeder 2 Transmission Line Phase 1, all in-channel work was completed by February 23rd, and right now the AUI is working on the 36-inch pipe and completed the jack and bore off Jarales Road. She said looking ahead, they are looking to get the open trench off and going downstream.

Mr. Casuga asked if they were under the railroad with the jack and bore.

Ms. Ramos answered no, not yet.

Ms. Angelina Jiminez discussed the Atrisco Acequia Madre CBC Extension Phase 1 Project. She stated that Phase 1 was awarded to Lopez Precision for a contract amount of \$207,823.88, and they issued a notice to proceed on February 10th. She said they completed pouring concrete wingwalls and CBC side walls on March 4th. She stated that as of today, the forms are stripped, and the contractor needs to complete the backfill and channel reshaping so they can begin moving irrigation water through this section of the Atrisco Acequia.

Mr. Zamora added that their maintenance staff will be about doing cleanup in the area to make it presentable for the Primera Agua event on the 29th.

Ms. Jiminez recapped their division projects and show pictures of the complete culvert replacement off of the Cochiti East Main Canal, completed work on Tribal Road 7 in the Pueblo of Isleta, the work completed reshaping and dredging within the Albuquerque Riverside Drain, and a picture of crews working on replacing the Belen Wasteway.

See also Appendix X.

Chairman Kelly shared he received calls from the neighborhood around the Riverside Drain by the south diversion channel from people mad about the vegetation being disturbed, and he and Mr. Ish assured them they would do appropriate hydroseeding on there. He stated this is one of the deeper drains they have because it cuts through the historic alluvial fan of the Tijeras Arroyo, so it is an unusual spot with a 20-foot-deep cut before it gets down to the water level. He voiced they would problem hear more from people who liked it the way it was before, but it was a very inefficient drain that hardly

could convey 50 CFS from a primary feed to get water down to Isleta Pueblo. He asked them to tell Mr. Lopez they appreciate the effort they put in to get that culvert extension done and have it open up for irrigation season and the Acequia Madre Project.

b. Update on the Corrales Siphon Project

Mr. Zamora voiced they identified the issue with the conductor's casing and the piece of equipment being stuck inside, and they are moving forward with a solution to create a new pilot hole with a new conductor casing. He said that steel has been ordered and they are in the waiting period; however, in the meantime, on the Pueblo of Sandia side, work is complete with the minor improvements they could do. He is hoping to get the material by the end of March so they can be done installing the conductor casing by mid-April and potentially start the drilling operations by late April, and then a six-week period of pulling the pipe under the river.

Chairman Kelly asked if the contractor was making any claims for multiple mobilization.

Mr. Zamora responded there is still a lot of discussion to be had on that.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14 - REPORT(S) FROM THE CHIEF ENGINEER/CEO– Jason M. Casuga, PE

a. Update from Director of Communications - Amanda Molina

Ms. Molina voiced they have noticed questions from the general public on how their system works, so they made a video answering that and she shared that with the board. She noted that between that video and the charging video, they received over 11,000 views. She stated it has been interesting learning about the different modes of media their audience goes to for news and information. She shared the next topic they plan to tackle is what rotations look like and why water managers make the decisions they do. She expressed she would love to hear from the board members on questions they get.

Vice Chair Baugh suggested sending out the Irrigator Tips that Mr. Martinez showed via text, along with a link to the video.

Ms. Molina responded they made that in text version as well so the ISO could send those out but did not link to the video, but agreed that is a great idea.

Director Russo Baca commented that when she sends out an email about the meetings, she tried to imbed the video. She asked if there was a way to put their YouTube channel next to the other social media.

Ms. Molina stated YouTube can appear directly from their website, so when the videos are posted on the website, they do not have to go to another page. She added they have a call with the website people tomorrow to talk about highlighting those videos on their homepage so people do not have to dig around and find it.

Vice Chair Baugh shared it was important, especially in the hard season they are facing, to see the visuals of the charge up.

b. Report on Lower San Acacia Reach Improvement Project Technical Presentation and Discussion with USBR, March 2, 2026 - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO

Mr. Casuga stated MRGCD, State Engineer's Office, and EBID were able to communicate with the federal government, and he attended a highly technical presentation. He said work Reclamation is doing has shifted, so he felt the technical work is okay; however, the federal government still needs to update their EIS to contemplate Compact affects. He felt they were in a good spot, and right now they are on a timeline to respond to the EIS. He hoped they would see a direct Compact section added to the EIS and have an appendix section dedicated to the technical work he saw. He voiced making sure the Rio Grande Compact is contemplated in the EIS and adaptive management plan clears hurdles if something goes wrong. He met with the regional director when he was in town and they had a good conversation. He told him one of the biggest resources MRGCD can be to Reclamation is being the direct link to the users.

c. Report on the 2026 Land and Water Summit, March 5-6, 2026 - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO and Directors Sandoval and Russo Baca

Mr. Casuga expressed he was only able to attend the last afternoon, but he got to sit on a panel made up of other water professionals to answer questions about river drying. He expressed they needed to encourage the water management community to do community meetings and take every question available. He shared this was a conference and the questions were scripted so a lot of people did not get their questions answered. He was blown away by the expertise sitting on the panel, so they need to find a way to get that accessible to people to answer questions.

Director Russo Baca expressed they could have had that panel for two hours, as it was very good and had a great number of experts. She noted that Mr. Casuga did a great job.

d. Information on Upcoming Events:

1. **Primera Agua Event, March 29, 2026: Albuquerque, NM**
2. **5th Annual Acequia & Land Grant Education Project Pre-Conference Institute, April 8, 2026: Albuquerque, NM**
3. **Rio Grande Compact Commission Annual Meeting, April 17, 2026: Santa Fe, NM**
4. **2026 Water Leaders Workshop, April 20-22, 2026: Ruidoso, NM**
5. **Law of the Colorado River Annual Conference, May 18-19, 2026: Santa Fe, NM**
6. **2026 Next Generation Water Summit, June 11-12, 2026: Santa Fe, NM**

Mr. Casuga discussed the upcoming events.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 15 - REPORT(S) FROM THE MRGCD ATTORNEY(S) - Chief Water Counsel or General Counsel

MRGCD's Attorneys did not have any reports to share during open session.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 16 REPORT(S) FROM THE BOARD

See Appendix XI for written reports:

- a. **Report on Meeting NMISC, January 27, 2026 -Vice Chair Baugh**
- b. **Report on Meeting with Explora, February 4, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- c. **Report on Meeting with SIPI's Environmental and Biology Department, February 11, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh**

- d. **Report on the SVRAA Comisionado Meeting, February 16, 2026 - Director Russo Baca**
- e. **Report on Representative Vasquez Ag Advisory Group, February 17, 2026 - Director Russo Baca**
- f. **Report on the meeting with Maggie Hart Stebbins, Office of Natural Resources Trustee, February 18 - Director Russo Baca**
- g. **Report on Meeting with NMISC, February 19, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh and Director Russo Baca**
- h. **Report on Meeting with Amanda Molina, Director of Communications, Regarding APS School Board Presentation with Valle Vista Elementary, February 20, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- i. **Report on Meeting with Nancy Conrad and Conrad Institution, February 23, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- j. **Report on Follow Up Meeting with NMISC and Conrad Institution, February 24, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- k. **Report on Village of Corrales Council Meeting, February 24, 2026 - Director Lopez**

Director Lopez attended the meeting with Mr. Casuga, and Mr. Zamora gave an update on the siphon project and the water situation. He said most of the farmers appreciated the information but are still not sure if the completion date will be there.

- l. **Report on the Meeting with CESOSS regarding the Primera Aqua Event, February 27, 2026 - Director Russo Baca**
- m. **Report on RFP Committee Meeting, March 2, 2026 - Chair Kelly**

Refer to item 10a.

- n. **Report on Meeting with Valle Vista Elementary, March 3, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- o. **Report on Albuquerque Public Schools Board Meeting, March 4, 2026 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- p. **Report on the Rio Grande 6-Pueblo Coalition Meeting, March 5, 2026 - Director Jiron**

Director Jiron shared they appointed a new chairman and new vice-chair, but the secretary stayed the same. He said it was different having new members conduct the meeting but there were a lot of good and tough questions asked. It stated it was a good meeting and good turnout.

Chairman Kelly asked what the primary concerns were from the questions.

Director Jiron answered prior and paramount waters, storage, and another possible bypass coming at the beginning of April from BOR.

Director Russo Baca and Vice Chair Baugh submitted written reports labeled as Appendix XI.

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE REPORTS FROM THE BOARD**. Seconded by Chairman Kelly. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Chairman Kelly shared the Personnel Committee will get together to work through Mr. Casuga's evaluation like they did two years ago by bringing in board level goals and give

recommendations on it, as well as give other board members a chance to add input. They plan to wrap it up at the April meeting. He said they need to get together soon.

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 7:05 pm.** Seconded by Vice Chair Baugh. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED.**

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes
Director Lopez	Yes	Director Jiron	Yes

AGENDA ITEM NO. 17 EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. NMSA 1978 Open Meetings Act, Section 10-15-1(H)2
1. Limited Personnel Matters

b. NMSA 1978 Open Meetings Act, Section 10-15-1(H)7
1. Threatened or Pending Litigation

Vice Chair Baugh made the **MOTION TO GO BACK INTO REGULAR SESSION at 7:38 pm.** Seconded by Director Russo Baca. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED.**


Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes
Director Lopez	Yes	Director Jiron	Yes

Chairman Kelly expressed they will be scheduling a special meeting of the MRGCD Board of Directors for Monday, March 16th, at 10 a.m., with a regular session at the front and then Executive Session to further discuss the matters they previously discussed in tonight's Executive Session. No decisions were made at the meeting tonight.

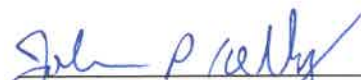
With no further comments, questions, or concerns, Chairman Kelly adjourned the meeting at 7:39 pm.

Approved to be the correct Minutes of the Board of Directors of March 9, 2026.

