

February 2014

Regional Water Planning Stakeholders – Call for Participation and Local Input

**STEERING COMMITTEES**

The New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (ISC) has begun the process of working with the 16 New Mexico water planning regions to update their Regional Water Plans for incorporation into a State Water Plan update over a two-year planning period. The first year will focus on updates of the technical data and reactivation and formation of the regional steering committees. The second year will focus on completion of the updates by the regions to identify the programs, policies, and projects that will best serve the region’s needs. The water plans accepted by the ISC will be used as a foundation to begin the updates, to build on the previous work completed by the regions rather than “starting over.” In addition to the regional water plans’ value as an expression of a region’s vision for addressing water issues, the updated regional water plans will be used to outline regional priorities for Water Trust Board and other funding applications. See link for the Water Trust Board’s funding and application criteria (*http://www.nmfa.net/governance/water-trust-board/*) A summary of the ISC water planning program and process is available at: *http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/SWP/SWP&RWP\_Recommended%20ApproachAlt1\_09-03-2013re2.pdf*

The first step for each of the 16 ISC water planning regions is to re-establish and develop steering committees following the *Updated Regional Water Planning Handbook: Guidelines to Preparing Updates to New Mexico Regional Water Plans (December 2013)* [*http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/RWP/Revised%20RWP%20Handbook%20ISC\_Dec\_2013\_Final.pdf*](http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/RWP/Revised%20RWP%20Handbook%20ISC_Dec_2013_Final.pdf)The Handbook focuses on ensuring that steering committee members have direct experience with water and represent a broad set of water user groups To that end, the ISC recommends that the regions re-engage available regional water planning council members who participated in the development of the first round of regional water plans and strengthen the group by ensuring that all water management entities within the region are represented and that individuals with extensive knowledge about local water issues are included.

As outlined in the Handbook, regional steering committee members should represent one or more of the following water use groups:

* Agricultural, both surface water (including acequias) and groundwater users
* Municipal government
* Rural water provider
* Extractive industry
* Environmental interest
* County government
* Local (retail) business
* Tribal entity
* Watershed interest
* Federal agency
* Other groups as identified by the steering committee

The ISC is asking assistance from the regions and statewide councils of governments (COGs) to participate in the steering committee formation process by helping identify potential steering committee members. The regions will decide who is on their steering committees, with the state assisting the regions in ensuring that the steering committees reflect full representation of all water interests.

Functional and representative stakeholder steering committees will ensure successful completion of the regions’ updates of their water plans in year two. The regions retain the key role of deciding how to address regional water issues and prioritize policies, programs, and projects to address their water challenges.

**TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND DATA GATHERING**

The ISC has engaged contractors to update population and economic analyses and to update the water supply and demand data using a consistent technical methodology for all regions, referred to as the “common technical platform.” See link for description of “common technical platform” [http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/SWP/SWP&RWP\_Recommended%20ApproachAlt1\_09-03-2013re2.pdf](http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/SWP/SWP%26RWP_Recommended%20ApproachAlt1_09-03-2013re2.pdf). These efforts will be informed by local data and studies that reflect each unique region. We are asking that any information on the following topics outlined below be provided to the listed contractors so that the plans will accurately consider local conditions.

***Population and Economic Data Needs for Regional Forecasts:***

* Recent (within the past five years) plans (or those in preparation) that project population or economic activity and where to obtain a copy of each plan. Examples include:
* City or county comprehensive plans
* Economic development plans
* Transportation plans
* Water or sewer plans
* Social service plans
* Announced or potential major projects that will significantly affect employment and where to get specifics on each project. Examples include:
* Power plants (new or closures)
* Mines (new, expansion, closures)
* Industrial development
* Major shopping centers
* Announced or potential major residential developments that could provide additional housing and where to get specifics on each project. Examples include:
* New communities
* Retirement communities
* Large subdivisions
* Major apartment complexes
* Any major expected changes in agriculture and where to get specific information on such changes. Examples include:
* Increases or reductions in acreage
* Changes in crops
* Changes in irrigation methods
* Knowledgeable persons to contact, along with their contact information (phone and e-mail if available), regarding potential major projects and general economic trends, including but not limited to
* Local and regional planning and engineering officials
* Economic development organizations
* Chambers of commerce
* Recreational users
* Bankers
* Realtors
* Developers
* Utilities
* Major employers
* Agriculture extension agents.

# Please call or email with any information you might have about the above, or names of people they may contact:

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***Technical (Water Supply and Demand) Information Needs***

* Water planning documents
* 40 year plans
* Water and sewer master plans
* Water conservation plans
* Local water issues or studies related to:
* Water management
* Water quality (e.g., water supply wells impacted by contaminants, natural or other)
* Groundwater monitoring
* Special studies commissioned by local governments (e.g., Estancia Basin hydrologic study/model)
* Local water conflicts
* Climate change impacts on water resources
* Local water-related programs or initiatives sponsored by local governments or other groups.  Examples may include:
* Protection of aquifer or water resources
* Conservation
* Water Rights
* Water Quality
* Watershed/river restoration or protection
* Domestic wells
* Land Use
* Agriculture
* Economic Development
* Drought planning and mitigation
* Preparation for extreme precipitation and flooding
* Unique water management projects or agreements (Water shortage sharing or cooperative agreements, or regionally managed projects)
* Other information or issues of importance to the region
* Local water-related ordinances or threatened or pending litigation. Examples include:
* Mora County Community Water Rights and Local Self-Government Ordinance
* Lawsuit filed against Mora County about the ordinance
* Water Conservation and/or Drought Preparedness Ordinances
* Contact information for knowledgeable staff members/ experts/individuals who work on these issues in the region. For example:
* County/City hydrologist

# Please call or email with any information you might have about the above, or names of people we may contact:

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**For questions or general information:**

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**Additional state and regional water planning documents:**

[*http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/index.php*](http://www.ose.state.nm.us/Planning/index.php)

*(All ISC-accepted regional water plans, water planning statutes, the 2003 State Water Plan, the recently revised regional planning handbook, etc.)*

**Water Trust Board Project Management guidelines (funding):**

***http://my.nmfa.net/NMFAInternet/GetDoc.aspx?docid=1337***

**We look forward to working with you!**