

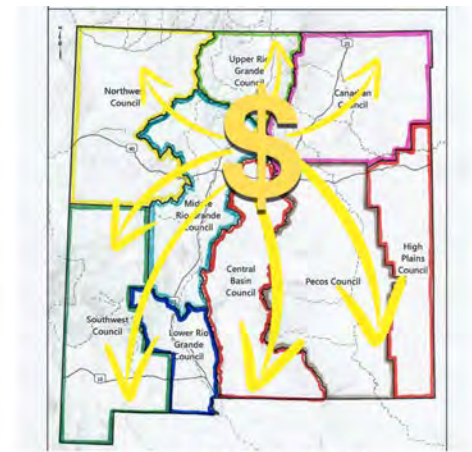


# 6 Water Priorities for 2026

## Legislative Funding

### 2023 Water Planning Security Act

- Assigns responsibility to water planning regions to develop state-funded regional water security plans using Water Data Act databases.
- Requires prioritized, evidence-based programs, policies, and projects to improve water supply resilience.
- Balances competing interests through inclusive planning with tribal, public, and local stakeholders
- With ISC funds, regions and their communities prepare detailed work plans, conduct their planning, and prepare a water security plan.

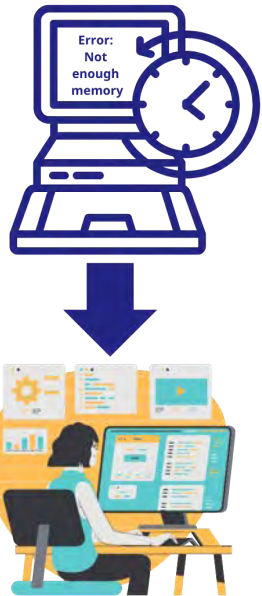


State Grants to Regions for Planning

### Agency Modernization

**State water agencies can't fulfill their responsibilities effectively with antiquated systems.** Modernization needs include:

- **Enhanced Data Management:** Improve quality control and verification of water data collected and managed by the agencies.
- **IT Infrastructure Upgrades:** Replace outdated and dysfunctional hardware and software.
- **Administrative Improvements:** Implement modern business practices and improve critical data security.
- **Timely Water Use Reporting:** Provide prompt, integrated water use reports and readily accessible data for planning and administration.



### Enforce Water Rights

AWRM administers “wet water” based on actual water availability with emphasis on interstate compact compliance. Key components include:

- **Priority Administration:** Apportioning water rigorously based on legal rights.
- **Shortage-Sharing:** Alternatively apportioning water according to user agreements.
- **Authority to Enforce Requirements:** The State Engineer needs the option to promptly address illegal water uses.

The NM Supreme Court unanimously upheld AWRM in 2012. It has never been implemented along the Rio Grande, which was the plan when the authorizing legislation passed.

New Mexico has escalating water challenges that threaten its communities, economy, and environment. The water crisis is here. Without adequate funding of these great water laws and programs, which have already been approved by the legislature, we will slip past the point of no return for creating a sustainable water future for all New Mexicans.

## 2019 Water Data Act

The NM Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources convened and organized work by five state agencies and other owners of NM water data sets and systems to develop the 2019 Water Data Act implementation framework.

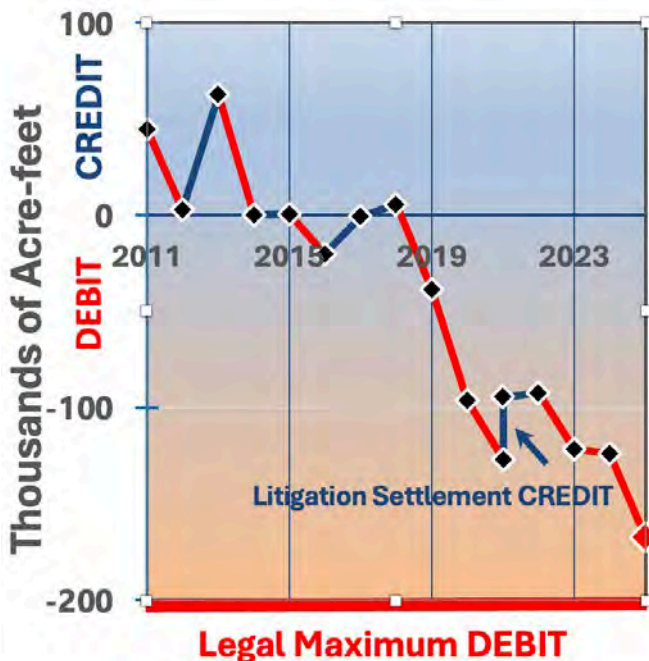
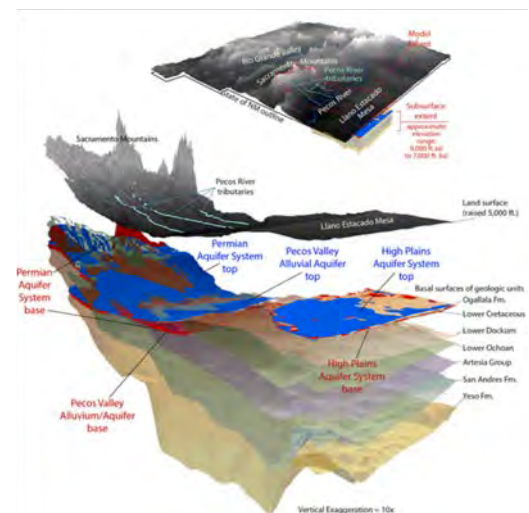
The 2019 Water Data Act requires a major effort from the Office of the State Engineer and the Interstate Stream Commission to compile the water data they collect and own. These agencies are required to get their data in order, improve the data quality and coverage, and make the data available online for state and public uses.



## Aquifer Mapping Program

New Mexicans deserve to know, **How much underground water remains? Where is it? And is it of sufficient quality to be treated for use?**

The Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources can map and test all the state's aquifers with a network of new monitoring wells. The key questions can be answered by 2035, if adequate funding is provided **starting now**.



## Rio Grande Compact Compliance

Ongoing excessive water depletions in the Middle Rio Grande will cause another lawsuit. To remedy excessive use of water and under-deliveries the State Engineer immediately needs:

- Specific Rules for priority enforcement in the Middle Rio Grande.
- Staff to allocate and monitor legal uses of water
- Authority to enforce prompt termination of illegal uses.