



# 2026 Legislative Session Update

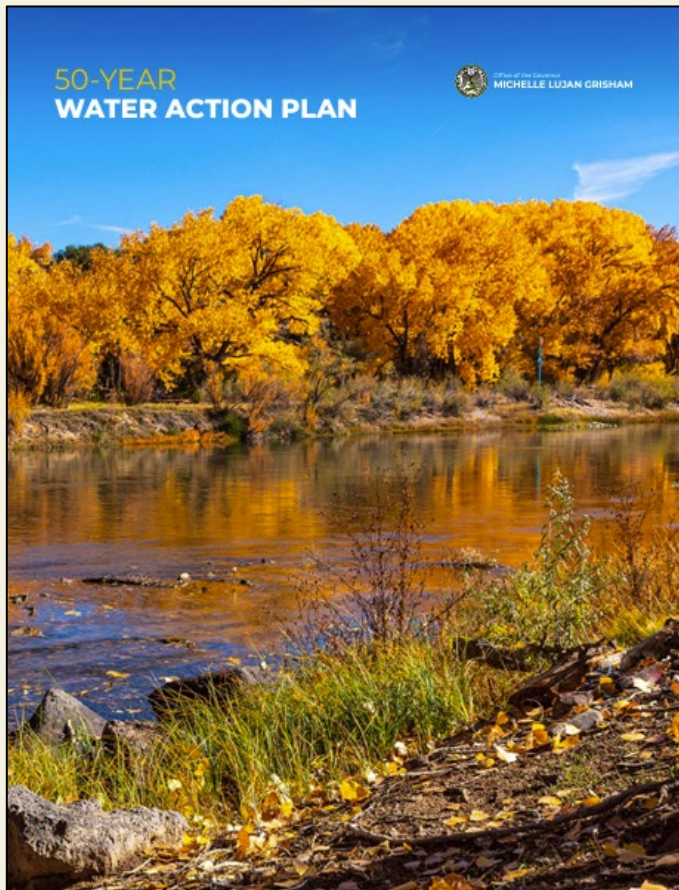
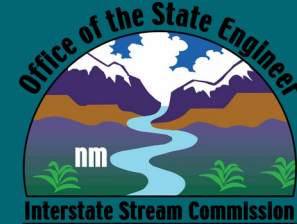


Jonas Armstrong, NMED, Water Protection Division Director  
Michelle Hunter – Interstate Stream Commission Deputy Director

Water Quality Control Commission  
March 10, 2026



# 50-Year Water Action Plan



## Water Conservation

- ❑ A1 Develop a water education program
- ❑ A2 Incentivize agricultural water conservation
- ❑ A3 Reduce leaks in drinking water infrastructure/ increase municipal conservation
- ❑ A4 Improve water storage and delivery systems

## New Water Supplies

- ❑ B1 Strategic Water Supply to develop treated brackish water
- ❑ B2 Adopt policies to expand potable and non-potable water reuse
- ❑ B3 Improve groundwater mapping and monitoring

## Water and Watershed Protection

- ❑ C1 Clean up contaminated groundwater sites
- ❑ C2 Develop a surface water discharge permitting program
- ❑ C3 Modernize wastewater treatment plants and stormwater infrastructure
- ❑ C4 Protect and restore watersheds



# Stacking Water Wins: Conservation & Infrastructure

## 2025 Session

- \$200M to water project fund
- \$25M for Indian water rights settlements
- \$15M to Rural Infrastructure Program Fund
- \$6M for water planning and education
- \$5M for ag water conservation projects

## 2026 Session\*

- \$100M to water project fund
- \$46.5M for depletion reductions, increasing water supply, compact settlement implementation
- \$15M for Indian water rights settlements
- \$10.75M for Construction Programs Bureau projects
- \$10M for ag water conservation projects
- \$2.5M for water planning and education

\* 2026 appropriations are subject to the Governor signing House Bill 2; the signing period extends through March 10.



# Stacking Water Wins: New Sources

## 2025 Session

- \$40M for strategic water supply
- \$8M for brackish water technology, research and NMSU lab
- \$7.5M for aquifer monitoring and mapping
- \$2M for water data act

## 2026 Session\*

- \$35M for strategic water supply
- \$11.5M for aquifer monitoring and mapping
- \$3.6M for NMSU water research, training, education

\* 2026 appropriations are subject to the Governor signing House Bill 2; the signing period extends through March 10.



# Stacking Water Wins: Protection & Restoration

## 2025 Session

- \$20M to clean up contaminated sites
- \$20M for forest management and restoration
- \$15M for natural resources damages assessments and restoration
- \$5.7M for Superfund sites
- \$3M to address PFAS contamination

## 2026 Session\*

- \$25M to clean up contaminated sites, incl. uranium
- \$10M for riparian area management and restoration
- \$15M for natural resources damages assessments and restoration
- \$4M for drinking water support, incl. private wells
- \$1.5M for surface water permitting program

\* 2026 appropriations are subject to the Governor signing House Bill 2; the signing period extends through March 10.



