

**TIER-1 APPLICATION TO THE NEW MEXICO INTERSTATE STREAM COMMISSION
FOR NEW MEXICO UNIT OR WATER UTILIZATION ALTERNATIVE
UNDER THE ARIZONA WATER SETTLEMENTS ACT**

APPLICANT INFORMATION (PRINT OR

DATE: July 14, 2011

1. Legal Name: Allyson Siwik	2. Organization: Gila Conservation Coalition				
3. Address (street, city, county, state, and zip code): 305A North Cooper St. Silver City, NM 88061	4. Name, email, and phone number of contract person: Allyson Siwik 575.538.8078 info@gilaconservation.org				
5. TYPE OF APPLICATION (check one): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary for review <input type="checkbox"/> Revised	6. TYPE OF APPLICANT (CHECK BOX): <input type="checkbox"/> local governments or municipalities <input type="checkbox"/> soil and water conservation districts, irrigation districts or commissions, acequias, or other political subdivision of the State of New Mexico <input type="checkbox"/> institutions of higher education or a consortium of such institutions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> non-profit organizations or associations <input type="checkbox"/> private individual/s <input type="checkbox"/> federal agency (ies) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)				
7. BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Purchase Unused Water Rights for Outside Domestic Use in the Gila-San Francisco Basin Project to be administered and implemented by the Office of the State Engineer and/or Interstate Stream Commission.	(Continuation of 6. TYPE OF APPLICANT)				
8. AREAS AFFECTED (describe by county, municipality, township, etc. as applicable): Grant County Hidalgo County Catron County	(Continuation of 6. TYPE OF APPLICANT)				
9. TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED (in \$1,000):					
2012: \$800,000	2013: \$600,000	2014: \$600,000	2015: \$600,000	2016: \$600,000	
2017: \$600,000	2018: \$600,000	2019: \$600,000	2020: \$600,000	2021: \$600,000	
10a. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES IF THE PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED.					
10b. TYPED OR PRINTED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Allyson Siwik	11. TITLE: Executive Director			12. PHONE NUMBER: 575.538.8078	
13. SIGNATURE: 				DATE: 7/13/11	

14. Evaluation criteria. Comprehensive responses to criteria A through D should be supported where possible by the best available science and scientific data, studies, models, and, where applicable, cite state, regional, or other water plans. Where such data and information is not available, applications should include best estimates and describe how such information would be obtained. Applications that do not include the requested information will not satisfy Tier-1 standards and, therefore, will not be eligible for Tier-2 consideration. Use Form 14a if needed.

A. State whether the proposal is for the “New Mexico Unit,” a “water utilization alternative,” or both.

This project is for a **WATER UTILIZATION ALTERNATIVE** that proposes to purchase 1,000 acre-feet/year of currently unused groundwater rights in the Gila-San Francisco Basin that in turn could be sold or leased at a unit of 0.25 af/yr for outdoor use (e.g. watering horse, dog or garden plot). This would provide for a total of 4000 households, including the existing households in the region and factoring in modest growth.

Under the Rifkind Decree (*Arizona v. California*), approximately 3,572 households in the Gila/San Francisco basin are restricted, in theory, to indoor water use only.¹ Residents are not allowed to water a garden or domestic animals unless they have water rights. The Rifkind Decree gives the state of New Mexico a depletion right of 31,000 acre-feet/year from the Gila-San Francisco Basin. However, only 27,000 acre-feet/year are consumed.² This project proposes to purchase 1,000 acre-feet of currently unused water rights that in turn could be sold or leased at a unit of 0.25 af/yr for outdoor use (horse, dog and garden plot). This would provide for a total of 4000 households, including the existing households in the region and factoring in growth. Presumably these water rights would be groundwater rights.

B. Describe how the proposal will meet a “water supply demand” in the Southwest New Mexico Water Planning Region, comprised of Catron, Grant, Hidalgo and Luna Counties.

This project would supply water from currently unused water rights to residents in the Gila-San Francisco Basin for outdoor watering. This project preserves and fulfills existing water rights. This project satisfies a need that has been identified by residents of the Gila-San Francisco Basin during AWSA planning and Gila-San Francisco Water Commission meetings to allow for outdoor watering since residents are currently limited to indoor domestic water use only under the Rifkind Decree.

¹ Personal communication with Amy Sun, Sandia Laboratory 11/07/09. ~3572 households (542 in San Francisco Basin; 3030 in Gila Basin) are used in the Sandia Decision Support Model developed for the Gila Planning Process. Data is from NMOSE.

² Deborah Hathaway, SS Papadopoulos, Briefing to AWSA Planning Implementation/Technical Committee. June 2009.

C. Describe how the proposal considers the Gila environment and describe how any negative impacts might be mitigated.

Potential impacts to surface water from increased groundwater withdrawals would need to be assessed. SS Papadopoulos has been collecting data and working on a groundwater-surface water model for the Interstate Stream Commission that could be used to evaluate any Gila River impacts of this proposal. Because groundwater withdrawals for outdoor use from individual households would be widely dispersed throughout the basin without the environmental impacts of a large conveyance system, impacts to Gila and San Francisco flows from this project would be small and diffuse relative to a single point of diversion on the Gila River with off-stream storage.

D. Describe how the proposal considers the historic uses of and future demands for water in the Southwest New Mexico Water Planning Region and the traditions, cultures and customs affecting those uses.

This project satisfies a need that has been identified by residents of the Gila-San Francisco Basin during AWSA planning and Gila-San Francisco Water Commission meetings to allow for outdoor watering since residents have been limited to indoor domestic water use only since the Rifkind Decree went into effect in the late 1960's. This would restore an historic use as well as provide for outdoor watering in the Gila-San Francisco Basin in the future.