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Office of the State Engineer Wins Three Achievement Awards For Public Relations Excellence

(SANTA FE, New Mexico) – For the fourth year in a row, the Office of the State Engineer received Cumbre Awards of excellence from the New Mexico Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (NMPSA) this year.

The Cumbre Awards is an annual competition in the State of New Mexico, which recognizes public relations professionals and their respective organizations for their excellence in producing effective campaigns and tactics.

The Office of the State Engineer's Planning and Communication Division received a **First-Place Gold 2007 Cumbre Award** for the "*Water for a Nation*" video program in the public relations visual presentation tactics category. The video program was designed to focus on why funding is needed to implement the Navajo Nation water rights settlement agreement. The program spotlights at the fact that many Navajos who live in western new Mexico are without basic water service for cooking, drinking, or taking a shower. Often, water must be hauled to remote areas by barrels on the back of trucks. The video program was produced in cooperation with Cordova Communications, of Albuquerque.

Also, the division won a **Second-Place Silver 2007 Cumbre Award** for the public outreach campaign "**Active Water Resource Management in the Lower Rio Grande Basin: Putting Tools in Place to Manage the Drought**" in the public relations campaigns category. This public outreach campaign -- which included a series of public meetings, legislative briefings, and media visits -- supported the State Engineer's efforts to manage future drought through the Active Water Resource Management initiative. The Lower Rio Grande Basin is one of seven basins around the state that was made a priority by the State Engineer.

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In addition, the division won a **Second-Place Silver 2007 Cumbre Award** for the "**2006 State Water Plan Progress Report**" in the public relations publications and brochures tactics category. This report detailed the progress made on 98 implementation strategies identified in New Mexico's First State Water Plan, which was completed in 2003. Judges noted that the report was "well written and communicated key messages consistently for a very complex topic." The report was produced in cooperation with Graftext, of Santa Fe.

"These awards are significant because they reflect on our agency's efforts to clearly communicate our priorities and initiatives to the public," said Planning and Communication Division Director Karin Stangl. "Our agency strives to go above and beyond expectations when it comes to public outreach."

"These awards demonstrate that the quality of work produced by the communication team here at this state agency is the norm rather than the exception," said State Engineer John D'Antonio. "I'm very proud of the exceptional job that all our agency employees do each and every day. Effective communication with the public about our goals and objectives remains one of my top priorities as State Engineer."

The Cumbre Tactic Awards recognize expertise in writing, design, production, and management of materials that meet a single communication need.

The Cumbre Campaign Awards recognize outstanding achievement in a comprehensive public relations campaign for writing, design production, and management of materials consisting of more than one communication tool, program or component. The campaign must also include planning and evaluation activities.

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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