



**For immediate release:**

December 3, 2009

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## **The State Engineer Closes Curry-Portales Basins To New Groundwater Appropriations**

**(CLOVIS, New Mexico)** The State Engineer has issued an order closing the High Plains aquifer in Curry-Portales Underground Water Basins (CPUWBs) to the filing of applications for new appropriations of ground water.

The order was issued due to limited groundwater supply within the area. The High Plains aquifer is the primary water supply source in the CPUWBs and consists of the water bearing deposits of the Ogallala Formation and alluvial sediments. Modeling studies and observed water level declines indicate large portions of the aquifer may become unsaturated within 40 years.

This order will not affect the ability to obtain well permits for relatively small quantities of water for domestic, stock and temporary construction purposes. In addition to these wells, other permits for change location of well, replacement wells, and supplemental wells may be obtained if statutory requirements are met.

"This order was put in place to extend the life of the aquifer in the Curry-Portales Underground Water Basin," said State Engineer John D'Antonio. "It will protect senior water right owners and help to ensure a more sustainable water source in the future."

The Office of the State Engineer is in the process of developing new administrative guidelines for the processing of water right applications. The agency plans to hold a public meeting next year to present the draft guidelines for public comment. Questions pertaining to the order will also be addressed. The State Engineer also plans to hold many stakeholder work meetings prior to the public meeting.

*The Office of the State Engineer is charged with administering the state's water resources. The State Engineer has the responsibility to allocate, measure, administer, and oversee the 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.*

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