ATTESTED:



 Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM
 Secretary-Treasurer/CFO



 John P. Kelly, Chairman
 MRGCD Board of Directors

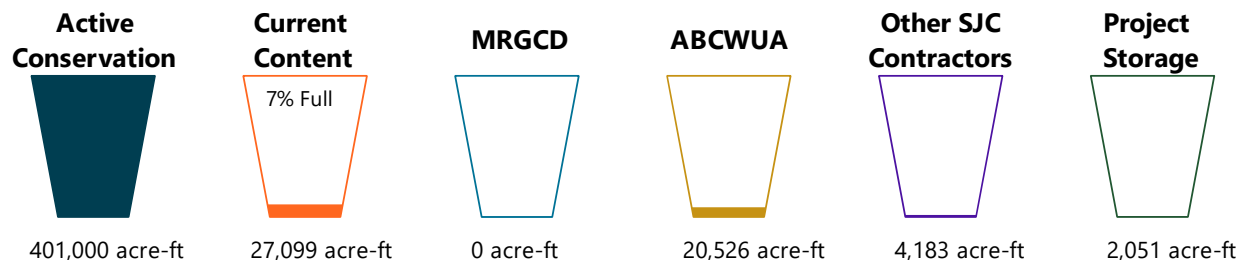
Appendix I Reservoir Storage Status



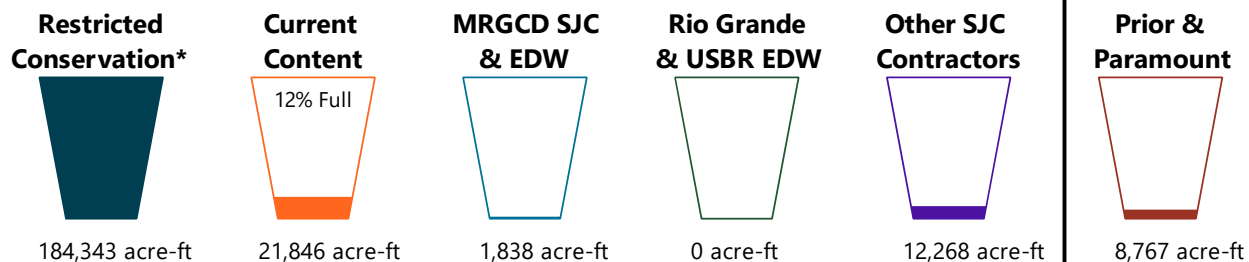
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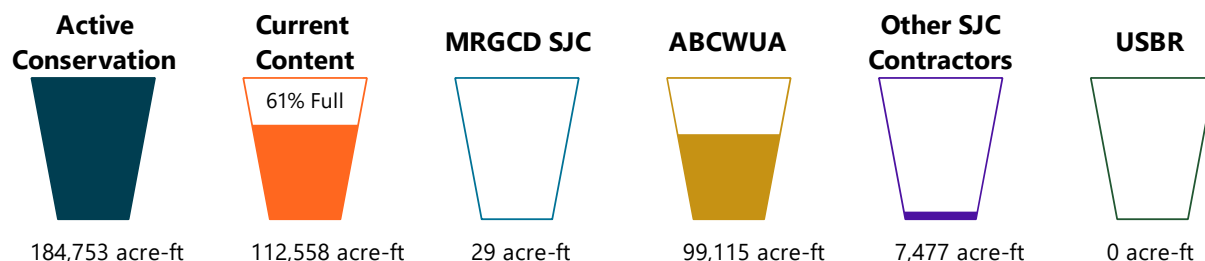
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El Vado



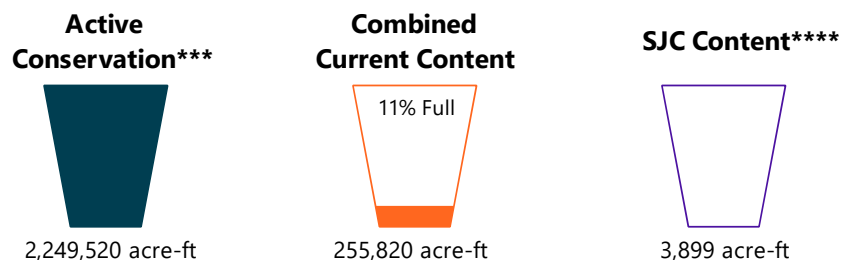
Abiquiu



Cochiti



Elephant Butte and Caballo



* Currently restricted to 25,678 acre-ft.
 ** Includes storage in both El Vado and Abiquiu
 *** Varies by time of year. Reported number is for 04/01 - 09/30.
 **** Max San Juan-Chama storage in Elephant Butte is 50,000 acre-ft.
 Total reservoir content may include incidental storage of water in transit.

MRGCD BOARD MEETING (3-4-2026)

1. Heron Summary

Content:	27,099	ac-ft	(3/4/2026)
Azotea Tunnel:	85	cfs	
Total SJ-C Inflow (2026):	668	ac-ft	
Currently Releasing:	0	cfs	
Current MRGCD Storage:	0	ac-ft	

2. El Vado Summary

Content:	21,846	ac-ft	(3/4/2026)
Rio Grande Storage:	7,739	ac-ft	
MRGCD SJ-C Storage:	1,838	ac-ft	
P&P:	7,739	ac-ft	
Other SJ-C Contractors:	12,269	ac-ft	
Current Release:	90	cfs	RG Inflow: 40 - 140 cfs

3. Abiquiu Summary

Content:	111,332	ac-ft	(3/4/2026)
MRGCD SJ-C Storage:	29	ac-ft	
P&P:	1,027	ac-ft	

Total Supplemental Water Released (2026): 0 ac-ft

Current Snow Water Equivalent for Water Year 2026 to 3/4 (% Median; NRCS SNOTEL)

Rio Chama Basin.....	52%
Upper Rio Grande Basin.....	59%
Sangre de Cristo Basin.....	34%
Jemez Basin.....	16%
San Juan River Basin.....	55%

- Storage of native inflow into both El Vado and Abiquiu Reservoirs for the prior and paramount lands of the Six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos began on January 1, 2026. Total storage is now about 8,766 ac-ft.
- Below average snowpack and warm temperatures are contributing to low elevation snowmelt and early runoff

Appendix II

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) has a long-standing role in the planning, development, and stewardship of land and water resources within the Middle Rio Grande Valley; and

WHEREAS, the historical survey and engineering records produced by the Ross Engineering lineage, which originated with Pitt Ross, New Mexico License No. 1, and continued through the Ross Engineering Office, Ross-Beyer Engineering Office, and the Ross Howard Company, document foundational land boundaries, infrastructure planning, and community development throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, Edmund Ross served as Engineer in charge of property surveys for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District during the preparation of the MRGCD's Official Plan, and his work is expressly acknowledged therein as contributing to the successful development of the Official Plan; and

WHEREAS, these historic survey records provide enduring evidentiary, historical, and interpretive value, offering insight into the early organization of land ownership, water conveyance systems, transportation corridors, and urban growth within the Middle Rio Grande Valley; and

WHEREAS, in July 2025, Cecilia Martinez Howard, wife of the late Ross Howard, contacted the MRGCD to ensure the careful preservation and continued stewardship of select historic survey materials associated with the Ross Howard Company; and

WHEREAS, the MRGCD, in collaboration with Cecilia Martinez Howard, together with her sons, Troy Howard and Jason Howard, undertook a careful review, evaluation, and digitization effort focused on preserving unique and irreplaceable survey records while improving long-term access for historical reference and public benefit; and

WHEREAS, the MRGCD is coordinating with the University of New Mexico's Center for Southwest Research and Special Collections at Zimmerman Library regarding the potential long-term archival placement of select original survey materials to ensure continued preservation and scholarly accessibility within the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, this effort reflects the MRGCD's commitment to responsible stewardship, historical awareness, and the preservation of records that illuminate the shared history of land, water, and community development in the Middle Rio Grande Valley;


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Board of Directors of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District hereby recognizes and expresses its appreciation for the contributions of the Ross Engineering lineage to the history and development of the region, and acknowledges Cecilia Martinez Howard, Troy Howard, and Jason Howard for their thoughtful stewardship and cooperation in preserving these historically significant survey records.

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED, that the MRGCD affirms its commitment to preserving, documenting, and facilitating appropriate long-term archival stewardship and appropriate public access to these materials as part of its ongoing responsibility to honor and protect the historical foundations of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.

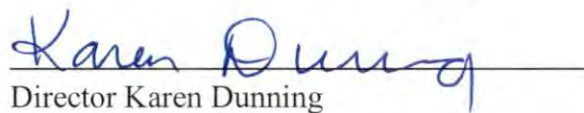
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Board of Directors of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District has caused this Proclamation to be adopted on this 9th day of March, 2026.



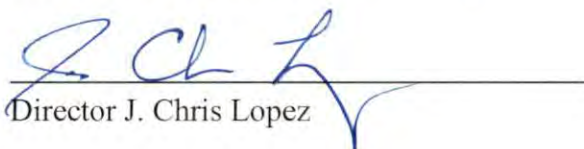
John P. Kelly
Chairman, Board of Directors