# Stacking Water Wins: Water Education, Conservation, Delivery

## 2025 Session

- \$5M to implement the Governor's 50-Year Water Action Plan and Water Security Planning Act (WSPA)
- \$1M surface and groundwater metering
- \$1M for Elephant Butte Delta Channel improvements
- \$1M for Ute Reservoir improvements
- \$1M to implement regional water planning

## 2026 Session\*

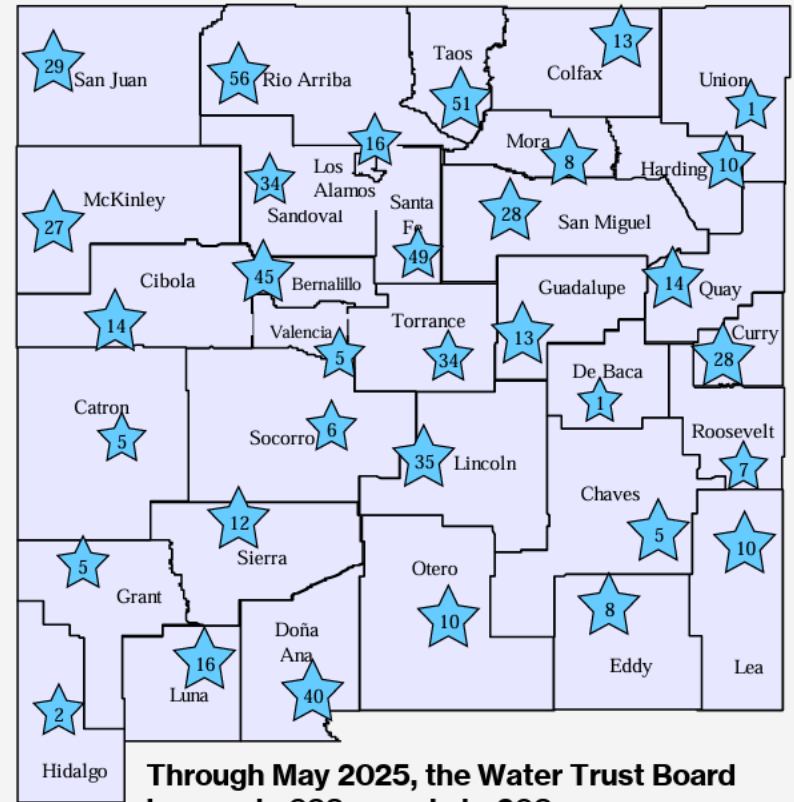
- \$13M for Strategic Water Reserve
- \$1.5M surface and groundwater metering
- \$1M for Elephant Butte Delta Channel improvements
- \$1M for Ute Reservoir improvements
- \$2.5M to implement the Governor's 50-Year Water Action Plan and WSPA

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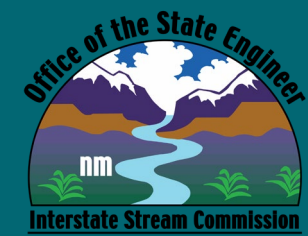
# 2026 Legislation: HB109

- Updates Water Project Fund prioritization criteria
- Requires weighted scoring system for project ranking
- Allows funding without legislative authorization through 2029
- Increases flexibility for project funding decisions



Through May 2025, the Water Trust Board has made 638 awards to 208 entities totaling nearly \$1 billion

Source: NMFA

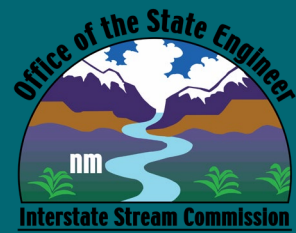


# HB111 – Water Enforcement Bill

- Strengthens enforcement authority of the State Engineer
- Targets illegal water diversion
- Increases monetary penalties
- Clarifies how and when penalties accrue

1 HOUSE BILL 111  
2 57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026  
3 INTRODUCED BY  
4 Kristina Ortez and Mimi Stewart and Andrea Romero  
5 and Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics and James G. Townsend  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10 AN ACT  
11 RELATING TO WATER, INCREASING THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR A  
12 VIOLATION OF WATER LAW.  
13  
14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:  
15 SECTION 1. Section 72-2-18 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2001,  
16 Chapter 143, Section 1, as amended) is amended to read:  
17 "72-2-18. STATE ENGINEER--ENFORCEMENT--COMPLIANCE  
18 ORDERS--PENALTY.--  
19 A. When a person, pursuant to a finding of fact,  
20 violates a requirement or prohibition of Chapter 72 NMSA 1978,  
21 a regulation, code, order or special order adopted by the state  
22 engineer pursuant to Section 72-2-8 NMSA 1978, a condition of a  
23 permit or license issued by the state engineer pursuant to law  
24 or an order entered by a court adjudicating a water right, the  
25 state engineer may, in addition to any other remedies available  
26  
27 .232729.2

underscored material = new  
[bracketed material] = delete



**Thank you!**