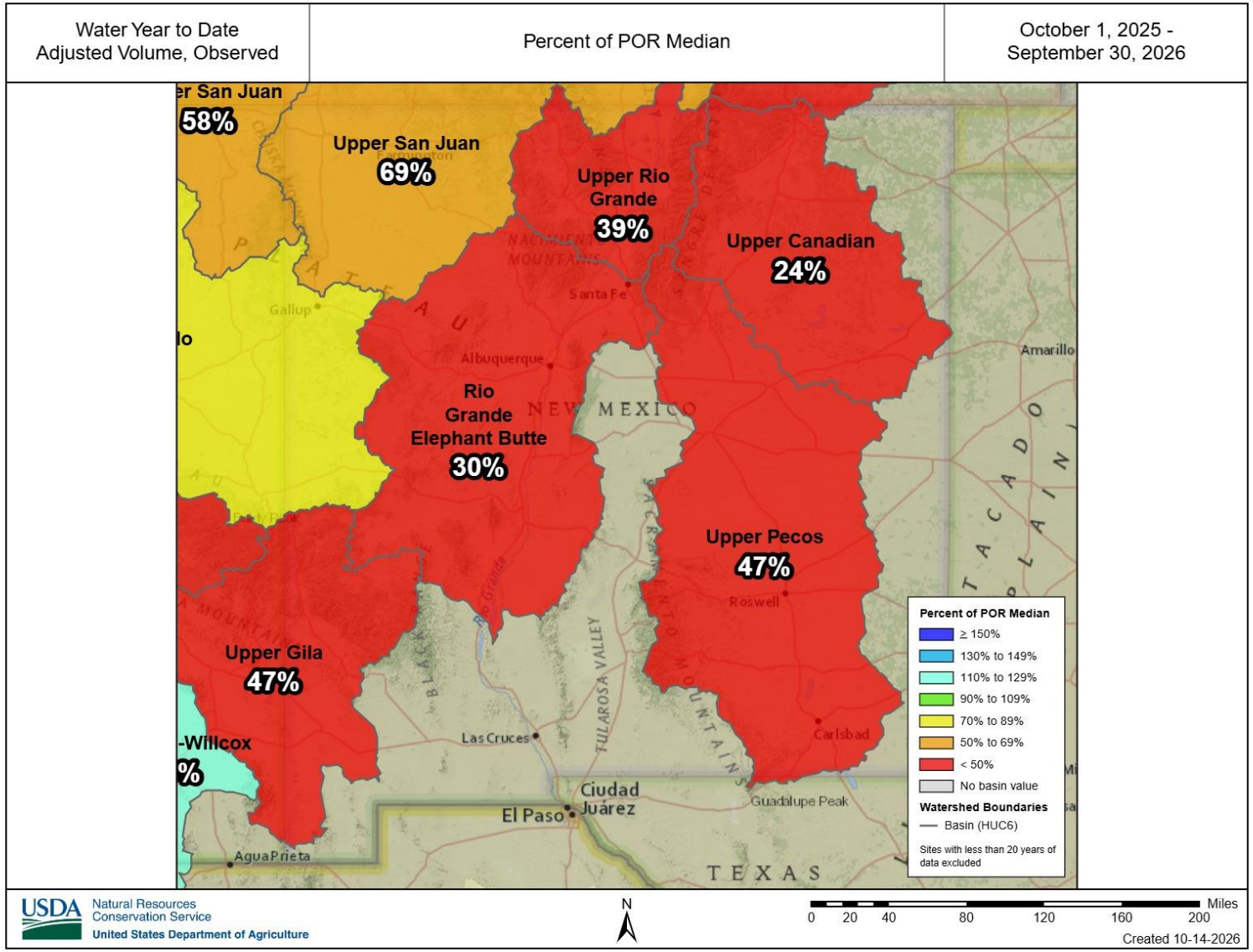


New Mexico Office of the State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission

