



Strategic Water Reserve Updates

Water and Natural Resources Committee

New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission

Hannah Riseley-White, Director
September 28, 2026



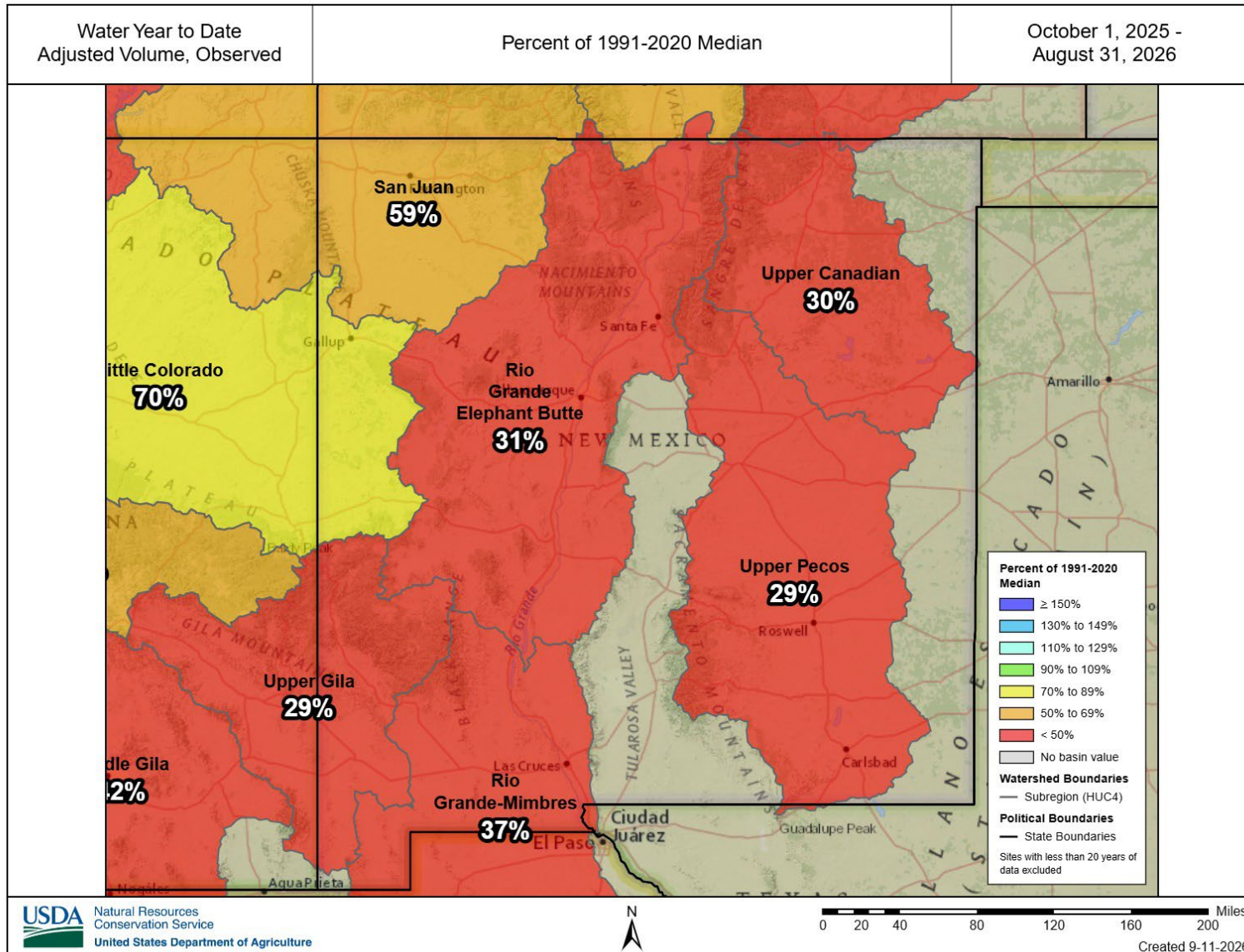
Climate and Hydrology Challenges

CLIMATE CHANGE TRENDS:

- Lower snowpack
- Higher temperatures
- Increased aridification
- More variable rain/monsoons
- Lower stream flows
- Lower reservoir levels

We need to prepare for 25-30% less water by 2070

Record Breaking Conditions in 2026



RECORD LOW SNOWPACK

RECORD HIGH SPRING TEMPERATURES

STREAMFLOW in 2026

- Rio Grande streamflow 31% of the historical median over the last year
- Rio Grande streamflow in August 14% of the historical median
- San Juan streamflow at 59% of the historical median



Overview of Strategic Water Reserve

The NMISC may acquire water or water rights by purchase, lease, or donation to assist the state in:

1. Complying with interstate stream compacts or court decrees;
2. Manage water for benefit of threatened or endangered species or avoidance of listing species; or
3. Conservation efforts designed to support aquifer recharge or reduce groundwater depletions in order to promote streamflow or other environmental benefits.

Supplementary Benefits: When establishing priorities, the ISC shall consider supplementary benefits, such as supporting traditional and cultural practices, habitat improvement or recreational opportunities.

Strategic Water Reserve Fund: non-reverting except balances over \$15 million.

