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New Mexico's Projected Population Dynamics

(SANTA FE, New Mexico) – The New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission is pleased to announce the release of new population projections for New Mexico counties and water planning regions. The projections which extend through the year 2060, were prepared by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of New Mexico.

According to Interstate Stream Commission Director Estevan López, "As part of its mission, the Interstate Stream Commission supports the 16 New Mexico water planning regions in ensuring that there are adequate supplies of water to meet future demand. These forecasts will enable the regions to better plan for their future water needs." The report was commissioned by the Planning and Communication Division of the Office of the State Engineer/Interstate Stream Commission.

The projections take into account both historic trends and recent changes in the rates of migration (in-migration and out-migration) and natural increase (births minus deaths). Population differences in the rates of these events drive differences in growth across the state's water planning regions.

It is projected that the population of New Mexico will increase from the July 1, 2007 estimate of 2,059,075 to 2,540,145 in 2020 and to 3,710,875 by 2060. A majority of this growth is expected to occur within the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area.

According to the report, between 2005 and 2010, the two fastest growing regions will all exceed two percent average annual population growth – from a high of 2.91 percent in the Middle Rio Grande region to the lower rate of 2.21 percent in the Lower Rio Grande region. In 2005, the New Mexican population is characterized by concentrations around the Rio Grande. While the entire state will nearly double in population size, this picture of the relative distribution of populations will change only slightly. An overriding conclusion of the report is that if historical trends continue, the New Mexico population between 2005 and 2060 will become increasingly concentrated in the Middle Rio Grande (Albuquerque), Lower Rio Grande (Las Cruces), and the Jemez y Sangre (Santa Fe) water planning regions. Secondary densities

will accumulate in the San Juan, Lower Pecos Valley, and Northwest New Mexico regions between 2005 and 2020.

A summary of the projections will be posted on the Interstate Stream Commission website at www.ose.state.nm.us/ under "Hot Topics." For additional information, please contact Angela Bordegaray at (505) 827-6167.

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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