Vice Chairman Colin T. Baugh




Director Karen Dunning



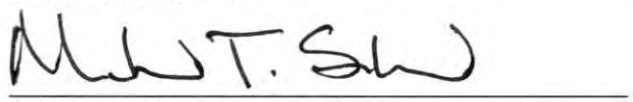
Director J. Chris Lopez



Director Stephanie Russo Baca



Director Brian Jiron



Director Michael T. Sandoval



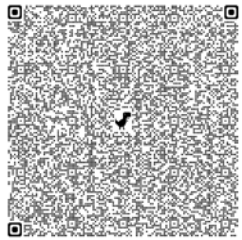
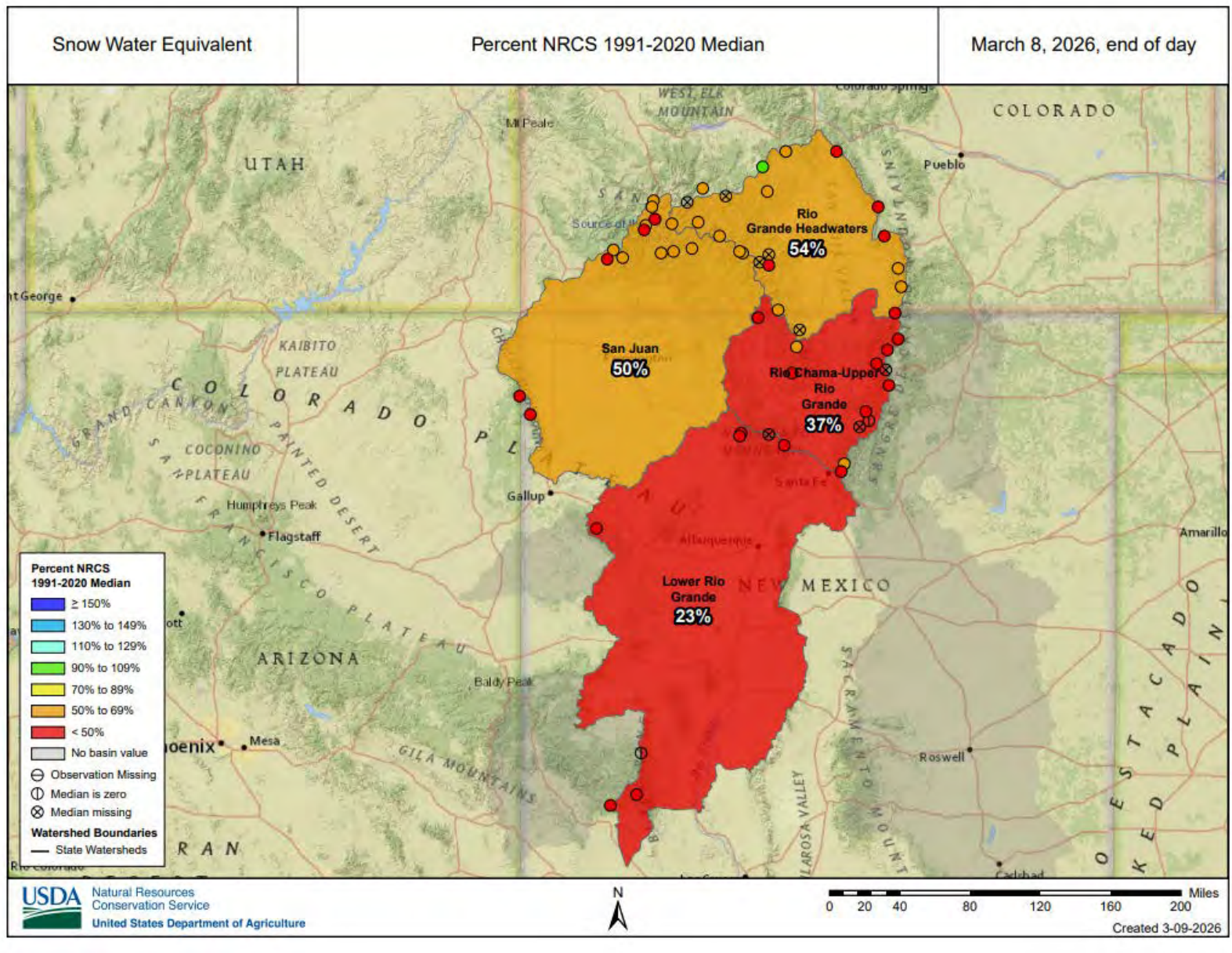
Water Supply Update

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Board of Directors Meeting

Prepared and Presented by: Anne Marken

Date: 3/9/2026





<https://nwcc-apps.sc.egov.usda.gov/imap/#version=2&elements=&networks=!&states=!&counties=!&hucs=&minElevation=&maxElevation=&elementSelectType=any&activeOnly=true&activeForecastPointsOnly=true&hucLabels=false&hucIdLabels=false&hucParameterLabels=true&stationLabels=&overlays=&hucOverlays=&basinOpacity=75&basinNoDataOpacity=25&basemapOpacity=100&maskOpacity=0&mode=data&openSections=dataElement,parameter,date,basin,options,elements,location,networks&controlsOpen=true&popup=&popupMulti=&popupBasin=&base=esriNgwm&displayType=station&basinType=6&dataElement=WTEQ&depth=-8¶meter=PCTMED&frequency=DAILY&duration=1&customDuration=&dayPart=E&monthPart=E&forecastPubDay=1&forecastExceedance=50&useMixedPast=true&seqColor=1&divColor=7&scaleType=D&scaleMin=&scaleMax=&referencePeriodType=POR&referenceBegin=1991&referenceEnd=2020&minimumYears=20&hucAssociations=true&relativeDate=-1&lat=42.300&lon=-114.300&zoom=4.5>



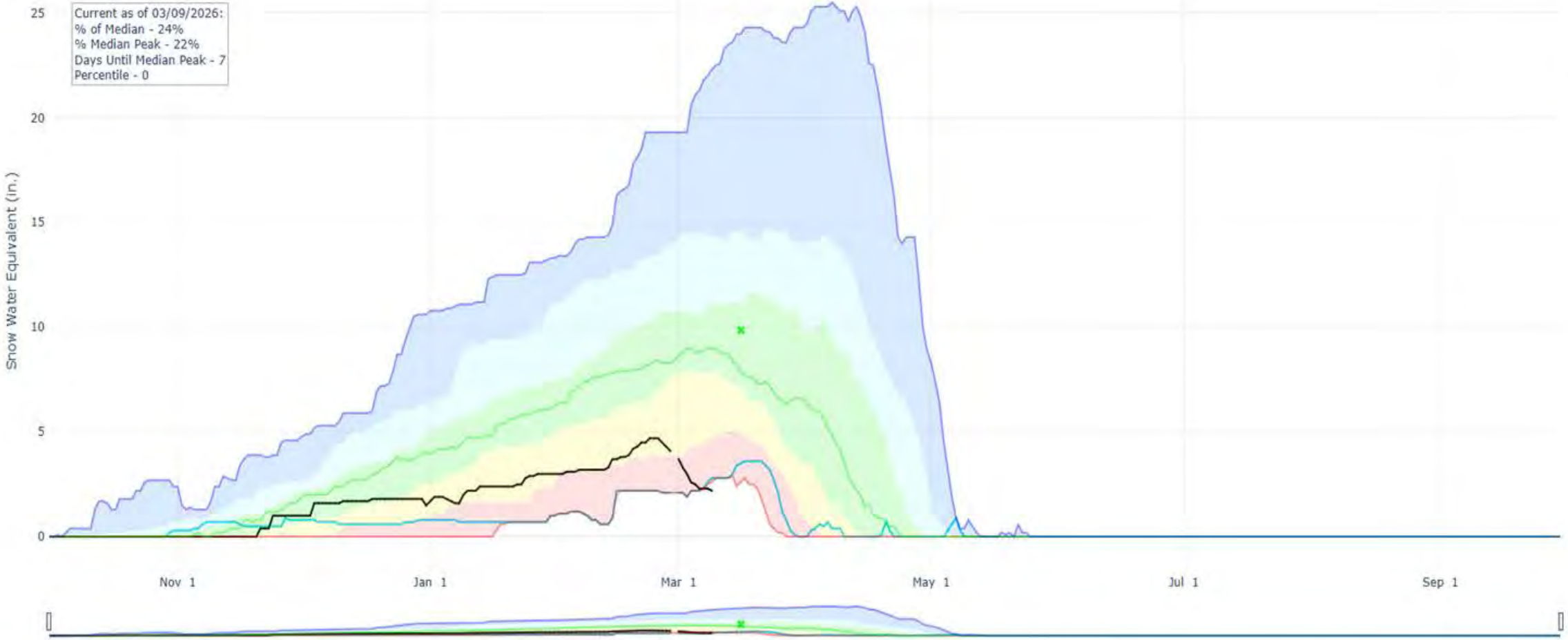
CHAMITA, NM (394) SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT

Reset Range

[Link to data: CSV / JSON](#)

Current as of 03/09/2026:
% of Median - 24%
% Median Peak - 22%
Days Until Median Peak - 7
Percentile - 0

- Median Peak SWE
- Max
- Median ('91-'20)
- Min
- Stats. Shading
- 2026
- 2025



Statistical shading percentiles are calculated from period of record (POR) data, excluding the current water year. Percentile categories range from: minimum to 10th percentile, 10th - 30th, 30th - 70th, 70th - 90th, and 90th - maximum.

For more information visit: [30-Year Hydroclimatic Normals](#)

Updated: Monday, Mar 09, 2026 11 AM CST

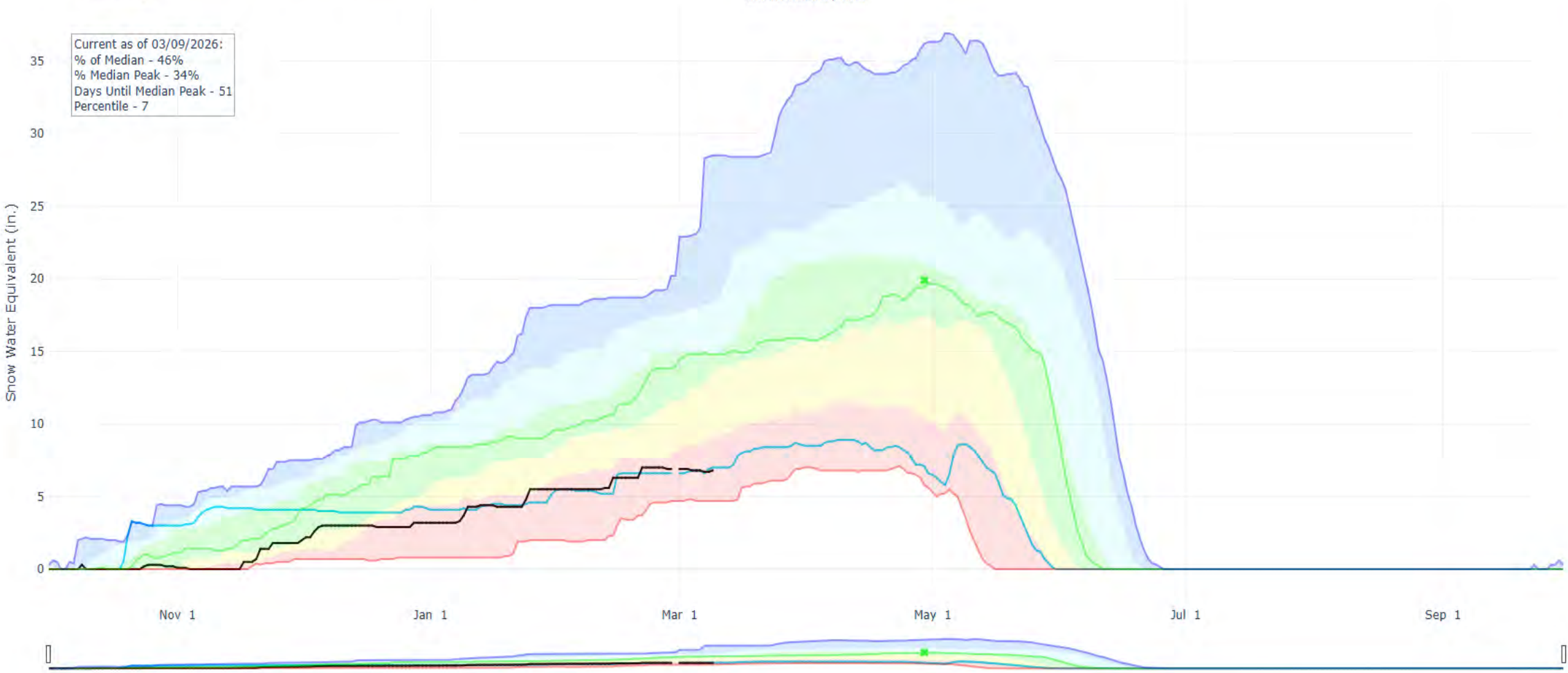
TAOS POWDERHORN, NM (1168) SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT

