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## **State Engineer's Metering Initiative in the Mimbres Basin Is Successful**

**(DEMING, New Mexico)** — The first full year of surface water meter installation in the middle and lower Mimbres basin has been very successful, said New Mexico State Engineer John D'Antonio today.

The meter data show that during 2009 there were 10 meters installed in the middle and lower portions of the Mimbres River – 4 in the Middle Mimbres, and 6 in the Lower Mimbres at a total cost of \$225,000. There are 11 additional meters planned, and two more that are in the initial agreement phase of the installation process. Including the 9 that were installed in the upper Mimbres previously, that brings the total number of ditches metered to 19.

About 80,000 acres are irrigated in the Mimbres basin, including both groundwater and surface water.

"We are encouraged that most people have signed on to the metering program," said New Mexico State Engineer John D'Antonio. "There is still some money left from an appropriation from the 2009 State Legislature for anyone who wants to still sign up for financial assistance in obtaining a meter."

Data regarding diversions taken from the Mimbres River is collected in two ways. The water use is either logged electronically onto a computer with data collected via satellite, or the District 3-Deming Office Water Masters check the metering stations and manually collect the information.

"Our Water Masters have been out in the field this spring, checking meters and gathering meter readings as necessary," said D'Antonio. "The information provides an improved picture of water supply and surface water usage in the Mimbres Basin."

Metering and the tracking of water use benefits water users as a means to protect their water rights. Water Masters are continuing to take the essential steps to achieve 100 percent installation. It is estimated that 61 percent of the surface water diversions are now measured.

**(MORE)**

The metering program is part of the Active Water Resource Management initiative, which was launched by the State Engineer in January of 2004. Surface water measurement helps the Office of the State Engineer manage and administer waters of the Mimbres stream system by putting the tools in place effectively manage our state's variable water supply.

For information about the metering program, contact the District 3 Office of the State Engineer in Deming at (575) 546-2851.

*The New Mexico 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.*

*The New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission is charged with 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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