



**For immediate release:**

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## **Public Invited to Participate in Town Hall Meeting for New Mexico's First State Water Plan**

**(SANTA FE, New Mexico)** – Citizens with an interest in water issues are invited to submit their names for consideration as participants at a **Town Hall Meeting** for the first comprehensive state water plan.

The Town Hall Meeting will be held **September 23-25**, in Albuquerque, by the Interstate Stream Commission, with the Office of the State Engineer and the Water Trust Board, as provided in the Water Plan Act.

"We would like for all New Mexicans to be able to provide input at this forum, but space is limited," said Director of Planning and Communication Rhea Graham. "So, we have decided to hold a lottery, comprised of individuals equally representing our three Congressional districts, to select who will represent New Mexicans in this consensus process. We felt this was the most equitable way to allow for full public participation from around the state."

Governor Richardson mandated that a comprehensive state water plan be in place by the end of December 2003. Information is being gathered from public meetings in 29 communities throughout the state, from July through September, and comments received are posted on the agency's web site along with the details about this Town Hall.

**(MORE)**

Public input will be summarized and provided to participants to help develop workable policy recommendations, which will be incorporated into the final state water plan document. In addition, this first state water plan will also provide a framework for the Office of the State Engineer, the Interstate Stream Commission, and the Water Trust Board to manage water issues and prioritize funding needs around the state in coming years.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Office of the State Engineer web site at: [www.ose.state.nm.us](http://www.ose.state.nm.us) Members of the public who are interested in applying to participate in the Town Hall are encouraged to fax the reply form to (505) 764-3893, in Albuquerque.

Participant names will be selected on September 5, 2003 using the lottery process. Interested citizens must respond either by facsimile transmission or by letter by 1:00 p.m. on September 3, 2003. If selected for the lottery, an invitation, which is non-transferable and cannot be delegated to another individual, will result.

The Office of the State Engineer and the Interstate Stream Commission are separate but companion agencies charged with administering the state's water resources. The agencies have power over the supervision, measurement, appropriation and distribution of almost all surface and ground water in New Mexico, including streams and rivers that cross state boundaries. The State Engineer is also Secretary of the Interstate Stream Commission and oversees the staff of both agencies.

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