State Priorities for the Coming Year

Liz Anderson PE, State Engineer
Hannah Riseley-White, Interstate Stream Commission Director
Legislative Finance Committee – November 18, 2026

Record Breaking Conditions in 2026



RECORD LOW SNOWPACK

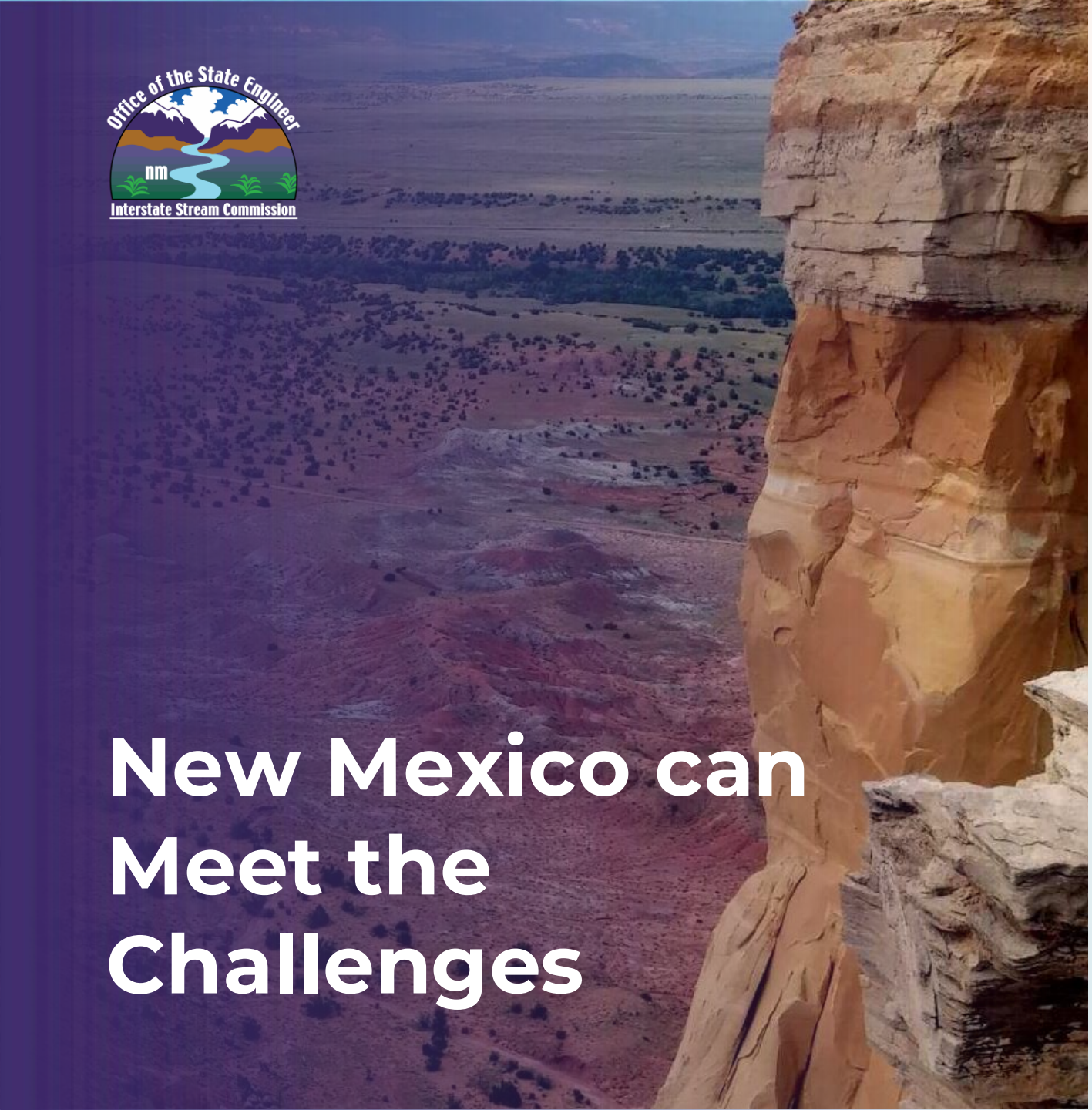
RECORD HIGH SPRING TEMPERATURES

LOW STREAMFLOW in 2026

Despite record-breaking September and October rainstorms, 2026 flows were well below historical medians:

