



Middle Rio Grande Listening Session

July, 2008

Albuquerque, NM

presented by:

Estevan López, PE, Director
Interstate Stream Commission

What is the purpose of this event?

The Interstate Stream Commission (ISC) seeks to collaborate with stakeholders in the Middle Rio Grande for the effective implementation of the Strategic Water Reserve.



Strategic Water Reserve

The Reserve was created through a collaborative legislative process to diminish future conflicts relating to interstate stream compacts and endangered species. Recent examples of conflicts:

1. Under-delivery of Pecos River water to Texas
2. The endangered silvery minnow in the middle Rio Grande.



What is the Strategic Water Reserve?

The Reserve is an additional management tool for the ISC to acquire water rights for these purposes:

1. Interstate river compact compliance and
2. Assist state and water users in efforts to benefit threatened & endangered species.



Why do we have a Strategic Water Reserve?

The Strategic Water Reserve aims to protect the waters and people of New Mexico from threats to our shared water supply.



Strategic Water Reserve

We have had some successes on the Pecos River and now we are focusing on the Middle Rio Grande.



Strategic Water Reserve Priorities

The ISC formally designated priority basins
to benefit from the Reserve 2008 Priorities:



Strategic Water Reserve Priorities

Additionally, the ISC seeks input from stakeholders in the priority areas, including:

1. Indian Nations, Tribes and Pueblos
2. Counties
3. Municipalities
4. Irrigation, Conservancy and other Special Water Districts
5. Soil and Water Conservation Districts
6. Water Authorities
7. Water Planning Regions



Implementation of the Strategic Water Reserve in the MRG

The ISC is planning for incremental implementation and long-term success of the Reserve in the MRG.

Timing and success will be determined by:

1. Funding allocations and
2. Cooperation with the MRG Collaborative Endangered Species Program, local stakeholders and government entities.



Strategic Water Reserve

Legal Protections

- Water must remain in river reach or groundwater basin of origin
- No condemnation
- No impairment to existing users



Strategic Water Reserve

Legal Protections

- No new depletions
- No acequia water
- Leased water rights not subject to forfeiture for non-use
- Must comply with State Engineer transfer process

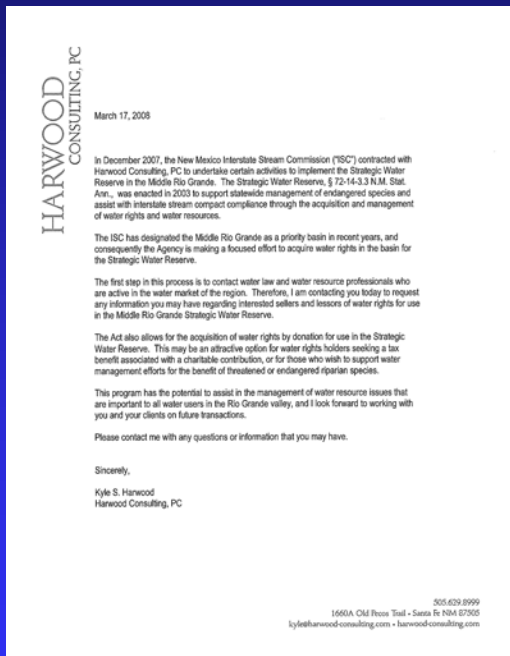


How Can the ISC Acquire Water for the Strategic Water Reserve in the MRG?

- Purchase water from willing sellers
- Lease water from willing lessors
- Receive donations



Implementation of the Strategic Water Reserve in the MRG



Outreach has begun in the MRG and potential acquisitions are being reviewed.



Strategic Water Reserve Acquisition Challenges in the MRG

- Expense of water rights
- Scarcity of and competition for water rights
- Lack of awareness about the Reserve
- New program in a complex environment



How Can the ISC Use Strategic Water Reserve in the Middle Rio Grande?

Preliminary ideas include:

- Restoring river habitat (offset depletions)
- Maintaining flow in critical river locations
- Supporting interstate river compact deliveries



**What should be the
water acquisition priorities?**

**What should be the
water use priorities?**

**How can the ISC spread the word
about the Strategic Water Reserve?**

Other thoughts?



Please complete the comment forms.

**Please contact us if
you are interested in selling some water.**

Thank you!



www.ose.state.nm.us