

ACTION PLAN

Submitted by agency?	Yes
Timeline assigned?	Yes
Responsibility assigned?	Yes

Water Security Planning Act

ISC has published its proposed regional water planning report. The report proposes splitting the state into nine different hydro-administrative boundaries. The largest would stretch from central New Mexico to the border between Texas and New Mexico. These new boundaries would be administered by councils within them, and the councils would provide region-specific insight into effective water management and propose and prioritize projects or improvement within the regions. ISC notes a key point gleaned from public input was for the boundaries to be “soft,” allowing the regions to collaborate on overlapping needs and engage in multi-regional planning.

The Office of the State Engineer (OSE) and the Interstate Stream Commission (ISC) continue in negotiations with Texas, Colorado, and the U.S. government regarding a possible settlement of the Texas lawsuit against New Mexico over the management of the Rio Grande. OSE and ISC met with representatives from all parties in February, though no timeline was finalized. Additionally, negotiations continue in the Colorado River Basin with implications for the state’s compact delivery obligations.

New Mexico’s cumulative debt under the Rio Grande Compact remained within acceptable margins of decline, though trends regarding the state’s debt should be monitored. Efforts by the agency to improve deliveries to Elephant Butte continued in FY24. The number of offers submitted to defendants through OSE’s Litigation and Adjudication Program are on track to exceed the target for the second year in a row. Discussions about new performance measures to monitor the success of other aspects of OSE and ISC should be considered because existing measures capture only a small portion of the agency’s workload.

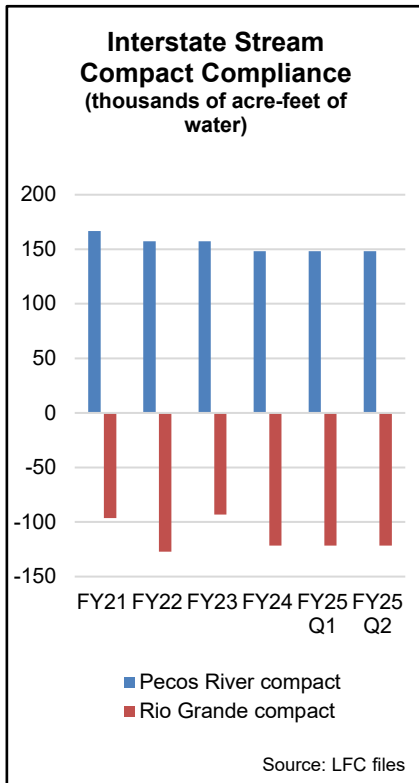
Water Resource Allocation

The Water Resource Allocation Program processed 21 applications per month in the second quarter of FY25, missing the target by 14. The agency noted this was due to staffing shortages. The program has 51 vacant FTE. This program also serves as “agency reviewers” for the New Mexico Finance Authority and Water Trust Board and as “cannabis water rights validation reviewers” for the Regulation and Licensing Department. Neither of these additional workloads are reflected in current performance measures.

The Water Rights Abstract Bureau is responsible for populating and maintaining the Water Administration Technical Engineering Resource System and is on pace to meet the annual target of 21 thousand transactions. Staff are focusing on groundwater files and district office file maintenance work, which does not substantially affect database numbers. The bureau is also close to completing the abstracting (surveying) of the Estancia groundwater basin. Once done, it will start on the Roswell artesian basin. The Dam Safety Bureau performed enough inspections in the second quarter to nearly reach half the annual target.

Budget: \$21,960 FTE: 192	FY23 Actual	FY24 Actual	FY25 Target	FY25 Q1	FY25 Q2	Rating
Number of unprotested and unaggrieved water right applications backlogged*	499	445	N/A	343	350	G
Average number of unprotested new and pending applications processed per month	39	37.8	35	36	21	Y
Number of transactions abstracted annually into the water administration technical engineering resource system database.	28,665	19,210	21,000	4,361	7,410	G
Number of notices issued to owners of publicly owned dams notifying them of deficiencies or potential issues	61	26	45	0	22	G
Program Rating	G	Y				G

*Measure is classified as explanatory and does not have a target



Interstate Stream Commission

The state's cumulative Pecos River Compact credit continues to be positive; however, the U.S. Supreme Court's Pecos River master recently determined that New Mexico underdelivered for water year 2023 by 8,400 acre-feet. This decision brought New Mexico's current cumulative credit down to 148,200 acre-feet.

New Mexico's Rio Grande Compact cumulative delivery deficit remained at 121,500 acre-feet halfway through FY25, a 31 percent increase in the deficit from FY23. While the current cumulative delivery deficit is still below the compact compliance debit threshold of 200,000 acre-feet, the 31 percent increase is a worrying trend. OSE and ISC are working to identify additional actions that might be needed to increase deliveries. New Mexico's compact status has implications for the ability to store native Rio Grande water in upstream reservoirs. This, in combination with continued construction on El Vado Reservoir, has resulted in challenges for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District ability to store irrigation water.

Budget: \$15,095.1	FTE: 68	FY23 Actual	FY24 Actual	FY25 Target	FY25 Q1	FY25 Q2	Rating
Cumulative New Mexico Unit fund expenditures, in millions of dollars*		\$22.0	\$22.3	N/A	N/A	\$23.1	
Cumulative state-line delivery credit per the Pecos River Compact, in thousand acre-feet		157.2	156.6	161.6	148.2	148.2	G
Cumulative delivery credit per the Rio Grande Compact, in thousand acre-feet		-127.1	-93	< -150	-121.5	-121.5	Y
Program Rating		Y	G				Y

Litigation and Adjudication

The Litigation and Adjudication Program (LAP) is making progress in the second quarter of FY24 toward its goal of fully adjudicating water rights in the Lower Rio Grande Basin. Anticipating a substantial increase in offers during the third quarter, LAP expects to stay on course to meet its target of 300 offers for FY25 and continue to increase the Lower Rio Grande Bureau's productivity.

Data is regularly added to LAP's water right adjudication database, encompassing information from hydrographic surveys to finalized adjudication details. Monthly updates or as-needed entries are made based on field investigations, surveys, and court actions that result in offers.

Budget: \$8,966.3	FTE: 68	FY23 Actual	FY24 Actual	FY25 Target	FY25 Q1	FY25 Q2	Rating
Number of offers to defendants in adjudications		142	436	300	68	89	G
Percent of all water rights with judicial determinations		76.5%	76.7%	76%	65%	65%	Y
Program Rating		G	G				G