- Rio Grande - 30%
- Pecos River - 47%
- San Juan River - 69%

RECORD FLOODING



New Mexico can Meet the Challenges

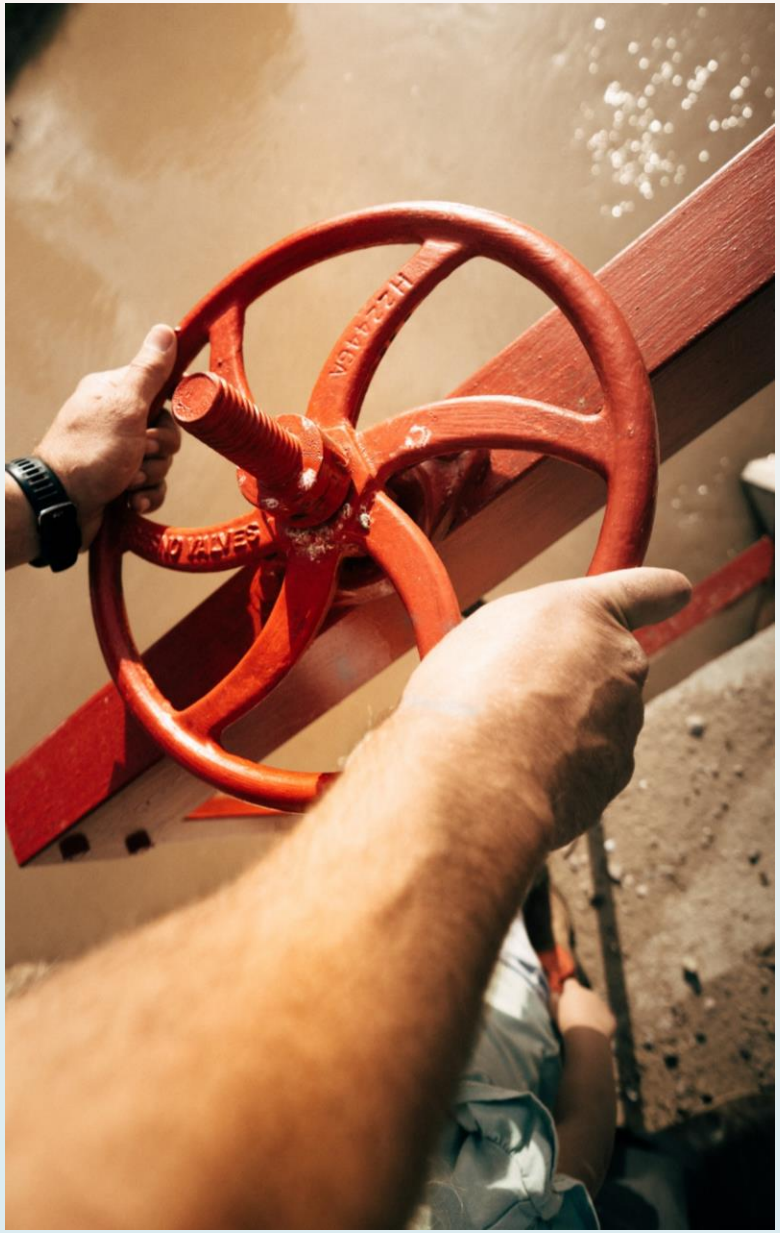
OSE and ISC are leading implementation of solutions across the state.

FY28 priority investments:

1. Modernizing the agency
2. Focus on the Rio Grande and Colorado River
3. Planning for New Mexico's water future

We must work together to respond to significant water management challenges affecting communities throughout NM.