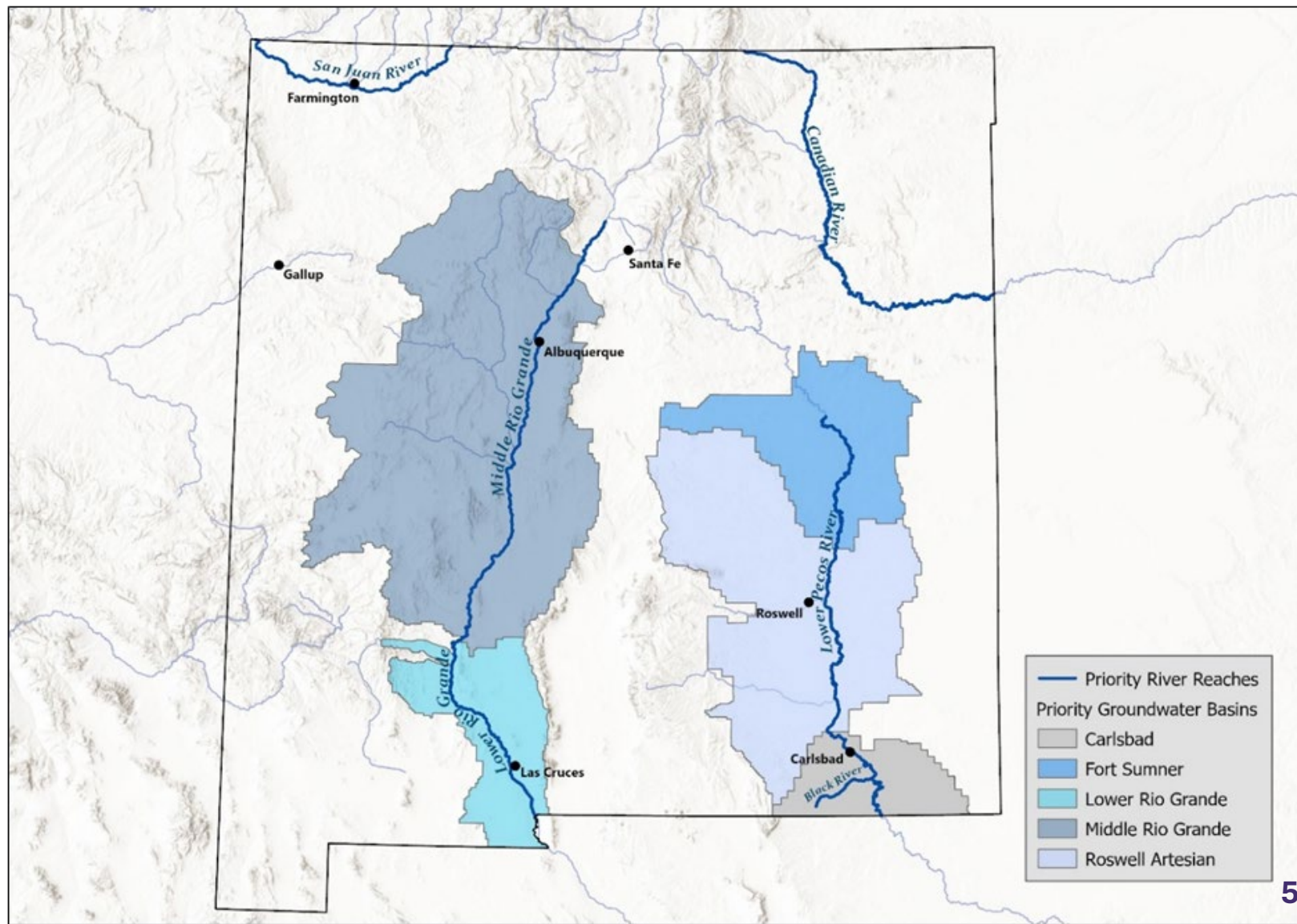
2026 Strategic Water Reserve Priorities

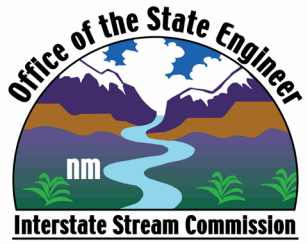
Priority River Reaches

- Middle Rio Grande
- Lower Rio Grande (below Elephant Butte Reservoir)
- Lower Pecos River (below Sumner Reservoir), and its tributary the Black River
- Canadian River
- San Juan River

Priority Groundwater Basins:

- Middle Rio Grande Basin
- Lower Rio Grande Basin
- Lower Pecos River Basin (which includes the Black River)





Strategic Water Reserve Fund

Non-reverting \$15M Strategic Reserve Fund created in 2025

- Will allow time to seek and complete transactions
- Addresses the come-and-go history of funding
- \$13,000,000 appropriated into the fund in 2026

Recent Successes

- 2026 = first ever purchase of surface water rights in the Middle Rio Grande
- 2022 = 10-year lease agreement with the Jicarilla Apache Nation and The Nature Conservancy for 20,000 acre-feet per year

Year	Appropriated	Pulled Back
2005	\$2,800,000	
2006	\$2,000,00	
2009		\$1,400,000
2010		\$600,000
2014	\$2,000,000	
2017		\$1,758,000
2020	\$750,535	
2022	\$500,000	
2023	\$7,500,000	
2024	\$1,000,000	
2026	\$13,000,000	

Looking Forward



- Revisit rule – including significant public and tribal engagement
- Continued flexibility to meet changing climate and diverse basin needs
- Partnerships with communities
- Water for broader array of uses
- Sufficient and reliable funding from diverse sources is critical
- Regular reporting on outcomes

Contact:

Anne Maurer, Interim SWR Technical Lead

505-490-5771

Anne.maurer@ose.nm.gov

www.ose.nm.gov/ISC/