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State Engineer Hires New Water Master in the Upper Mimbres River Basin

(DEMING, New Mexico) – New Mexico State Engineer John D’Antonio announced that an additional Water Master has been hired for the Upper Mimbres River area for the Deming District Office of the State Engineer.

Adam Polley is responsible for the delivery and management of water to the acequias in the Grant County area. Past work experience includes teaching agriculture in Bayard, NM. Polley also held the position of county manager in both Sierra and Catron Counties. Also, he has government agency experience as a caseworker for Income Support Division with Human Services Department of the State of New Mexico in Truth Or Consequences, NM.

Polley began his duties as a Water Master in the Upper Mimbres River Water Master District on December 31, 2007. District III in the Deming area includes the Animas Valley, Cloverdale, Gila-San Francisco, Hatchita, Lordsburg, Mimbres, Mount Riley, Nutt-Hockett, Playas, San Simon, Virden Valley and Yaqui underground water basins and basin surface rights.

Polley joins current Water Master Brian Stevenson who is working to ensure the public safety of water users in the District and also to ensure protection of existing water rights in the District from impairment.

Water Masters actively administer the distribution of water from stream systems on a daily basis. As a part of Active Water Resource Management, the State Engineer has the authority to create special water districts and appoint Water Masters as he determines necessary for the administration of water rights. Water Masters also regulate and control waters of such water districts so as to prevent waste.

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In December 2004, the State Engineer included the Upper Mimbres, the area along the Mimbres River North of Highway 152, as one of its seven priority basins. Currently, a large portion of the Mimbres Basin is being managed under Active Water Resource Management utilizing a groundwater model that encompasses critical areas within the region. The active management of the basin is necessary to ensure economical and satisfactory apportionment of the water in the area.

"Water masters serve a very important function for the Office of the State Engineer because they work in the field and make sure that water and the rights to it are being equitably distributed to water users in a particular area," said State Engineer John D'Antonio. "Polley's educational background in New Mexico agricultural and familiarity with the farming and ranching in the area will make him an ideal person to help manage the river basin."

Polley earned his bachelor's degree in agricultural economics in 1982 and another bachelor's degree in agricultural extension and Education in 1983, both from New Mexico State University (NMSU). Polley continued with his graduate education at NMSU and earned a masters degree in agriculture in 1985.

Polley and his wife Lola have made restoring their 1930's home their main hobby. He also enjoys fishing when he can.

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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