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State Engineer Meets on Measuring and Metering in the Mimbres River Basin

(SANTA FE, New Mexico) – About 70 people attended a public meeting in San Lorenzo on Tuesday, January 13 to hear State Engineer John D'Antonio present a phased-in action plan for measuring and metering in the Mimbres Basin.

D'Antonio said legislators in 2003 gave the State Engineer authority to administer water allocations. He initiated Active Water Resource Management as a means for putting emergency tools in place in select New Mexico basins to prepare for inevitable drought cycles, which includes the proposed phased-in action plan for measuring and metering in the Mimbres River Basin.

"The Upper Mimbres is already metered. We now need meters in the middle and lower Mimbres," said D'Antonio. "My goal is to protect senior water right holders and ensure they get their fair share of water in times of variable supplies."

Details of the action plan included the proposed timeline for the first year, subsequent years, as well as the plan for ten years and beyond.

Metering and measuring, funding for meters, water liaisons (masters) and future Water Master Manuals, ditch agreements, and evaluation of ditch efficiencies are all part of the plan.

He also said acequia rehabilitation programs for water users are available and stressed that basin-specific rules and regulations will be developed with input from water users. Alternative administration plans among adjudicated or licensed water right holders are encouraged.

(MORE)

D'Antonio listed other river basins throughout the state that have established Water Masters Districts. He explained how those basins are successfully being administered and the sharing agreements that are in place. He gave examples where measuring and metering have already been successfully implemented around the state, including on the Cimarron River, Rio Costilla and Rio Chama.

The State Engineer shared with those in attendance the feedback he received from the 18 individual one-on-one meetings held in San Lorenzo on October 30, and how those concerns are being addressed. He brought the meeting to a close after answering questions and listening to comments from audience members.

To view the presentation and handouts that were available at the meeting, visit the Office of the State Engineer website at www.ose.state.nm.us and click on Hot Topics, Mimbres Public Outreach.

To make an appointment to discuss these topics in detail, or to submit a ditch agreement, please contact the Office of the State Engineer District 3 office at (575) 546-2851.

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 nine-member 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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