Reset Range

[Link to data: CSV / JSON](#)

Current as of 03/09/2026:
% of Median - 46%
% Median Peak - 34%
Days Until Median Peak - 51
Percentile - 7

- Median Peak SWE
- Max
- Median ('91-'20)
- Min
- Stats. Shading
- 2026
- 2025

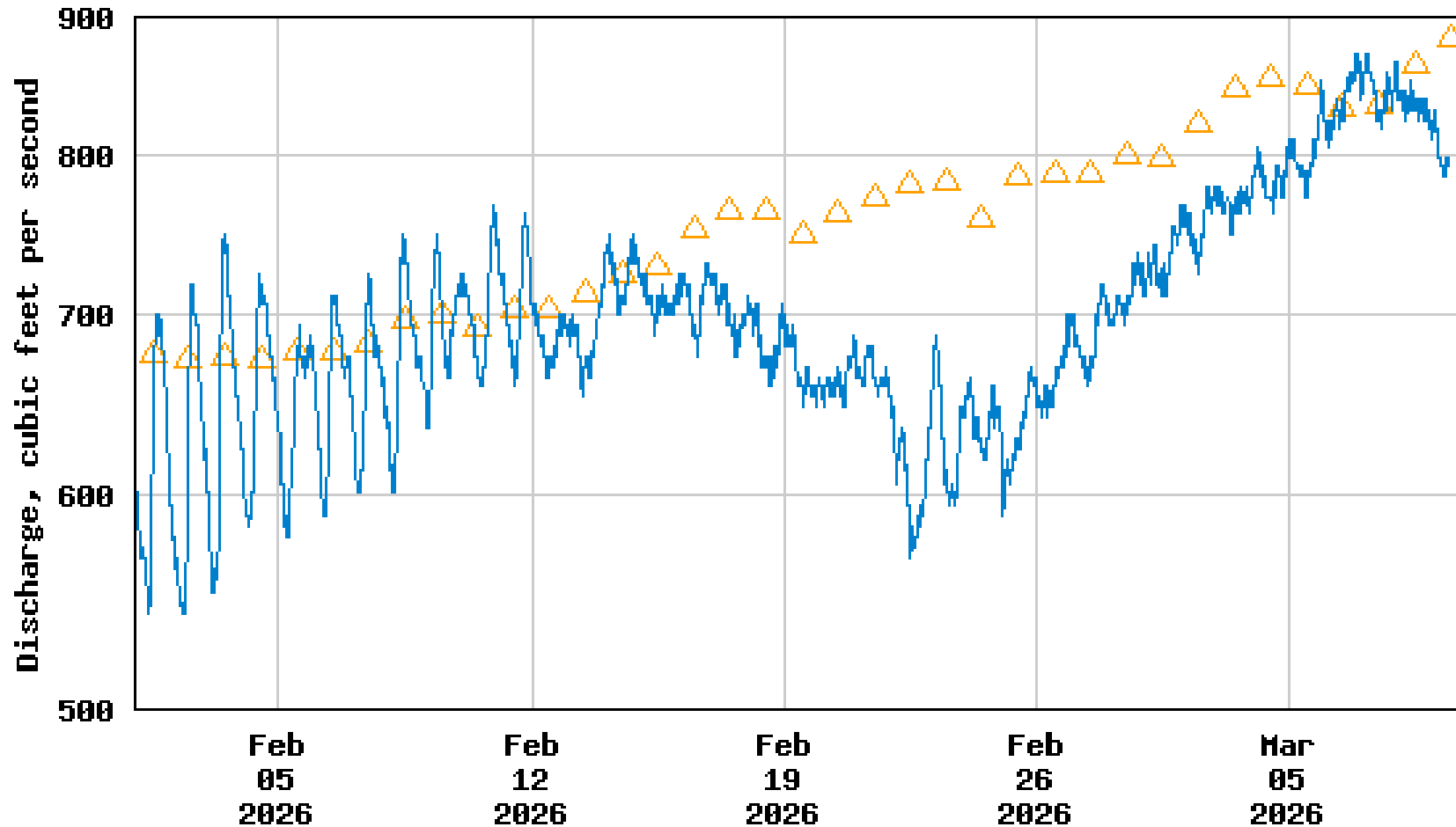


Statistical shading percentiles are calculated from period of record (POR) data, excluding the current water year. Percentile categories range from: minimum to 10th percentile, 10th - 30th, 30th - 70th, 70th - 90th, and 90th - maximum.

For more information visit: [30-Year Hydroclimatic Normals](#)

Updated: Monday, Mar 09, 2026 11 AM CST

USGS 08313000 RIO GRANDE AT OTOWI BRIDGE, NM



---- Provisional Data Subject to Revision ----

△ Median daily statistic (55 years) — Discharge



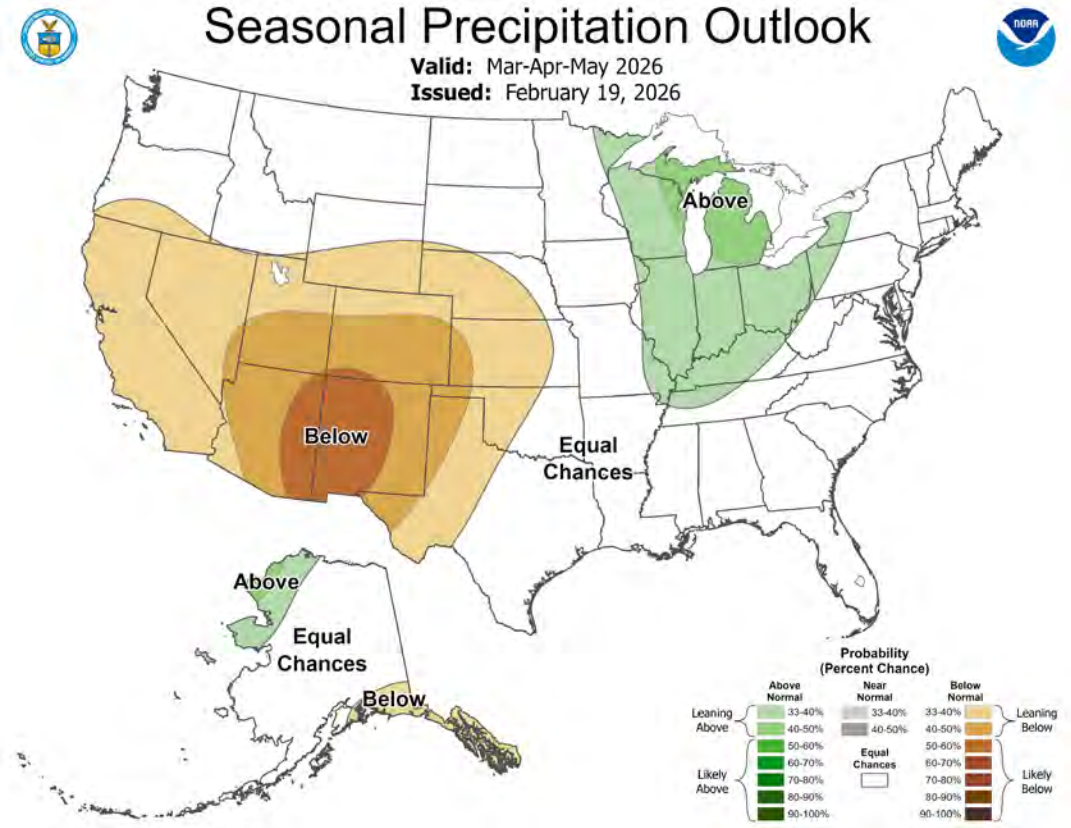
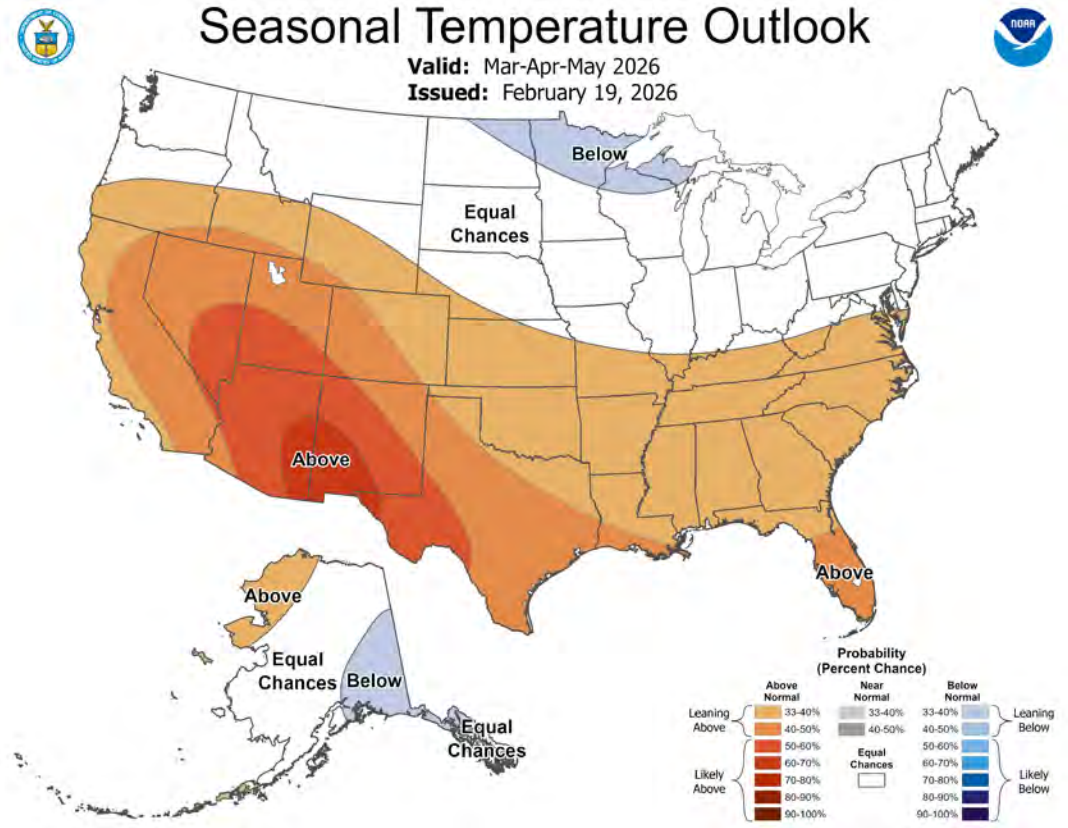
Weekly Forecast

