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## **Interstate Stream Commission Hires Water Resource Specialist for Albuquerque**

**(ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico)** — Several important projects within the Rio Grande basin will be picking up momentum now that Anders Lundahl has been hired as a Water Resource Specialist for the Interstate Stream Commission's Rio Grande Bureau.

The Interstate Stream Commission is an active member of the Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Collaborative Program, which works to prevent the extinction of listed species, including the Rio Grande silvery minnow and Southwestern willow flycatcher, as well as assisting in recovery efforts while protecting current and future water uses of the Rio Grande.

"Lundahl will be out on the Rio Grande throughout the irrigation season collecting critical real-time data for the 'River Eyes' program." said Grace Haggerty, Senior Hydrologist with the Interstate Stream Commission. "He will also be helping with the new Silvery Minnow Refugium in Los Lunas as well as with key river restoration projects."

Lundahl holds a bachelor's degree in geology and a master's degree in water resources from the University of New Mexico. Prior to joining the Interstate Stream Commission, he spent the past six years working as a hydrologist for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.

The River Eyes program was established to assist New Mexico water users and the federal government in fulfillment of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services Biological Opinion requirements. Observations made of changes in river flows and of drying river sections will be used by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service crews to rescue stranded minnow. River Eyes program participants include the Interstate Stream Commission contractors S.S. Papadopoulos, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.

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Another project that Lundahl will be engaged in is the Los Lunas Silvery Minnow Refugium. The Interstate Stream Commission is constructing a second refugium in the Village of Los Lunas on state-owned lands. This facility will be in addition to a naturalized refugium operating at the City of Albuquerque's Biopark. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service require construction of a total of three such minnow refugia. Captively-bred fish that are raised under more naturalized conditions appear to have better chances for survival when released to the river.

Lundahl may also be seen out directing an amphibious excavator while overseeing the Interstate Stream Commission's Phase II Albuquerque Riverine Restoration project. This is the second year of a projected four-year project. A number of habitat restoration techniques will be used to create habitat diversity that is so important for the various life stages of the minnow.

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 nine-member 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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