

# Water Appropriations Requested of the 2024 Legislature

Immediate Needs for a Transition to Sustainable Resilience



**WATER ADVOCATES**

11/15/2023 FOR NEW MEXICO & MIDDLE RIO GRANDE

**OGALLALA  
LAND & WATER  
CONSERVANCY**



SECURING THE FUTURE

Water Advocates Workshop November 16

# OSE/ISC Staff Capacity

**Capacity** – 31 new staff members requested by the State Engineer for FY25 per the OSE/ISC handout to the WNRC.

Task Force Recommendation 2.1.

- Assume \$120,000 cost per year per employee
- \$3.7 million FY25 and thereafter
- 30 additional positions needed next year to restore most of the positions eliminated by the Susanna Martinez administration

## Prepare OSE/ISC Plans to Implement Water Task Force Recommendations

Special appropriation requiring OSE/ISC to prepare an implementation plan for each of the 2022 Water Policy and Task Force consensus recommendations directed at these agencies. Prioritize implementation of that long list.

# Accelerate Implementation of the 2019 Water Data Act

Make large multi-year appropriation per the Sept 2023 New Mexico Water Data Plan.

- **Staff Capacity** is required for the four water agencies that generate and own water data to make that data accessible and publicly available.
- The 2023 Water Security Planning Act requires the data for water planning to be available to regions as the foundation of each region's work.

Water Task Force Recommendations 2.2, 2.7, and 2.8.

# Accelerate Implementation of the 2019 Water Data Act (continued)

The 2023 Water Data Act report to the Legislature includes an FY25 collaborative funding request totaling \$2.875 million in recurring funding and \$2.875 million in non-recurring funding.

- Implementation of the 2019 Act requires 23 staff positions total between the five agencies, almost all of them in IT positions.
- Only six positions have been funded.

The 2024 Legislature should capitalize a \$50 million fund from which the Legislature can make annual appropriations

# Expand Aquifer Mapping Monitoring

Appropriate \$1.2 million in recurring funding for staff and \$100 million for drilling aquifer research and water monitoring wells across New Mexico over the next 10 years.

Expand the aquifer mapping program in critical areas of the state where planning requires reliable information.

- Amount and extent of groundwater remaining
- Depletion trends
- Volumes of feasibly treatable water in New Mexico's brackish water aquifers.

Water Task Force Recommendations 2.8 and 3.2.

## Expand Aquifer Mapping Monitoring (continued)

**Make a \$50 million, five-year special appropriation to the NMBGMR to install and equip the first half of these wells.**

# Support Parallel Collaborative Regional Actions to Implement the 2023 Water Security Planning Act

Provide for grants to organized regional collaborations to:

- Self-organize inclusive and representative regional water planning entities in cooperation with the ISC, and/or
- Address immediate serious problems, such as in the Middle Rio Grande, and the Ogallala regions.
- Complete work over the next several years that otherwise would have to be completed later before collaborative problem-solving can commence.



## Support Parallel Collaborative Regional Actions (Continued)

Make a \$5 million special appropriation to the ISC for planning grants to inclusive regional collaboratives to:

- Inclusively self-organize
- Develop regional planning capacity
- Gain ISC's official approval
- Prepare detailed work plans for ISC grants
- Address or head off crises

# Incentivize Collaboration

Set aside windfall revenue in the Water Trust Fund to provide state-matching funding for:

- implementation of programs, policies, and projects that are prioritized by regional water planning entities, or to support
- inclusive, collaborative groups that are addressing or preventing serious problems now.

Related to Water Task Force Recommendation 2.3.