Location	Maximum Temperature							Probability of Precipitation						
	Mon 03/09	Tue 03/10	Wed 03/11	Thu 03/12	Fri 03/13	Sat 03/14	Sun 03/15	Mon 03/09	Tue 03/10	Wed 03/11	Thu 03/12	Fri 03/13	Sat 03/14	Sun 03/15
Albuquerque	72	69	71	74	78	81	81	30	40	0	0	0	0	0
Santa Fe	69	66	68	71	73	76	77	20	40	0	0	0	0	0
Farmington	67	67	65	69	71	74	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gallup	67	63	65	70	73	75	75	20	30	0	0	0	0	0
Grants	70	63	66	71	74	76	76	30	50	0	0	0	0	0
Clayton	78	75	55	75	77	80	75	10	30	0	0	0	0	0
Raton	73	70	59	72	75	77	74	10	50	0	0	0	0	0
Las Vegas	70	66	60	69	73	76	73	20	50	0	0	0	0	0
Moriarty	70	65	67	70	75	77	77	40	40	0	0	0	0	0
Tucumcari	83	78	64	79	83	87	82	30	30	0	0	0	0	0
Clovis	82	75	63	76	83	87	83	30	30	0	0	0	0	0
Roswell	83	74	72	78	86	88	87	30	40	0	0	0	0	0
Socorro	76	67	74	78	82	86	86	40	50	0	0	0	0	0
Chama	57	59	58	60	63	64	65	0	30	0	0	0	0	0
Taos	65	65	63	67	71	73	72	10	40	0	0	0	0	0
Angel Fire	58	58	56	59	64	64	65	20	60	0	0	0	0	0
Los Alamos	65	62	63	65	69	70	71	20	50	0	0	0	0	0
Ruidoso	67	56	61	64	70	72	73	50	70	0	0	0	0	0
Quemado	67	55	63	68	71	73	73	60	60	0	0	0	0	0

<https://www.weather.gov/abq/TempPop>



NWS Seasonal Outlook



https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=1



Questions?



Appendix IV

MRGCD IRRIGATOR TIPS AHEAD OF THE 2026 SEASON



Know your ISO. stay in close contact with your ISO about water availability



Billing & Rights Issues: Ensure water service charge and water rights issues are resolved before scheduling



System Maintenance: Perform necessary maintenance on your on-farm delivery system for efficient irrigation



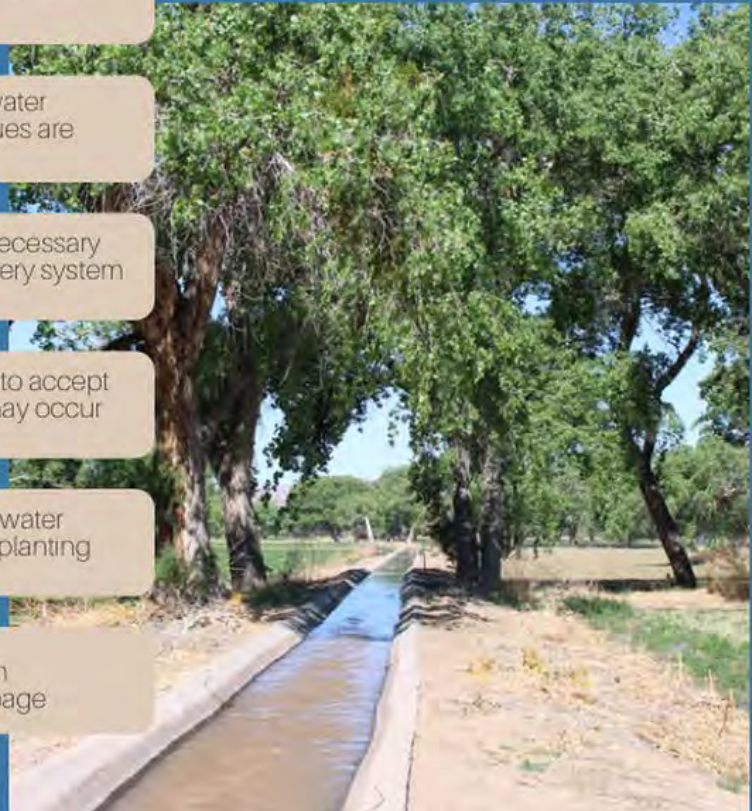
Accept Upon Offer: Be prepared to accept delivery when offered - deliveries may occur at night or on weekends



Plan Ahead: Consider forecasted water shortages when making farming & planting decisions



Stay Informed: Follow updates on MRGCD's website and Facebook page



Appendix V

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Board Presentation March 9, 2026



†This is not a CPA firm.

*Assurance, attest, and audit services provided by Carr, Riggs & Ingram, L.L.C.

Carr, Riggs & Ingram and "CRI" are the brand names under which Carr, Riggs & Ingram, L.L.C. ("CRI CPA"), CRI Advisors, LLC ("CRI Advisors" or "Advisors"), and Capin Crouse, LLC ("Capin Crouse CPA"), and CRI Capin Crouse Advisors, LLC ("Capin Crouse Advisors") provide professional services. CRI CPA, Capin Crouse CPA, CRI Advisors, Capin Crouse Advisors, Carr, Riggs & Ingram Capital, LLC and their respective subsidiaries operate as an alternative practice structure in accordance with the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct and applicable law, regulations and professional standards. CRI CPA and Capin Crouse CPA are licensed independent certified public accounting ("CPA") firms that separately provide attest services, as well as additional ancillary services, to their clients. CRI CPA and Capin Crouse CPA are independently-owned CPA firms that provide attestation services separate from one another. CRI Advisors and Capin Crouse Advisors provide tax and business consulting services to its clients. CRI Advisors and its subsidiaries, including Capin Crouse Advisors, are not licensed CPA firms and will not provide any attest services. The entities falling under the Carr, Riggs & Ingram or CRI brand are independently owned and are not responsible or liable for the services and/or products provided, or engaged to be provided, by any other entity under the Carr, Riggs & Ingram or CRI brand. Our use of the terms "CRI," "we," "our," "us," and terms of similar import, denote the alternative practice structure conducted by CRI CPA, Capin Crouse CPA, Capin Crouse Advisors, and CRI Advisors, as appropriate.

Agenda

Scope of Work

Audit Timeline

Responsibilities

Auditor's Report

Scope of Work



Scope of Work

- Audit of financial statements for June 30, 2025
- Single audit compliance testing for each major federal program
 - ALN 21.027, COVID-19 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
- Compliance with NM State audit rule

Audit Timeline



Timeline

Timeline	
Entrance Conference	July 31, 2025
Planning	September 2025
Fieldwork	October – November 2025
Exit Conference	January 16, 2026
Independent Auditor's Report*	January 16, 2026
Released from NM State Auditor's Office	February 25, 2026

*Due to federal compliance supplement delays, deadline extensions to January 20, 2026 (financial statement) and February 9, 2026 (single audit).

Responsibilities



Auditor Responsibility

Our responsibility under U.S. & *Government Auditing Standards*

- Form and express opinion if financial statements prepared by management are fairly presented in conformity with U.S. GAAP.
- Obtain reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance if financial statements are free from material misstatement.
- Consideration of internal controls for purpose of determining and designing audit procedures.
- Communicate significant matters related to financial statement audit.

Management Responsibility

Management, with oversight from those charged with governance, is responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining internal controls, including monitoring ongoing activities.
- Selection and application of accounting principles.
- Fair presentation of the financial statements and results of operations in conformity with the applicable framework.
- Maintenance of complete and accurate accounting records.
- Design and implementation of programs and controls to prevent and detect fraud.
- The governing board participated in the entrance and exit conferences and were sent the communications required by audit standards.

Auditor's Reports



Auditor's Reports

Independent Auditor's Report

- Opinion on the Financial Statements
- Unmodified – Best opinion available
- Financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with U.S. GAAP
- No audit areas where an opinion could not be rendered

Other Auditor's Report

GAGAS Report on *Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters*

- Negative Assurance
- No findings noted

Uniform Guidance Report on *Major Program and on Internal Control over Compliance*

- Unmodified Opinion
 - ALN 21.027, COVID-19 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Questions?

A decorative graphic in the bottom-left corner consisting of several overlapping triangles of varying shades of blue, creating a layered, geometric effect.

Thank you

Alan D. "A.J." Bowers, Jr., CPA, CITP
Partner
abowers@CRIadv.com





JOIN CESOSS AT OUR 6TH ANNUAL FIRST WATER EVENT
ÚNASE CON CESOSS EN NUESTRO 6º ANUAL PRIMERA AGUA CELEBRACIÓN

PRIMERA AGUA CELEBRACIÓN

Sunday / Domingo March 29, 2026 9am - 3pm

Headwaters of the Atrisco Acequia Madre - 3901 Central Ave NW 87105

Join our community in welcoming the first acequia waters of the season at our Annual Primera Agua Celebration.

This year's celebration will include an acequia blessing, danza ceremonial, festivities & prizes, and a free feast prepared by Cleo's Blue Corn Kitchen, with food provided by the Utton Center).

Bring your water containers, friends, and family to join in honoring the sacred waters that bring life to our fields, gardens, and neighborhoods.

This is your Acequia!

It has sustained our community for generations. You are invited to help shape its next chapter. Come learn how & share what you'd like to see at the Acequia Madre site.



RESERVE A PLATE
RESERVAR UN PLATO



FOR THIS
FREE EVENT

CESOSS.ORG/EVENTS



9AM ACEQUIA BLESSING & DANZA CEREMONIAL | 10AM ACEQUIA WALK & TALK | 12PM FREE FEAST



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



UTTON TRANSBOUNDARY
RESOURCES CENTER



PAJARITO ACEQUIA WATER RIGHT TRANSFER PROTEST

Who's involved:

- The **Ruth A. Sanchez Disclaimer Trust** and the **Estate of Gilbert S. Sanchez** - they currently own the water rights tied to about 10 acres of farmland near Theresa Rd and Raymac Rd
- **Southwest Landfill, LLC** - the company that wants to receive and use the water at their landfill off Pajarito Road SW

What would be transferred: The right to divert about **30.66 acre-feet per year** of surface water, currently pulled from the Rio Grande via the MRGCD to the Pajarito Acequia. That water has historically been used to irrigate those farm tracts. The application would **permanently stop** that irrigation use. Pic attached.



Where the water would go instead: It would be transferred to a groundwater well (about 1,030 feet deep) on the Southwest Landfill property, for "any and all uses for landfill purposes" - industrial and commercial use.

In simple terms: The Sanchez family is essentially **selling their water rights** to Southwest Landfill. The farmland stops being irrigated, and that water allocation gets redirected to support landfill operations instead.

