

# **Progress Report on 2017 House Memorial 1**

## **Improving Water Governance and Planning in New Mexico**

**Presentation by the  
HM1 Working Group  
to the  
Water and Natural Resources Committee**

**October 2, 2018**

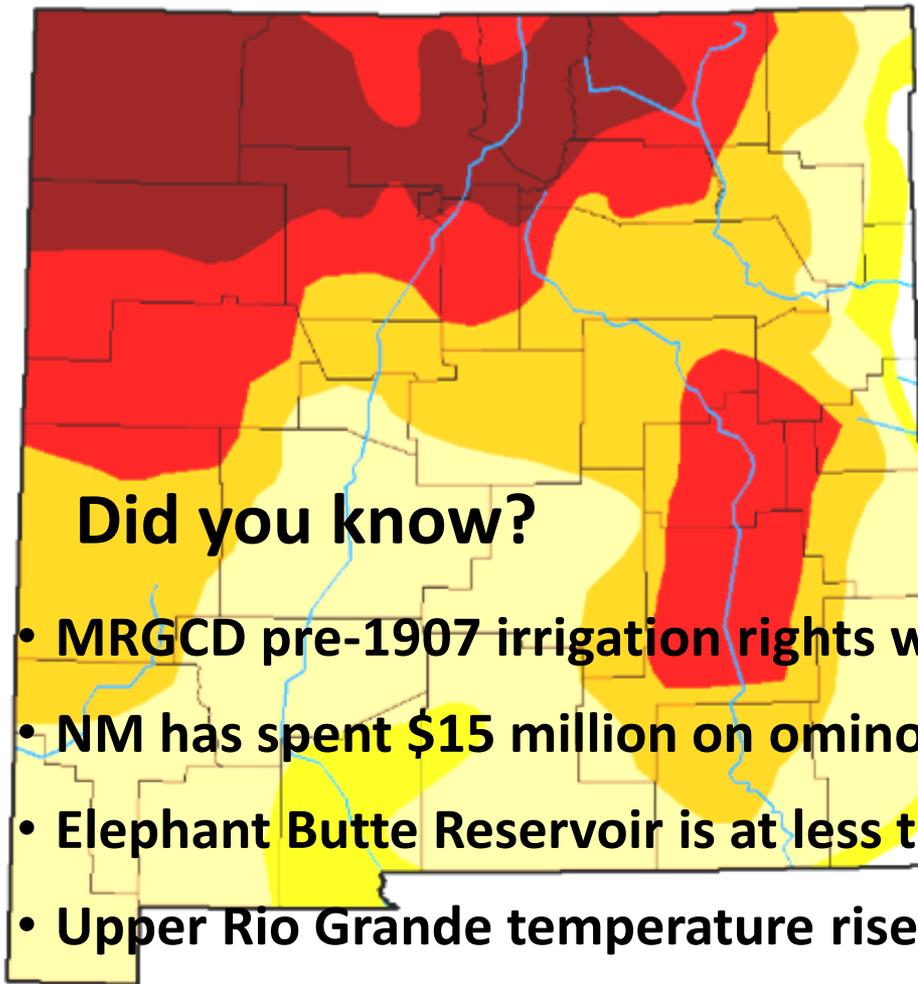
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# Background

- **The New Mexico Water Dialogue Sponsored a July 2015 Workshop**
  - **Statewide regional water planners, ISC staff, and NMWD Board members**
  - **Discuss experiences with current (and previous) RWP processes**
- **Result: Governance Study Group – Six Issue Papers**
  - **Volunteer group of experienced regional water planners**
  - **Problems with water planning process; remedial suggestions**
- **Presentation to WNR on October 26, 2016**
  - **Flaws in the process and product were reported**
  - **Led to 2017 House Memorial 1, passed unanimously**
- **2017 House Memorial 1**
  - **Requested a proposal on how water planning can be made useful**
  - **Assigned ISC to convene a Task Force to deliver for the 2019 legislature**
  - **Since January 2017, HM1 Working Group developed this proposal**

# Not a Drought; Dry Is Now Normal



Intensity:

None

 D0 (Abnormally Dry)

 D1 (Moderate Drought)