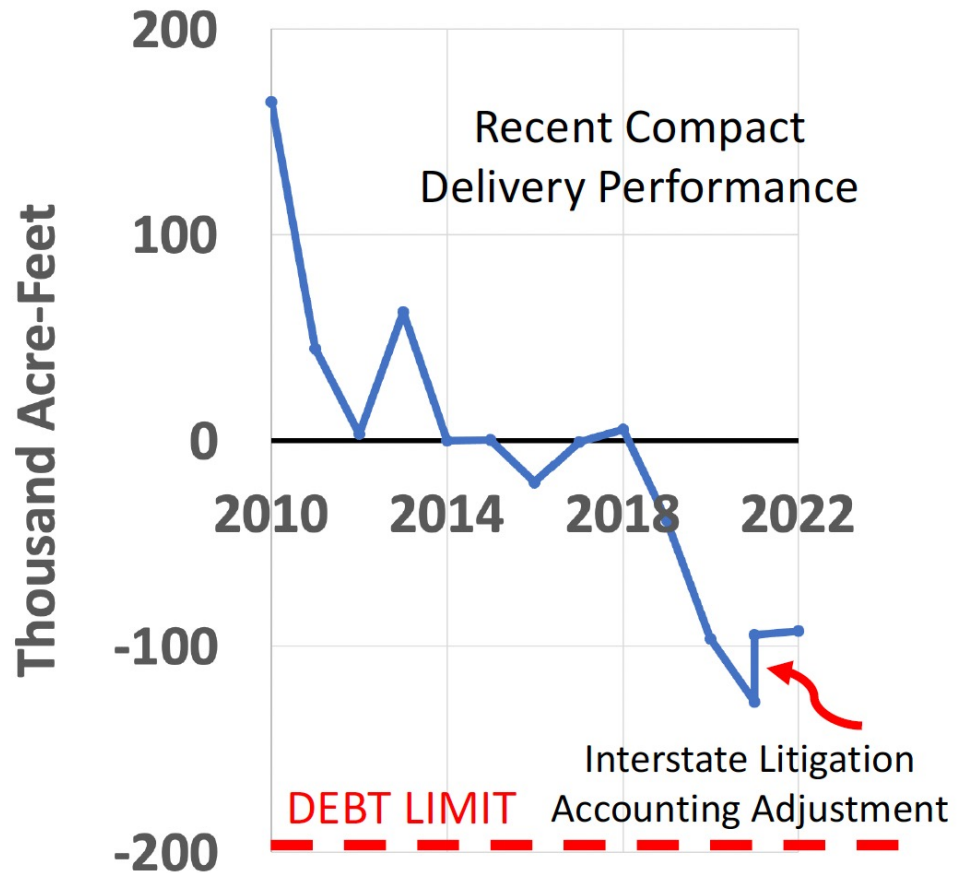
\$250 million appropriation, for adapting to water scarcity pursuant to regions agreed water funding priorities.

# 2024 New Mexico Legislature Special Appropriation Requests

- Restore OSE/ISC staff capacity, specifically including 31 positions requested by OSE/ISC
- Require a plan from the OSE/ISC to implement Water Task Force recommendations
- Provide funding required to timely implement the 2019 Water Data Act
- Provide funding to determine how much water we have left in aquifers across New Mexico
- Support regional organizing to implement the Water Security Planning Act and address or prevent crises
- Incentivize collaborative regional solutions to community and regional water scarcity.

## Middle Rio Grande Water Demand Exceeds the Legally Available Supply

- Maintaining compliance requires reduced water depletions
- 2023 compact accounting results will continue the trend
- Violation consequences are substantial



## N. Gaume November 7, 2023, [Statement to the Water and Natural Resources Committee](#)

"I evaluated the time requirements to complete a collaboratively prepared regional water plan for the Middle Rio Grande. The distinct tasks will require seven to eight years and millions in total funding. However, parallel preparatory tasks could be started in 2024.

If the Middle Rio Grande regional water planning commences from a cold start in 2026, and completes this work sequentially, the Middle Rio Grande plan could be completed in 2033, for approval in 2034.

A parallel approach could shave off up to four years from the time required for completion, but that necessitates resources appropriated by the 2024 Legislature."