Telling it how it is, we're *Making the Case for Change*

New Mexico faces but has not faced up to its severe water challenges.

The state has promised, explicitly or inferentially, far more water than it has, or ever had (except, perhaps, for 1941).

Besides violating Article XVI of the state constitution, this over-promise risks billions of dollars of taxpayer money in interstate Compact lawsuit damages, ongoing federal control of New Mexico's water uses, and the economic consequences of no groundwater in large areas of the state.

There will be pushback against remedy from those who have enjoyed over-use of water that causes drawdown of resource reserves. However to avoid dire consequences in the not too distant future, the state should act promptly.

Water planning doesn't acknowledge our physical constraints. In key areas, it's unclear who owns what and is allowed to do what. And the responsible agencies are in disarray.

Making the Case for Change

Making the Case for Change is a report about what you can do to ask policy makers to meet our obligations. Beyond the failure to determine the Native American rights to water and the non-native rights on the state's largest river, *Making the Case for Change* identifies four cosmic-level problems and five core initiatives to address those problems.

In summary, the problems are:

- Federal lawsuit on New Mexico's over-use in the lower Rio Grande

- Unreliable Compact compliance in the Middle Rio Grande

- Unsustainable groundwater depletions in many areas

- New Mexico's hands-off approach to water administration

The core initiatives to address those problems are:

- Strengthen leadership and capacity in appropriate state agencies

- Use Compact constraints to drive water administration

- Reform water planning to be an effective management tool

- Base decisions on hydrologic and analytic reality

- Fund the reforms with a significant one-time two year appropriation

We urge the Legislative Branch and the Executive Branch, in a coordinated way, to take action. Now!