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Summer Recreational Opportunities Look Promising Based on Winter Rains and Snowpack

(ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico) – Record-setting amounts of precipitation around the state this year prompted officials to announce today that recreational opportunities in New Mexico will likely be abundant this summer.

Estimates of better than average snowpack runoff and reservoir levels were presented at a joint news conference in Albuquerque with state officials attending including: State Engineer John D'Antonio, Secretary of Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Joanna Prukop, Secretary of Tourism Mike Cerletti and State Parks Division Director David Simon.

"With the best snowpack we have seen within the last ten years, we are predicting good runoff for the spring and a great recreational season this summer," said State Engineer John D'Antonio. "However, we hope to see more rain to ensure optimal reservoir levels for New Mexico's water enthusiasts on Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day. Elephant Butte Reservoir in particular should have much improved recreational opportunities."

While the wet fall and winter weather has certainly helped, D'Antonio cautioned that drought conditions may return later in the year.

"I want to emphasize that it will take at least a couple of more years of above average snowpack before we can say that the drought is over," said State Engineer John D'Antonio.

Although drought conditions remain statewide, there will still be opportunities for fun with New Mexico State Parks Division taking steps to ensure park visitors have access to lakeshores, marinas and boat ramps.

(MORE)

“State Parks staff have been working hard to improve boater access and with conditions getting better at Elephant Butte, Navajo and Ute lakes, visitors will reap the benefits this summer,” said Secretary of Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Joanna Prukop. “Heron, El Vado, Abiquiu and Conchas lakes should have plenty of recreational water through the major summer holidays.”

Even though the State Parks Division welcomes improved boating conditions, they remain focused on expanding recreational opportunities at all of their parks.

“We are pleased the outlook for our lakes have improved this year, but I wish to remind everyone there’s more to do at our lake parks,” said State Parks Director Dave Simon. “We’re hosting over 2,500 special events and education programs this year. Our top priorities remain, to provide park visitors with exciting, valuable park experiences and create a positive impact on the economies of neighboring communities.”

“Water sports remain one of New Mexico’s top summertime attractions, for locals and visitors alike,” said Secretary of Tourism Mike Cerletti. “Boating, fishing, snorkeling, water skiing and sailing will continue to offer cool-water excitement all summer long, while rafting, canoeing and kayaking during spring runoff in the Rio Grande should be especially good this year.”

The Office of the State Engineer is charged with administering the state’s water resources. The State Engineer has power over the supervision, measurement, appropriation and distribution of all surface and groundwater in New Mexico, including streams and rivers that cross state boundaries. The State Engineer is also Secretary of the Interstate Stream Commission and oversees its staff.

The Interstate Stream Commission is charged with separate duties including protecting New Mexico’s right to water under eight interstate stream compacts, ensuring the state complies with each of those compacts, as well as water planning.

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