The protest was filed by Pajarito Acequia Commissioner, James R. Maestas on February 27, 2026 - and the window to object is now closed. One thing worth noting: this would be a **permanent** change. If approved, those agricultural water rights would be gone from that farmland forever/and are subject to be sub-divided into residential lots.

Look at this pic... It's so disturbing to see the green of the Valley vs. where they want to transfer this water.



Atrisco Acequia Madre Education & Stewardship Initiative

Briefing for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) Board
Center for Social Sustainable Systems (CESOSS)
03/09/2026

1. Purpose of Briefing

This briefing outlines how the Atrisco Acequia Madre initiative supports the shared goals outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement between CESOSS and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.

Focus:

- Community education about irrigation systems and water stewardship
- Preservation of agricultural lands and acequia traditions
- Youth engagement in land and water education
- Public outreach aligned with MRGCD mission

2. Alignment with the MRGCD–CESOSS Memorandum of Agreement

The Memorandum of Agreement establishes collaboration to increase public awareness and education regarding agricultural lands, irrigation systems, and water stewardship in the Middle Rio Grande Valley.

Key elements of the agreement include:

- Public outreach and education on land and water conservation
- Community workshops and educational events
- Promotion of agricultural viability and ecosystem resiliency
- Youth education regarding farmland and water preservation
- Coordination with MRGCD staff and regional partners

3. The Atrisco Acequia Madre Project

Atrisco represents one of the oldest agricultural landscapes in the Middle Rio Grande Valley. The Acequia Madre system reflects centuries of irrigation knowledge and community water governance.

- A living example of acequia irrigation infrastructure
- A landscape connected to historic farming traditions

- An opportunity for public education about irrigation systems
- A location accessible to South Valley schools and community members

4. Proposed Educational Activities

The Atrisco Acequia initiative will function as a community learning site supporting the goals of the MRGCD–CESOSS partnership.

- Acequia irrigation demonstrations and interpretation
- Community workshops on water stewardship and agricultural practices
- Youth education programs connected to local schools
- Acequia Walk and Talks and field learning events
- Educational materials and media outreach highlighting irrigation knowledge

5. Benefits for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

- Expanded public understanding of irrigation systems
- Support for preservation of agricultural lands within the district
- Opportunities for youth education about water stewardship
- Community engagement aligned with district mission
- Strengthening partnerships across the Middle Rio Grande Valley

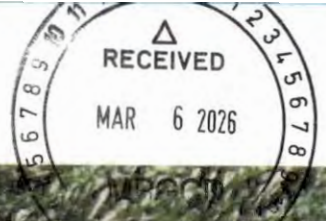
6. CESOSS Education Programs

- Ciclos de la Tierra educational framework
- Acequia workshops and community outreach
- Acequia Walk and Talks across the South Valley
- Youth leadership and agricultural education programs
- Community events such as Primera Agua celebrations

7. Next Steps for Collaboration

- Organize the Primera Agua 2026
- Continue coordination with MRGCD staff on educational outreach
- Explore opportunities for irrigation interpretation at the Atrisco site
- Develop additional workshops focused on water stewardship
- Strengthen partnerships with schools and regional organizations
- Share annual reports and progress updates as outlined in the agreement

Appendix VIII
****INFORMATIONAL ONLY****



February 21, 2026

Mr. Scott Cameron
Acting Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner
Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C St NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Cameron,

I am a farmer in the Middle Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico, and along with other farmers here in the valley, I am asking for your help. We are extremely frustrated with a Bureau of Reclamation staff here in the Middle Rio Grande Valley (MRGV) that does not appear to be concerned with the magnitude of our problems or plight. Please allow me to explain.

Here in the MRGV we are subject to a compact between the states of Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. New Mexico is required to send a share of Rio Grande water to Texas every year. Since 2019 the state of New Mexico has been underdelivering water and as a result has incurred a compact debt of 130,000 acre feet (af) of water owed to Texas. Because of the debt to Texas as outlined in the compact, farmers may not store water for irrigation in an upstream reservoir (El Vado). Said Reservoir is currently operated and maintained by the US Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) and was built by the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) to store water for irrigation in the 1930s. (The manner in which BoR has maintained El Vado is another issue of concern, however, it would require an entire other letter to address.) If the debt exceeds 200,000 af farmers in the MRGV may be required to quit diverting irrigation water from the Rio Grande until that debt is relieved. The problem isn't a lack or overuse of water but rather

an efficient way to deliver it. The task of maintaining a river system that can efficiently deliver New Mexico water to Texas is the responsibility of the BoR. Because water is not being delivered, it is causing hardship to farmers in both New Mexico and Texas.

Here is the problem. The BoR is responsible for river maintenance that ensures that water can move efficiently through the MRGV and be delivered to Texas. The BoR has claimed that they can move 5,000 cfs of water through the MRGV. The river was designed and has in the past moved 10,000 cfs of water, but when it comes right down to it, because of overgrown vegetation in the riverbed, not more than 3,500 cfs can be moved through the MRGV without threatening neighboring communities with flooding. The vegetation in the river system uses more water through evapotranspiration than agriculture itself. We as farmers along with the MRGCD which delivers our water to our farms has been asking the BOR to do a better job at river maintenance for more than two decades, but our requests have gone unanswered.

Another request that has fallen on deaf ears by the BoR is that they use the Low Flow Conveyance Channel (LFCC) to help us deliver compact water from New Mexico to Texas. The LFCC was built in the 1950s to do exactly that. In 1953 the state of New Mexico had a water debt to Texas of 500,000 af. Congress approved funding to build the LFCC which is a deep channel that carries a lot of water through a very riparian, silt-laden, part of the MRGV and thus efficiently delivering it to Elephant Butte reservoir (Texas). By 1973 using the LFCC, and at the same time increasing agricultural acreage in the MRGV, the debt to Texas was repaid. It was estimated that the LFCC saved as much as 60,000 af of water per year. This is a very efficient structure that was rehabilitated in the 90s and is still in a very usable condition. The LFCC can easily be operated in an environmentally responsible way, as the upper reaches of the MRGV are operated, but the BOR refuses to use it. The MRGCD has taken over some uses of the LFCC, but the use of delivering water, while under negotiation for many years with BoR and constant foot dragging by BoR staff, has not been approved. Farmers are being held responsible for compact under deliveries which we have no control over. If the state of New Mexico is going to get out of water debt to the state of Texas we have to be able to use the LFCC.

We farmers of the MRGV feel that time is of the essence and this debt cannot continue to grow. Our livelihoods are at stake. We are asking that you as commissioner

or one of your trusted staff come to the MRGV of New Mexico and investigate as to why the BOR staff here have neglected their task of river maintenance for efficient water delivery and the use of LFCC which is a proven tool for the same. Why are they not doing the job they are tasked with? It seems that the Staff of the BOR in the MRGV give more consideration as to whether their actions provide job security for themselves rather than if they are helping the people they are tasked with serving. Our valley is made up of small family farms and we desperately need your help.

Respectfully,

CHRIS SICHLER



In collaboration with the undersigned MRGV farmers:

Snake Ranch, LLC

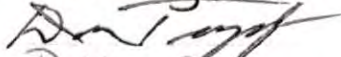
Paula J. Sichler

Steven Sichler

Erica Trevino

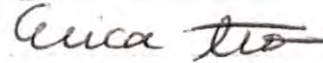
Tripp Farms

Kimberly Gonzales

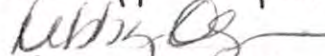


Debby Elguin

Robert Elguin



Don Tripp NM Speaker of the House, retired



CC:

Mr. Doug Burgum, Secretary of the Interior

Mr. Jason Casuga, CEO/Chief Engineer of the MRGCD

Senator Martin Heinrich

Senator Ben Ray Luján

Congresswoman Melanie Standsbury

Representative Gabriel Vasquez

Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernandez

Attachment: Additional MRGV farmer signatures.

We the undersigned are in collaboration with the above letter written by Chris Sichler.

Travis Harris
Ron Burnett
Chris Hammack
Julie McIntyre
Dennis Harris
Margene Harris
CARLINA HARRIS
Kristy Harris
Melanie Harris
Ronita Montoya
Meri Stanley
Shelly Rice
Peter Rice
Sheena Tozier
MRS Floyd
MICHAEL STANLEY
Matthew Harris
ENRIQUE A VEGA
CARLOS VEGA
JOSE L VEGA
Pablo Romero
Christina Romero
Clay Clark
Mary Ann Romero
Jose R. Romero

Iran Arini
Ray B...
Chris...
Julie McIntyre
Dennis Harris
Margene Harris
CARLINA HARRIS
Kristy Harris
Melanie Harris
Ronita Montoya
Meri Stanley
Shelly Rice
Peter Rice
Sheena Tozier
MRS Floyd
MICHAEL STANLEY
Matthew Harris
ENRIQUE A VEGA
CARLOS VEGA
JOSE L VEGA
Pablo Romero
Christina Romero
Clay Clark
Mary Ann Romero
Jose R. Romero

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

We the undersigned are in collaboration with the above letter written by Chris Sichler.

Christopher M. Lucero
Don Freuekamp

Jeanne Dixon

JAMES D. McPHERSON

Elizabeth B. McPhaul

Elmer Handrich

Ashley Handrich

Linda Rosales

MARIO ROSALES

JAMES MARTIN

Catherine Martin

Sally A. Bickel (Zimmerman)

Eddie Gutierrez

Barbara Harris

Edward L. Harris

Francie Durand

Steven DURAND

Elaine M. Padilla

David P. Maule

JASON P. LUCERO

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

We the undersigned are in collaboration with the above letter written by Chris Sichler.

Emily Willis

Jessica Richardson

ROBERT SANCHEZ

Don Simpson

Mike Rebel

Mariah Baca

Harvey Crowley

Dean Schubert

TROY RICHARDSON

JOE BOB GRIFFIN

MARK R SANCHEZ

Emily Willis

Jessica Richardson

Robert Sanchez

Don Simpson

Mike Rebel

Mariah Baca

Harvey Crowley

Dean Schubert

Troy Richardson

Joe Bob Griffin

Mark R Sanchez

MIKE MECHENBIER

Mariah Baca

Harvey Crowley

Dean Schubert

Troy Richardson

Joe Bob Griffin

Mark R Sanchez

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

We the undersigned are in collaboration with the above letter written by Chris Sichler.

