

**Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly and the UNM Water Resources Program
Co-Sponsor**

Third Annual Forum on the Rio Grande Compact

Free public forum about the Rio Grande Compact on Thursday, April 17, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Science and Technology Park Rotunda located at 801 University Blvd. SE, Albuquerque.

A major constraint to our collective water usage is the Rio Grande Compact. All are invited to this annual Forum to learn about and discuss --

- * the Compact -- including the recent Annual Report and how high water flows also impact our usage and predicted long term shortfalls, and
- * an upstream perspective -- addressing such issues as how upstream usage is impacted by the Compact and MRG water usage, together with plans to reduce the observed trend of increasing demands and live within the accord's constraints.

The Rio Grande Compact, an interstate agreement that determines the amount of river water Colorado, New Mexico and Texas receives in the coming months, will be the topic of discussion during a free public forum on Thursday, April 17, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Science and Technology Park Rotunda located at 801 University Blvd. SE, Albuquerque. The forum is co-sponsored by the Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly and the University of New Mexico Water Resources Program.

Featured speakers include:

- * ISC Rio Grande Basin Manager Rolf Schmidt Petersen, who will offer an overall outline of Compact issues, address the recent 2007 report and expectations for 2008, and explain how high flows also impact the amount allocated to the Middle Rio Grande.
- * Claudia Borchert, water project manager for Santa Fe's water utility, who will offer an upstream outlook -- seemingly overlooked by downstream users.

Through questions and public discussion, learn why the Rio Grande Compact is important and how its constraints and decisions made accordingly affect all basin residents.

More information:

New Mexico is party to eight interstate compacts that govern surface water flowing across its borders. One of those agreements, the Rio Grande Compact, guarantees a portion of the annual flow of the Rio Grande to Colorado, New Mexico and Texas, and establishes a limit on the amount of water we may use, including here in the middle basin.

The Interstate Stream Commission, which oversees New Mexico's compact compliance, is ultimately responsible for the distribution of a very limited water supply to a myriad of middle basin water users, with consideration for a host of federal, state and local mandates.

How are the high snowpack and run-off expectations accounted for in the Compact? Even though high flows are anticipated, the basin is bound to an upper depletion limit of 405,000 acre feet of native river water. What does that mean? What were some of the expectations discussed at the annual Compact meeting at the end of March? Santa Fe is also planning to divert water from the river and must find water rights to offset increasing depletions. Upstreamers are impacted by the Compact and by usage downstream -- and downstreamers may also be impacted by usage upstream. How is Santa Fe managing a growing demand for new uses (and thereby not negatively impacting the Compact)? These questions and many others will be discussed during the forum.

The Rotunda is in the Science and Technology Park at UNM, 801 University Boulevard, SE in Albuquerque. While the Rotunda is at the corner of Baseheart and University, parking is behind the building off of Bradbury. Walk north east and cross the open paved area to the Park North Building, entering at the west entrance, and proceed down the corridor to the Rotunda at the east end of the building. Check the inset on the UNM campus map <www.unm.edu/campusmap.pdf> for further detail.

For further information contact Elaine Hebard (505) 247-8767 or visit the Water Assembly's Web site at www.WaterAssembly.org.