

State and Regional Water Planning Work Plan

FY 2014

Executive Summary

The water planning work program for fiscal year 2014 includes three major elements: 1. Finalizing the update of the state water plan; 2. Revising the regional water planning handbook; and 3. Updating up to three ISC-accepted regional water plans. The budget for this work plan is \$483, 600.

Background

Most of the chapters of the draft State Water Plan Update are written, pending final review and technical editing. Some require additional work. Efforts are underway to post draft chapters of the state's major river and groundwater basins on the OSE/ISC water planning webpages.

The regional water planning guidelines are under review and revision by the ISC staff and Planning Committee and a group of water stakeholders. The guideline revisions are needed before proposals for updating regional water plans are sought to guide the plans for more uniformity in data collection. The process for guiding and funding regions to update their regional water plans will then be carried out over the next few months by ISC staff and the ISC Planning Committee.

These elements make up our water planning program. Without reliable funding in the past from the legislature, efforts to continue work have been steady but limited. Much of the State Water Plan update has been drafted internally, with technical editing consulting assistance. The state's 16 water planning regions have waited for ISC grant funding to update their plans or sought other assistance. The key to New Mexico's water planning integration depends on resources for regions to work out their differences between and among one another, in particular, so that they form a basis for our State Water Plan.

Description

State Water Plan – The water planner is coordinating the completion of the State Water Plan Update. Additional resources were needed in this fiscal year (2013) to continue the update to the 2003 State Water Plan that is partially drafted and edited. Remaining work on the plan includes drafting unwritten sections, updating information, and technical editing. New Mexico state law requires the OSE and ISC to review the plan every five years and to subsequently update the plan as needed.

Regional Water Planning – Update Regional Water Planning Handbook Guidelines. With technical assistance from contractors, the planner also is updating the regional water planning guidelines (reference: Regional Water Planning Handbook, NMISC 1994) to provide for consistency and accountability in updating regional water plans. Updating the guidelines is needed for regions to follow a template that will enable their water plans to address changing conditions due to ongoing drought and demographic changes and to feed into the next version of the State Water Plan. The OSE/ISC received an appropriation for state and regional water planning for the first time in several years. The water planner will work with key OSE and ISC staff, regional water planning groups, and other interested stateholders to update the regional water plan guidelines. Contract facilitation and hydrology assistance will help the planner design and

facilitate meetings for developing consensus related to improving the water planning template and the process for monitoring implementation of regional water plans. The goal of revising the template is to provide for integration of regional water plans, as appropriate, with the State Water Plan. Such integration is part of the comprehensive State Water Plan statute.

Update of selected Regional Water Plans – The appropriation for regional plans is intended to assist up to three regions in updating their regional water plans. The criteria and application process for selecting which regions will receive a grant is the third work element. Staff is working with the ISC Planning Committee to develop the process. The full Interstate Stream Commission will then review and approve those regions recommended for funding for updating their water plans. If additional resources become available, other regions may also begin the process of updating their plans.

Work Plan Budget, Funding Source & Time Frame

The original budget for planning \$483,600 which consists of \$83,600 from the Irrigation Works Construction fund in the ISC operating budget and \$400,000 from the Special Appropriation. A work order increase in the amount of \$69,000 was issued in May to the ISC contractor to complete the technical editing portion of the State Water Plan update and to update the original water planning guidelines, thus, now leaving an available balance of \$414,600. The available budget will be used to finish the State Water Plan update; revise the regional water planning guidelines; and update up to three regional water plans in the coming fiscal year (2014), potentially more plans if additional resources become available.

The period for this work plan is through June 30, 2013 on the following proposed schedule:

- State Water Plan Update
 - Draft Basin chapters posted on website – July
 - Other draft chapters on website – October
 - State Water Plan update released – December
- Regional Water Planning Handbook Revisions
 - Post draft changes – July
 - Public meeting and Public Comments – July
 - ISC Review and Approval of Handbook - August
- Regional Water Plans
 - RWP selection criteria defined – July
 - Request for Proposals - September
 - Proposals Due - October
 - Date of Award –December

Work Plan Risks and Impact

An updated State Water Plan and Regional Water Planning Guidelines will ensure better integration of regional water plans with the State Water Plan in future planning iterations. More immediately, the state's Water Trust Board will have the plans to consider in their water infrastructure funding decision. The result will be implementation of projects that have been made a priority in the regions and statewide.

Work Plan Manager Angela Bordegaray