 D2 (Severe Drought)

 D3 (Extreme Drought)

 D4 (Exceptional Drought)

## Did you know?

- MRGCD pre-1907 irrigation rights were cut off at the end of August 2018
- NM has spent \$15 million on ominous Texas lawsuit (and counting)
- Elephant Butte Reservoir is at less than 3.5% of capacity
- Upper Rio Grande temperature rise has been twice the global rate
- ISC requested only \$280, 000 to plan for our water for 2019

# “Rio Grande” Near Socorro in 2018



## Compare:

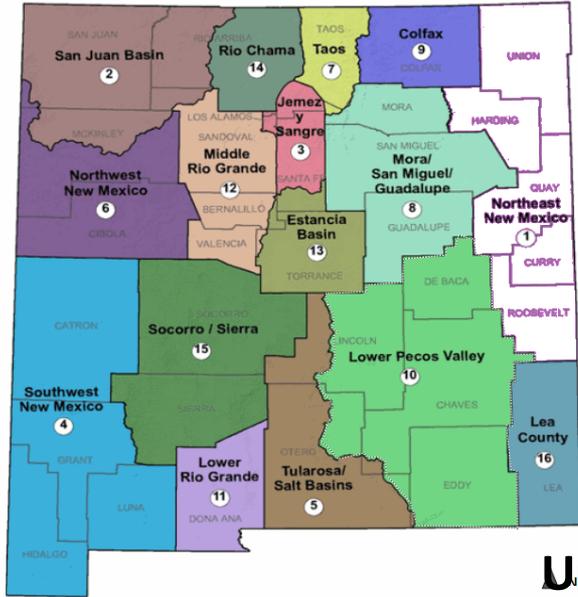
**“The key fact about our water: Demand Exceeds Supply” (ISC, 2002)**

## With:

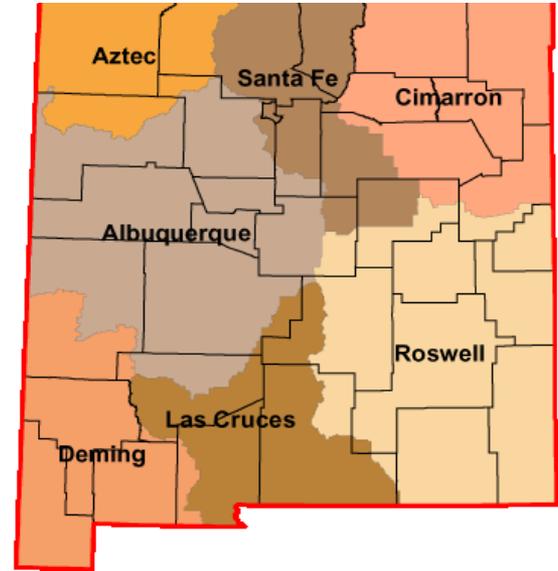
**“While the state as a whole has adequate supply to meet its current demands, in the future the demand for water may outpace the supply.” (ISC, July 2018 draft SWP)**

**We still have problems that need to be addressed**

# ISC's Political Planning Regions



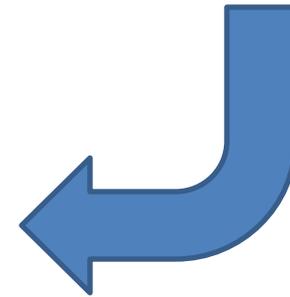
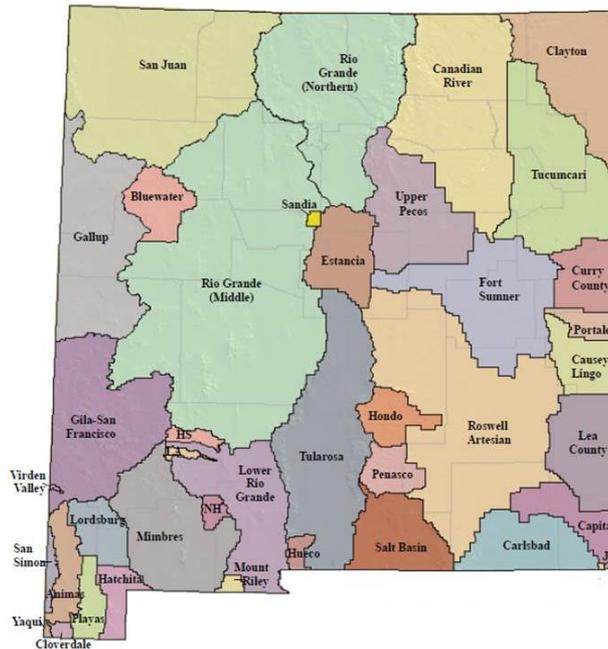
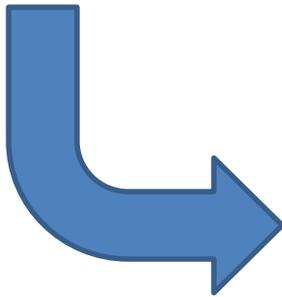
# OSE's Water Management Districts



