

Briefing Paper: 50-Year Water Plan -Proposed Approach-

New Mexico faces serious water challenges related to drought, climate change, growing population, gaps between supply and demand, inadequate infrastructure, resource constraints on water administration, and interstate and intrastate litigation. The 50-year Water Plan will provide an assessment of these challenges in various sectors of the State and the State as a whole; describe how we will bring all New Mexico stakeholders to the table to ensure inclusive water planning; and, most importantly, describe what New Mexicans can do to help; all with the goal of reducing risk, improving water resilience, and creating a realistic sustainable plan for the next 50 years. The 50-Year Plan (Plan) will be completed in Spring 2022 and will be guided by the three tenets of Governor's water resilience vision:

- Stewardship / Smart Water Management
- Sustainability
- Equity

Major Activities Supporting Development of the 50-year Water Plan

With the pandemic and associated economic downturn, limited resources for developing the Plan are available. Accordingly, we have evaluated how to make the best use of existing resources and will identify and utilize existing OSE/ISC staff to support the effort and will work to coordinate and receive input from all bureaus/programs in the agency. The following activities will occur in a stepwise fashion using our available resources, culminating in roll-out of the 50-year Water Plan in April 2022.

- 1) **Incorporate Governor Lujan Grisham's water resilience vision** as well as numerous on-going efforts initiated by the Lujan Grisham Administration **into the relevant portions of the 2018 State Water Plan**, which presented a "big-picture" view of the then current highest priority water issues in New Mexico and policies, goals and strategies to address them.. The Governor's administration has created new and supported collaborative initiatives that contribute to building resilience, informed through sound science, making the best use of limited resources, and leveraging partnerships to proactively address critical issues. They include:
 - a. Water Data Act Implementation (per 2019 HB 651)
 - b. The Forest and Watershed Advisory Board (per 2019 HB 266)
 - c. The Climate Change Task Force
 - d. The Drought Task Force
 - e. The Tribal Water Summit
- 2) **Proactively engage in water related climate work** that is presently in progress and incorporate and synthesize the findings in the Plan. We must use our resources efficiently to determine how these efforts, both complete and in progress (listed below), will contribute to the development of the Plan.
 - a. Water Resource Research Institute Statewide efforts

- b. The New Mexico Water Dialogue
- c. Santa Fe Basin Study and City of Santa Fe Long Range Plan
- d. Albuquerque 100 Year Plan
- e. Pecos Basin Study
- f. San Juan Climate Change Assessment
- g. Rio Grande Basin Study
- h. Regional Water Plans
- i. Previous State Water Planning documents

3) **New Initiative – Pivot and “Leap Ahead” to 2070**

Given the lack of new resources, we will use the experience of selected New Mexico water and climate experts to “leap ahead” 50 years to 2070 and describe how our water resources may have changed in various sections of the state and the state as a whole. That information will be used to identify areas of current and future resilience and problem areas and then to develop strategies/solutions for water resource questions, problems, issues, and water supply gaps. We will do this through the following steps:

A. The ISC will contract with the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources (NMBGMR) to convene a group of primarily New Mexican water resource and climate experts (up to eight total) to make the “leap ahead” analysis. Develop a planning approach that emphasizes using existing climate and water resource information.

B. The Water and Climate Advisory Experts will perform the “leap ahead” analysis for various areas the state and the state as a whole. The ISC and NMBGMR with selected research experts will bring the “leap ahead” information to OSE/ISC water administration and interstate compact experts and to expert local water providers/users in each of the sectors to examine and assess both the current water resource situation and the expected changes in 2070. This will ensure inclusive participation of all stakeholders in their respective watersheds.

Preliminary Approach and Project Schedule

We intend to complete this work in four phases in order to develop the 50-year Water Plan in a sound technical and science focused manner. The phases are summarized below.

Phase 1: Develop Planning Approach: Improving Resilience and Reducing Risk

The framework for the planning process, goals, roles, stakeholder engagement, and the result of the project will be defined. This process will take into consideration available information in elements 1 and 2 above, as well as the input from water and climate experts convened as described in element 3A. We will use best available science to inform this approach.

Phase 2: Perform “Leap Ahead” Analysis - Assessment of Current and Future Water Resource Conditions and Risk

Climate and water experts will use best available science to assess current conditions and risks, both now and in the future. They will work to identify activities that are currently mitigating risk and potential future activities all in consideration of hydrological and institutional constraints. Tools to assess water resource conditions and risk will be evaluated as stated in element 3A and B.

Phase 3: Outreach and Creation of Strategies to Achieve Resilience

This phase will focus on developing strategies to achieve resilience and reducing risk to water resources. The ISC will conduct outreach and education to water planning stakeholders throughout New Mexico based on the outcomes of the “leap ahead” analysis. The ISC will engage in virtual and / or in-person meetings or workshops, provide information via presentations, website, and email campaigns, and develop video and audio productions to address water planning topics.

Phase 4: Produce Draft, Review and Finalize Plan

ISC staff will synthesize the information developed in steps above and prepare the draft Plan. After review and revisions, ISC staff will prepare and present final 50-year Water Plan for consideration of the Interstate Stream Commission and Water Trust Board and transmittal to the Governor.

Phase	Date	Milestones
Phase 1	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene Water and Climate Advisory Experts • Develop Planning Approach
	January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official 50-Year Water Plan “Kick-off” • Governor to address the January 2021 Water Dialogue meeting (ISC to provide draft talking points)
	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Planning Retreat with ISC
Phase 2	June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Climate Advisory Experts Complete Leap Ahead Analysis • Draft Outline for Plan
	July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISC to conduct outreach to various sectors
	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water and Climate Advisory Experts present strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to the Governor - to the Legislative Interim Committee • Create opportunities for dialogue with Water and Climate Advisory experts, state agency experts and local experts to discuss water resource issues and strategies
Phase 3	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Draft 50-Year Plan • ISC and Water Trust Board to review Draft Plan and make suggestions for revisions

	January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water and Climate Advisory Experts presents at the annual Water Dialogue meeting
Phase 4	February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISC staff to provide Final Draft to Governor for review and revision
	March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISC to approve Final Plan
	April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Final 50-Year Plan and transmit to Governor

Note: Accomplishing the activities in the schedule will depend on available resources.