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For more information, contact:

Karin Stangl, Director
Planning and Communication Division
(505) 699-4923 cell

Julie Maas, Public Relations Specialist
Planning and Communication Division
(505) 765-2011

State Engineer Reviews Key Agency Milestones as the “Celebration of a Century of Service to New Mexico” Begins in 2007

(SANTA FE, New Mexico) — New Mexico State Engineer John D’Antonio today said the negotiation and execution of interstate stream compacts, the many years that Steve Reynolds served as the New Mexico State Engineer, and the adoption of rules and regulations for the Active Water Resource Management initiative as key milestones in effective water management in New Mexico.

Lt. Governor Diane Denish, Interstate Stream Commissioners, and State Legislators, as well as the Chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council were present for the ceremonies, which took place in Albuquerque.

“Addressing the water issues of New Mexico has always been high on my agenda. This year it is the top of the ticket in the ‘Year of Water,’ said Governor Bill Richardson. “We will aggressively advance an agenda that increases available water supplies, enhances riparian and in-stream habitats, rewards conservation, and makes water available for smart development – all while protecting the rights and supplies of senior water users. Water is the key element in the future of New Mexico, both for its people and its natural beauty. We will give it the attention and investment that it richly deserves.”

“Today the most important initiative we have is Active Water Resource Management, which will give us the tools to manage highly variable water supplies,” said D’Antonio. “In coming years, we also hope to make significant progress in the implementation of Indian water rights settlements and the regionalization of water projects.”

During the news conference a new logo for the agency was presented that will feature the year when the territorial water code was enacted -- in 1907 -- as well the current year -- of 2007.

Then a proclamation signed by Governor Richardson was read by the Governor’s Planning and Policy Director Bill Hume to kick off the Century of Service activities for the coming year, which was the first to be signed by the new Secretary of State Mary Herrera.

(MORE)

Key goals cited for the Office of the State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission included continuing to make strides with the Active Water Resource Management initiative, to be sure tools are in place to manage future variability in water supplies whether it be droughts or floods. Other goals the State Engineer placed a priority on include making progress on implementation of Indian water rights settlements, continuing adjudications around the state, and continuing to update the WATERS database.

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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