Jimmy L. Farmer
Jane Farmer

Jimmy L. Farmer
Jane Farmer

CURTIS VERBLOEHT
Valerie Moore
Joe Chers Lopez
Marty Greenwood

Curtis Verbloet
Valerie Moore
Joe Chers Lopez
Marty Greenwood

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Chris Sichler
PO Box 66
San Antonio, NM 87832



Retail



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JASON CASUGA, P.E. CEO/Chief Engineer
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
1931 Second St SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102

8710234515 0005





Appendix IX

New Mexico Office of the State Engineer / Interstate Stream Commission



3.0 AF/AC Duty Farm Delivery Requirement

Nat Chakeres, General Counsel

March 9, 2026



3.0 FDR: 1918 Surface Water Regulations

Article VI, Section 29 of the 1918 Surface Water Regulations states, in part:

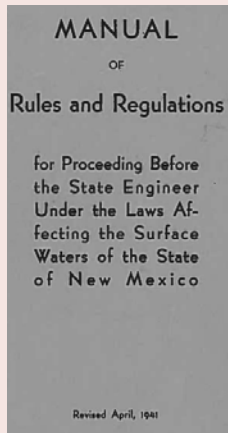
“It has been generally demonstrated by state, private and government tests to be reasonably conclusive that any claim for greater than an equivalent of **a net duty of three acre feet of water per acre is excessive**, and therefore, contrary to the constitution and law of New Mexico...so that in the issuance of permits or licenses to appropriate water for irrigation, or in the adjudication of rights to use water for such purpose, the amount allowed should not be in excess of the equivalent of three acre feet of water per acre delivered on the land[.]”

§29. (Code, 5655, 5682, 5702, 5664; Art. XVI, N. M. Const.)

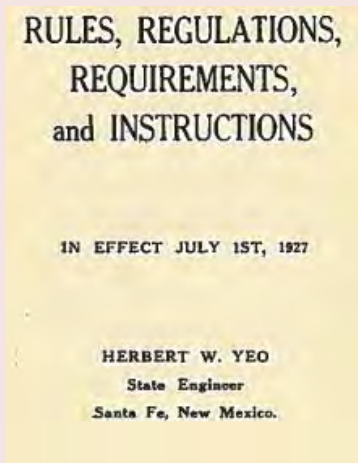
It has been generally demonstrated by state, private and government tests to be reasonably conclusive that any claim for greater than an equivalent of a net duty²² of three acre feet of water per acre is excessive, and, therefore, contrary to the constitution and laws of New Mexico, which limit all water rights to the extent and under the condition of actual useful or beneficial purposes, so that in the issuance of permits¹¹ or licenses²⁰ to appropriate water for irrigation,¹ or in the adjudication of rights to use water for such purpose, the amount allowed should not be in excess of the equivalent of three acre feet of water per acre delivered on the land, except that in extreme or unusual cases where it is conclusively demonstrated that such a duty would work material hardship, the unit may be adjusted to suit such specific conditions; Provided, that the rate of delivery shall not be greater than one cubic foot of water per second for each seventy acres served; Provided, however, that for works storing or diverting particularly flood or torrential flow the State Engineer may allow the construction of works to an efficient capacity, but the use of water shall not be in excess of the equivalent duty allowed under the permit as provided by this article. (See Art. VII.)



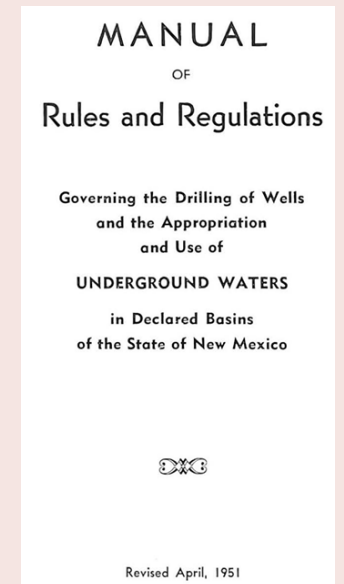
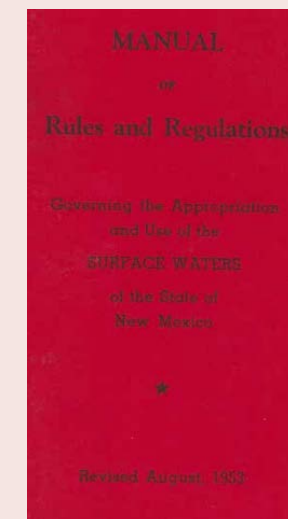
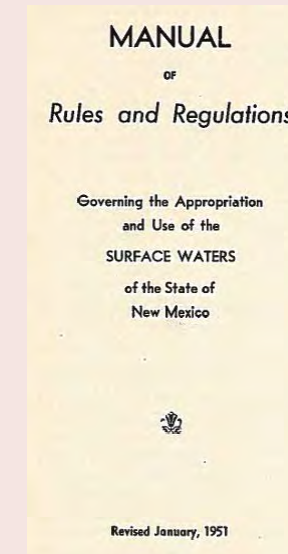
3.0 FDR: OSE Regulations



The 3.0 FDR requirement remained in all iterations of the OSE surface water rules through at least 1953 (when they were recompiled in a different format), and was also present in the 1951 groundwater regulations.



This means that any new appropriations or changes to water rights that occurred during this period were subject to this requirement.



3.0 FDR: MRGCD's *Report of the Chief Engineer*



MRGCD's *Report of the Chief Engineer* (1928) acknowledges the 3.0 FDR as required by the regulations, and incorporated that FDR in its engineering calculations (see, e.g., pages 197 and 208):

The net irrigable area of the project as it appears in the Official Plan of the Conservancy District, as approved by the Court August 15, 1928, is as follows:

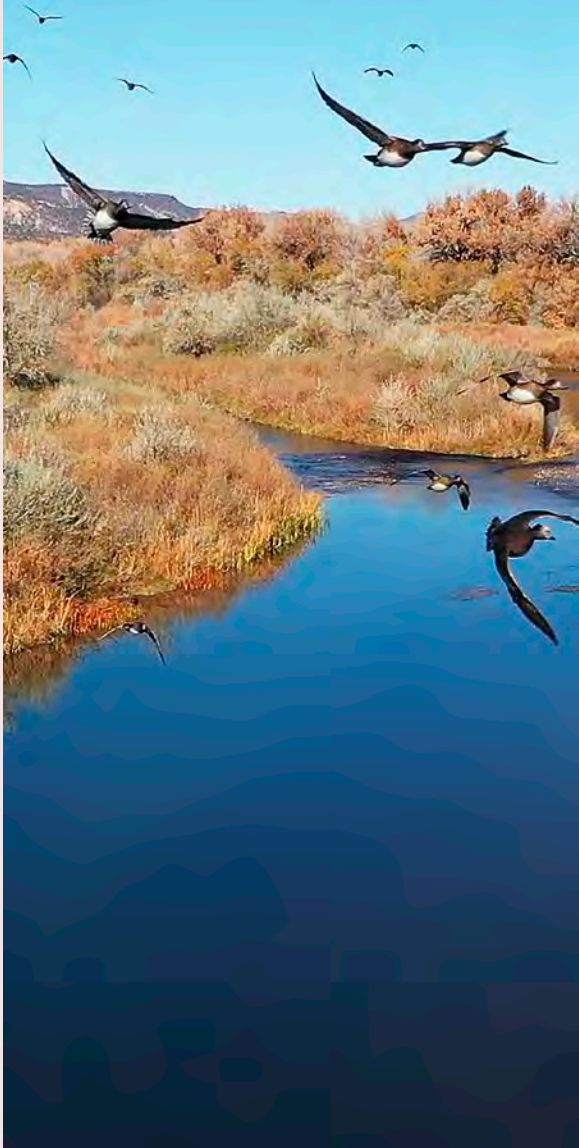
Cochiti Division	13,000 Acres
Albuquerque Division	37,205 Acres
Belen Division	57,399 Acres
Socorro Division	15,661 Acres
Total	123,265 Acres

Based on records of the Mesilla Valley (a part of the U. S. Rio Grande Project) the following assumptions are made:

- (a) Total Annual Consumptive use of river water 3.9 acre feet per acre irrigated (includes river losses).
- (b) Drainage return 2.4 acre feet per acre.
(Except in Cochiti Division where drainage is not so necessary, and where the assumed return is less.)
- (c) Delivery on lands 3.0 acre feet per acre.
- (d) River losses, considered in addition to above, both by evaporation from water surface and by seepage to lands not included in District.



Updates and Ongoing Initiatives



- **Hydrology**
 - Compact Status
- **Partnerships and Outreach to Major Water Users**
 - Data Collection
 - River Channel Conveyance Improvements
- **MRG Metering Order**
- **Legislative Session Outcomes**
 - Budget
 - Enforcement Bill

Appendix X

'25/'26 Off Season Construction Update

March 9, 2026

Presented by:
Engineering Department



Socorro Main Canal Channel Lining Phase IIB

Funding Source: WTB

Consultant Services: Wilson & Co. - \$287,495.50

Construction: Sanchez Demolition - \$6,878,359.05
(Including NMGRT)

- Progress
 - In-channel work completed February 16th
 - Substantial completion March 15th
 - Currently billed to date \$4,783,623.42 (74%)
 - Finalizing change orders and last pay application
- Work Completed
 - 1.1 miles of channel lining
 - Turnout replacements
 - New long-crested weir and check structure
 - Rubicon gate installation at 2 headings





Belen Highline Canal Overflow Structure #2

Funding Source: Fund Reserves

Consultant Services: BHI - \$85,102

Construction: Lopez Precision LLC. -
\$1,074,065.61 (Including NMGRT)

- Progress
 - Substantial completion February 18th
 - All concrete work was completed on February 10th
 - Billed to date: \$1,074,065 (100%)
- Work that has been completed
 - New overflow structure





Low-Flow Conveyance Channel Phase 2

Funding Source: ARPA
Consultant Services: Wilson & Co.
Construction: CF Padilla LLC- \$6,490,217.50
(Including NMGRT)

- Original Contract Amount: \$6,209,717.50
- Final Contract Amount: \$6,490,217.50
- Project is Complete









Feb 24, 2026 at 10:29:50 AM
N 34° 5' 24", W 106° 52' 48"
117° SE
Socorro, NM 87801
EOP

Loretta Road/Alameda Intersection Improvements Project

Funding Source: Capital Outlay, Capital Development Program

Consultant Services: BHI

Partner Agencies: Bernalillo County, NMDOT

- Contract Times: 160 Calendar Days, tentative signal lead time
- Bid Opening Date: February 2, 2026
- Number of Bids Received: One (under review and negotiation)
- Culvert Crossing at Nichols Interior Drain has been installed by MRGCD crew in September 2026. No MRGCD operation will be impacted, just the Open Space parking



Feeder 3 Transmission Line Phase 1

Funding Source: WTB

Consultant Services: BHI - \$286,732.37

Construction: AUI. Inc. - \$3,932,831.60 (w/NMGRT)

- Progress Schedule
 - Jack and Bore – Jarales Rd. complete
 - Ongoing concrete channel lining
 - Installation of pipe near Sabinal Lateral crossing
 - Dewatering
 - Dissipation Structure
- Lookahead
 - Jack and Bore 36” Pipe – NM109
 - 6” thick Concrete lining
 - Installation of 36” PVC pipe
 - Construct concrete dissipation structure, cip.





