



Requested Appropriations by the 2024 Legislature for Water Management and Planning

No.	Name	Agencies	Details	Recurring Funding	Non-Recurring Funding
1	Capacity Enhancement	OSE, ISC	Address the water and attendant economic security challenges of the 21st Century. We call on the 2024 Legislature to empower state water management agencies to transform themselves. That requires staff and resources to do the essential jobs only the State can do. Authorize 31 new staff positions in FY25.*	\$3.7 million FY25 onward	
2	Water Data	OSE, ISC, NMBGMR, NMED, EMNRD	2019 Water Data Act implementation, 17 new staff positions, mainly in Information Technology, along with investments to modernize state agencies' legacy IT infrastructure, data processes.**	\$2.875 million in FY25 onward	FY25 five-year \$30 million fund for annual funding to build water planning data sets and visualizations for water planning regions pursuant to the 2023 Water Security Planning Act. Continuity of effort is required.
3	Aquifer Mapping	NMBGMR	Funding for the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources to drill, equip, and monitor a statewide network of strategically located wells over next 10 years at \$10 million per year. New staff capacity is required to manage this work and secure federal matching funds.	\$1.2 million in FY25 onward	FY25 five-year \$50 million special appropriation to install and connect half the wells by FY29. Continuity of effort is required.
4	Regional Water Planning	ISC	Grants for regional collaborations, including for the Lower and Middle Rio Grande and Ogallala regions, to address urgent water supply resilience problems that challenge the public welfare.		FY25 five year \$5 million special appropriation for ISC grants supporting the self-organization of inclusive and representative regional water planning councils or entities, capacity building, and other planning prerequisites.
5	Incentivize Collaboration	Water Trust Fund	Set aside capital for State-matching funding to implement regional water planning entities' consensus priorities for water scarcity adaptation. Secure federal funding to multiply the State funding impact.		Create the More Arid Days Water Incentive Fund. Capitalize with \$250 million .
6	Water Task Force Recommendations Implementation	OSE/ISC	For OSE/ISC to develop and integrate a plan and schedule to accountably implement 2022 Water Policy and Task Force recommendations with the agencies' strategic plans	1.0 FTE experienced agency staff	\$0.3 million contractual services.
Total				\$7.775 million (FY25 onward)	\$335.3 million

*See OSE/ISC budget handout for the Water and Natural Resources Committee, November 7, 2023, Item #6.

**See 2023 New Mexico Water Data Report, September 2023, <https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/WNR%20100323%20Item%204%202023%20Water%20Data%20Plan.pdf>



2024 Legislature Special and Recurring Appropriations Requests

As New Mexico Water Ambassadors and representatives of our respective organizations, we propose the following for the 2024 legislative session.*

1. Capacity Enhancement: To address the water and economic security challenges of the 21st Century, we strongly urge legislators to:

Ensure a water resilient future for New Mexico by empowering state water management agencies. Transform and fund agencies to meet the growing challenges of the 21st Century: Water scarcity, aridification, supply and demand imbalances, contaminants of emerging concern, and equity. *2022 Water Task Force Recommendation 2.1.*

State Engineer Mike Hamman and ISC Director Hannah Riseley-White articulated the need for 31 new staff positions in their presentation to the 2023 Water and Natural Resources Committee on November 7, item #6. We emphasize New Mexico's critical need for these additional resources to modernize the operations of our water agencies, which will significantly enhance staff productivity and overall capacity. Required funding for FY25 at an estimated \$120,000 per position equals \$3.7 million.

2. Water Data: Fully fund the 2019 Water Data Act as set forth in the *2023 NM Water Data Plan*, thereby making reliable water data and information widely available for water resource planning and problem solving. Multiple Water Task Force recommendations and strategies address the foundational requirement for better, accessible water data.

The 2024 Legislature must provide substantial funding if the 2023 Water Security Planning Act is to be timely implemented by regions using the best data available from the New Mexico Water Data Initiative, pursuant to the 2023 Act. To realize this, the five agencies with statutory implementation roles require 23 new staff positions, mainly in information technology positions. Only six of the 23 are funded.

The 2023 Water Data Act report includes the five agencies' collaborative request for FY25, totaling \$2.875 million recurring requirements for staff to do the work, and \$2.875 million in non-recurring funds. Because continuity of effort is essential, we request the 2024 Legislature create a \$30 million, five-year fund from which it can make annual appropriations.

3. **Aquifer Mapping Expansion:** We propose \$1.2 million in recurring funding for staff and \$100 million over the next 10 years for drilling a statewide network of aquifer research and monitoring wells. This is essential to expand aquifer mapping into critical areas and define remaining groundwater reserves. Because continuity of effort is essential, we request the 2024 Legislature appropriate \$50 million to the NMBGMR over five years to install and instrument half of the wells.
4. **Regional Water Planning Program Support of Regions.** We recommend providing grants to regional collaborations preparing for regional water planning. Funding is crucial to timely progress, especially in the Lower Rio Grande, Middle Rio Grande, and Ogallala regions. State support is needed for inclusive, collaborative initiatives to self-organize to address urgent issues and prepare in parallel to the 2026 official ISC launch. Because these initiatives need state support in accordance with the letter and spirit of the 2023 Water Security Planning Act and because discontinuity of funding availability should not be a limiting factor, we request the 2024 Legislature appropriate \$5 million in non-recurring funds to the ISC for grants to support organized, appropriate initiatives for collective action over the next five years.
5. **Incentivize Collaboration:** We propose setting aside windfall revenue in a new More Arid Days Fund or the Water Trust Fund to provide state-matching funding for programs, policies, and projects prioritized by regional water planning entities. We recommend a \$250 million appropriation to implement collaboratively approved regional funding priorities for community and regional adaptation to increasing water scarcity.
6. **OSE/ISC Implementation Planning:** We request a special appropriation for OSE/ISC with language directing the agencies to submit written status reports and plans to implement each applicable 2022 Water Policy and Infrastructure Task Force consensus recommendation or the agencies' recommended alternative. This task necessitates an agency project manager/planner, support from a contractor to prepare a report, and significant cooperation from OSE/ISC executives, managers, and staff.

We recommend a \$0.3 million special appropriation with language to prioritize the OSE/ISC consideration of the Water Task Force recommendations and to require OSE/ISC accountability pursuant to the accountability strategy of Recommendation 2.1:

- A. Create new resilience metrics for long-term, adaptive resources management under climate change and aridification.
- B. Set and achieve measurable goals and objectives to assess and publicly report the effectiveness of funded initiatives.