Priority: *Modernize the Agency*



Goals

- Retain and recruit highly qualified staff
- Emphasis on stronger enforcement capabilities
- Catch up to 21st century technologies, including Water Data Act implementation, expanded measurement and metering
- Enhance online information and engagement

Successes

- Implementing recent enforcement capabilities at OSE
- Hiring additional water master staff
- Installing additional meters statewide

State Investment Highlights*

- ~$3.4 million invested in additional meters
- Over $17.5 million in dam maintenance and rehabilitation projects

*Expended or encumbered FY24 to present.

Priority: *Modernize the Agency*



2027 Session Priorities

- Retain and recruit critical staff through competitive salaries
- Improve ability to comply with new enforcement authorities (2026 HB 111) to prevent illegal water use and promote proper drilling techniques to protect aquifers
- Improve public service capabilities through better online resources, water administration databases, and availability of data in accordance with the Water Data Act (2019 HB 651)
- Ensure trust funds can be utilized for their originally authorized purposes ($10.1M)

September 1 Budget Request = $3.1M recurring, $5.2M special, $4M capital

Priority: *Focus on the Rio Grande and Colorado River*



Goals

- Invest in the Lower Rio Grande (LRG) through implementation of the TX v NM U.S. Supreme Court Settlement
- Keep water flowing to Elephant Butte Reservoir
- Protect New Mexico's interests in the Colorado River Basin, support development of Seven Basin State solutions

Successes

- Chama shortage sharing
- Over 7,500 acres enrolled in the voluntary Lower Rio Grande Groundwater Conservation Program
- Collaborative partnerships and work on the ground

State Investment Highlights*

- ~$11.2 million invested in river channel, habitat and vegetation management projects in the Middle Rio Grande
- ~$57 million dedicated to LRG solutions – conservation, new supplies, and community engagement

*Expended or encumbered FY24 to present.

Priority: *Focus on the Rio Grande and Colorado River*

2027 Session Priorities

- Improve Middle Rio Grande operations to ensure Rio Grande Compact compliance and improved water deliveries to Elephant Butte Reservoir through increases in metering, monitoring, and enforcement
- Implement the Lower Rio Grande TX v NM Settlement to support New Mexico communities
- Increase San Juan Basin management and engagement with New Mexico water users to ensure Colorado River Compact compliance
- Prioritize new Strategic Water Reserve acquisitions for environmental and interstate compact compliance
- Expand depletion reduction and river channel conveyance efficiency programs

September 1 Budget Request = $1.8M recurring, $65M special, $95M capital



Priority: *Plan for New Mexico's Water Future*



Goals

- Continue progress on water education, infrastructure improvements and operational efficiencies
- Re-envision regional water planning through continued implementation of the 2023 Water Security Planning Act
- Prioritize further progress on Indian Water Rights Settlements

Successes

- Launched drought.nm.gov and mainstreamnm.org
- Promulgated new regional water planning rule, convening new regions early 2027
  - Regions will prioritize recommendations for funding
- Continued progress on Indian Water Rights Settlements

State Investment Highlights*

- ~$7.7 million dedicated to water planning, education and enhanced tools and resources for communities
- ~$13.5 million dedicated to Indian Water Rights Settlements

*Expended or encumbered FY25 to present.

Priority: *Plan for New Mexico's Water Future*



2027 Session Priorities

- Expand regional water planning efforts to ensure compliance with the Water Security Planning Act (2023 SB 337)
- Ongoing implementation of the 50-Year Water Action Plan, including implementation of a statewide water education campaign to amplify the importance of water conservation
- Ensure compliance and progress with Indian Water Rights Settlements
- Confirm and expand support for acequia communities
- Ongoing implementation of the Pecos River Settlement
- Expand dam safety funding in coordination with DFA
- Expand opportunities for new water supplies through weather modification

September 1 Budget Request = $2.9M recurring, $41.5M special, $43.1M capital



Time to Work Together!

Office of the State Engineer
nm
Interstate Stream Commission