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## **State Engineer Hires Water Master**

**(SANTA FE, New Mexico)** – New Mexico State Engineer John D'Antonio announced that a new water master has been hired for the Rio Gallinas in San Miguel County.

**Luis Aguirre** began working for the Office of the State Engineer on October 1 and is co-filling the position until the current Water Master Larry Vigil retires in December. Water Masters actively administer water on the Rio Gallinas stream system that includes monitoring the diversion and use of the waters on a daily basis, especially during irrigation season.

In August 2003, the State Engineer declared San Miguel County a special water district in response to requests by water right users in the area to actively manage and administer the diversions and use of water from the Rio Gallinas on a day-to-day basis. The declaration also gave the State Engineer the authority to create a position and appoint a water master for the district.

In coming months, the Office of the State Engineer will be working with water users to develop a water master manual that will address specific needs of water users on the Rio Gallinas.

The State Engineer views the declaration of the special water district as a means to a solution for avoiding conflict over water in the event of a lengthy period of drought.

"Water masters serve an important function for the Office of the State Engineer because they work in the field and make sure that water is equitably distributed to water users in a particular area," said State Engineer John D'Antonio. "Aguirre will be an asset to our agency in this capacity."

**(MORE)**

Aguirre earned his Bachelor of Science degree in general agriculture/soils and water management from Texas A & I University in College Station, Texas (currently named Texas A & M University-Kingsville) near Corpus Christi, Texas. He had transferred from Escuela Agricola Panamericana near Tegucigalpa, Honduras where he graduated as an agronomist with emphasis on plant and animal production.

Aguirre received his Master of Science degree in agriculture/agriculture water management from Texas A & M University in College Station, Texas that included a research assistantship on drip irrigation. He had transferred from a post-graduate program at Centro Interamericano de Desarrollo Integral de Aguas y Tierras with the Universidad de Los Andes in Merida, Venezuela.

Aguirre was previously employed as a planner for the San Antonio Water System in Texas, and he served on the Texas Commission on Water Quality for 16 years. He has experience working in water rights, water quality, emergency response, non-point source pollution and wellhead protection programs for the State of Texas, and four years managing agriculture water conservation programs with a major water utility company.

Aguirre's interests include volunteering with community programs that protect water quality and encourage water conservation. He enjoys spending time with his family as well as traveling, hiking and playing soccer, volleyball and racquetball.

*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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