Atrisco Acequia Madre – CBC Extension Phase 1 Project

Funding Source: Capital Outlay

Consultant Services: Sites Southwest & BHI

Partner Agencies: Bernalillo County, City of Albuquerque Open Space, ABCWUA

Updates:

- Phase 1 Awarded to Lopez Precision LLC.
- Contract amount - \$207,823.88 (w/NMGRT)
- Issued Notice to Proceed on 2/10/26
- Completed pouring concrete wingwalls and CBC side walls on 3/4/26
- Additional Work: Strip forms, backfill, and channel reshaping





Division Projects

- Cochiti
 - Culvert replacement in Cochiti East Main
- Albuquerque
 - Tribal Road 7 Culvert Crossing Replacement
 - Riverside Drain Maintenance
- Belen
 - New Belen Wasteway Rehabilitation







QUESTIONS?



Appendix XI

From: [Colin Baugh](#)
To: [Tarah Jaramillo](#)
Subject: CTB meeting write ups
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 8:26:23 PM

Hey there-please find below my write ups-please review and let me know if you need anything else

CTB

1/27 – NMISC Meeting:

Met with the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission to discuss the Governor's water education template initiative and how it may be implemented statewide. The discussion focused on opportunities for collaboration between the ISC and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. Particular attention was given to expanding outdoor acequia classrooms and flood irrigation projects on Albuquerque Public Schools properties.

2/4 – Explora Meeting:

Met with representatives from Explora to discuss a potential Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen collaboration. The conversation focused on expanding support for outdoor education programs in the Middle Rio Grande Valley. Efforts centered on developing and supporting a network of outdoor educators and expanding experiential water education opportunities.

2/11 – SIPI Site Visit:

Conducted a site visit at Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute with Dr. Thomas DePree and his students. The group walked into the bosque to observe the landscape and discuss watershed and irrigation systems. Discussions also explored the development of higher education water certificate programs and ways to increase student engagement in water education initiatives.

2/19 – NMISC & Conrad Foundation Meeting:

Met with the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission and the Conrad Foundation to discuss the development of a statewide water education campaign. The conversation focused on messaging, outreach, and ways to increase youth engagement around water issues. Partners discussed opportunities to align educational initiatives occurring across the state.

2/20 – Valle Vista / APS Presentation Planning:

Met with Amanda Molina to discuss co-presenting with Valle Vista Elementary at an upcoming Albuquerque Public Schools Board meeting. The presentation will highlight the Outdoor Acequia Classroom project and its educational impact. The meeting focused on identifying key talking points and framing the project as a model for future district-wide initiatives.

2/23 – Nancy Conrad Follow-up Meeting:

Held a follow-up meeting with Nancy Conrad to continue discussions on youth engagement in water education. The conversation focused on developing a youth

advisory committee to support future programming. Opportunities for summer and fall educational programming were also discussed.

2/24 – NMISC & Conrad Foundation Follow-up:

Participated in a follow-up meeting with NMISC and the Conrad Foundation to continue planning the statewide water education campaign. The discussion centered on marketing strategies and communication approaches. Partners also discussed preparation for a potential presentation to the Governor's Office.

3/3 – Valle Vista Presentation Planning:

Met with the Valle Vista principal and community liaison to further develop the APS School Board presentation. The group discussed the presentation agenda and overall concept. The focus was on clearly highlighting the success and educational value of the Outdoor Acequia Classroom project.

3/4 – APS School Board Public Comment:

Provided public comment at the Albuquerque Public Schools Board meeting. The request was made for a 10–15 minute agenda placement at a future meeting. The purpose is to present the success of the Outdoor Acequia Classroom project and highlight other water education initiatives occurring throughout the district.

Report on the SVRAA Comisionados Meeting, February 16, 2026, Virtual

Commissioners and partners met to discuss ongoing acequia coordination efforts, shared infrastructure needs, and opportunities for collaboration among regional water management entities. Participants provided updates on current projects and discussed strategies for improving communication between the SVRAA and MRGCD. Continued dialogue focused on identifying funding opportunities for acequia infrastructure improvements and strengthening partnerships that support agricultural water delivery systems.

Report on Representative Vasquez Ag Advisory Group, February 17, 2026. Gutierrez-Hubbell House, 6029 Isleta Blvd. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105

Representative Gabe Vasquez convened his Agricultural Advisory Group to discuss the upcoming federal Farm Bill markup and gather input from stakeholders across New Mexico's agricultural sector. Participants shared priorities related to water availability, irrigation infrastructure, conservation programs, and support for producers. Congressman Vasquez also provided an update on current developments in Congress affecting agriculture and natural resources policy. The meeting provided local agricultural leaders with an opportunity to communicate their concerns and priorities directly with federal leadership and to highlight the importance of water management and infrastructure investment for New Mexico producers.

Report on the meeting with Maggie Hart Stebbins, Office of Natural Resources Trustee, February 18, Virtual

Director Russo Baca participated in a meeting with Maggie Hart Stebbins of the Office of the Natural Resources Trustee (ONRT) to discuss ongoing restoration and natural resource management initiatives in New Mexico. The ONRT works to restore and protect natural resources affected by environmental damage through projects that support habitat restoration, improved water quality, and ecosystem resilience. Discussion included opportunities for collaboration on projects that benefit the Rio Grande watershed and the broader Middle Rio Grande Valley.

Report on the ISC Meeting, February 19, 2026, Virtual

The New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (ISC) meeting included updates on statewide water conditions, legislative developments, and basin management activities. Staff reported on hydrologic conditions across New Mexico, including snowpack levels and reservoir storage, which remain below historical averages in several basins. The Commission also reviewed ongoing efforts related to Rio Grande operations, compact accounting, and collaborative river management projects in the Middle Rio Grande. The ISC continues to coordinate with state and

federal partners on channel conveyance improvements, bosque management activities, and long-term water planning initiatives.

UPPER AND MIDDLE RIO GRANDE BASIN KEY UPDATES

2026 Storage and Operations - Elevation restrictions at El Vado Reservoir are still in effect, where storage is limited to approximately 25,000 acre-feet. Efforts will be made to keep a minimum pool of approximately 16,000 acre-feet. As of February 1, approximately 23,000 acre feet of water was in storage, of which 19,500 acre-feet was San Juan-Chama Project (SJCP) water and 3,500 acre-feet was native Rio Grande water stored for Prior and Paramount (P&P) lands. New Mexico is expecting another year of low water supply in 2026, which will likely result in an above average storage requirement for P&P lands. The Bureau of Indian Affairs will determine the final volume of storage required to meet P&P demands in April, and P&P water will be stored in both El Vado and Abiquiu Reservoirs this year. As of February 1, just over 108,000 acre-feet of SJCP and P&P water is stored in Abiquiu Reservoir. The SJCP content was approximately 108,000 acre-feet and the P&P content was approximately 650 acre-feet.

WORK AREA OVERVIEWS WATER OPERATIONS AND RESERVOIR UPDATES

Rio Grande Compact Status - Provisional Rio Grande Compact accounting indicates that New Mexico under-delivered water to Elephant Butte Reservoir in 2025 by approximately 8,000 acre-feet. Thus, New Mexico's total accrued debit status for 2026 will be approximately 132,000 acre-feet. Final accounting for calendar year 2025 will be completed in March 2026. Elephant Butte and Caballo Reservoirs and Usable Water - According to provisional data through February 1, Usable Water in project storage (native Rio Grande water in Elephant Butte and Caballo, excluding SJCP and credit water) was approximately 225,000 acre-feet. Compact Article VII restrictions remain in place (no upstream storage in post-1929 reservoirs when Usable Water in Elephant Butte and Caballo is less than 400,000 acre-feet). Provisional data indicate that storage of all water in Elephant Butte Reservoir was approximately 213,000 acre feet as of February 1.

RIVER CHANNEL CONVEYANCE AND BOSQUE MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

Delta Channel Realignment Project - Public scoping under the NEPA process has started for this project. The public scoping process is held to get agency and other stakeholder input to help with alternatives development. NMISC, with Reclamation as the lead federal agency, held an agency stakeholder meeting at the NMISC Albuquerque office on Wednesday, February 11, followed by two public scoping meetings on February 12 at the Duranes Community Center, and on February 18 at the Socorro County Annex Building. Major Project Planning - The MRG Bureau is continuing to synchronize channel, conveyance, and operations projects with several partners. Alignment of the progress on these projects will help prioritize planning, budget, and implementation in upcoming work plan requests.

Report on the Meeting with CESOSS regarding the Primera Aqua Event. February 27, 2026, Frontier, 2400 Central Ave SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

Director Russo Baca met with representatives from CESOSS to discuss the upcoming Primera Agua event, which will focus on the cultural, environmental, and agricultural significance of water in New Mexico communities. The event is intended to highlight the role of acequias and community-based water stewardship while promoting dialogue among community leaders, educators, and water managers. Planning discussions focused on event programming, outreach, and opportunities to highlight the importance of traditional water management systems and community engagement in water policy discussions. CESOSS, the South Valley Regional Association of Acequias, and the MRGCD invite the community to join us for a celebration marking the start of the irrigation season. Primera Agua will be held at the head gate of the Atrisco Acequia Madre at the corner of Central Ave. and Sunset Blvd. on Saturday, April 2, at 9:00 AM. Enjoy an Acequia Blessing and an Acequia Walk & Talk to share stories about acequias and our community. Local community members connected to acequia and agricultural traditions will lead both the blessing and the walk-and-talk. If you have any questions, feel free to email info@cesoss.org. <https://www.cesososs.org/cesoss-events>

Report on the Land and Water Summit, March 4-6, 2026, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center 2401 12th St NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104.

Director Russo Baca attended the New Mexico Land and Water Summit, a statewide gathering that brings together water managers, agricultural producers, policymakers, conservation groups, and community leaders to discuss key natural resource issues affecting New Mexico. The summit featured presentations and panel discussions on water supply challenges, watershed restoration, agricultural sustainability, and strategies to improve long-term water security in the state. Jason Casuga presented on the final panel. Participants also discussed the impacts of drought, climate variability, and population growth on water resources, as well as opportunities for collaborative approaches to land and water management across New Mexico. <https://www.landandwatersummitnm.org/index.php/the-2026-land-and-water-summit/>