Example  
of a  
Disconnect



# Underground Water Basins



## Avoid Troubles – Plan for a Finite Resource

- **Planning allows for a fix before a fix becomes impossible**
- **Water is a major driver of economic health and well being**
- **The purpose of planning is to solve problems timely**
- **Planning must have relevancy, credibility and impact**
- **All interests need to be involved - multiple levels, multiple disciplines**

**PLAN AHEAD**

- **New Mexico's approach to water planning has been less than ideal**
- **HM1 Working Group is proposing remedial action**

# What's Been Developed?

- **The HM1 Proposal Is a Five-Part Set of Documentation:**
  - **Cover Letter**
  - ***Making the Case for Change***
  - **Reviewer Comment and Response Report**
  - ***Executive Guidance for Water Planning* (still in progress)**
  - **Legislative Suggestions for Implementation (still in progress)**

# Making the Case for Change - Overview

- **New Mexico Faces but Has Not Faced Up to Its Water Resource Limits**
  - Downstream delivery obligations
  - Federally-mandated requirements
  - State-permitted water uses and authorizations that substantially exceed sustainable supplies
- **The HM1 Proposal Response**
  - Identifies four of NM's urgent and serious water problems
  - Proposes five solutions that together address those problems ~~via planning~~
- **We Urge the Legislature and the Executive to Take Action**
  - Needed water planning investment now can avoid enormous costs later

# Serious Unaddressed Problems

- **Four of New Mexico's Major Problems**
  - **Rio Grande Compact compliance in the lower Rio Grande, from Elephant Butte to the Texas state line, and the associated US Supreme Court lawsuit**
  - **Rio Grande Compact compliance in the middle Rio Grande (Otowi Gage to Elephant Butte)**
  - **Unsustainable groundwater depletions in many areas of the state**
  - **New Mexico's hands-off approach to water administration.**

# Solutions

- **Five Proposed Strategies:**
  - **Strengthen water management leadership and increase agency capacity to responsibly manage our water resources**
  - **Administer water use for compliance with downstream delivery requirements and adherence to legal commitments**
  - **Address statewide and regional water resource problems, unsustainable water use, climate change impacts, watershed health, and water conservation opportunities, through effective water planning**
  - **Improve and integrate water resources and water use monitoring, data collection and data availability to support water planning and management**
  - **Consistently and adequately fund state and local water management and planning programs so that they can be effective**

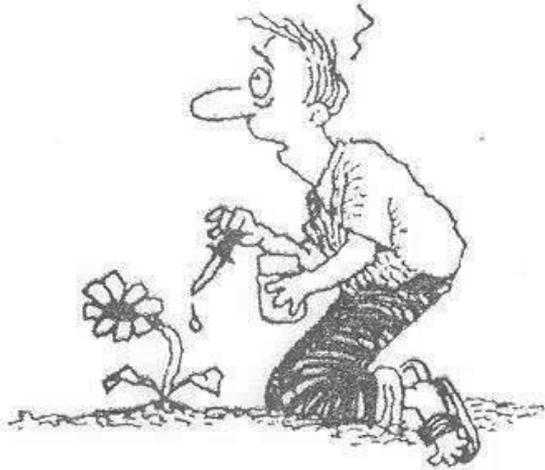
# No Surprises Here!

- The problems and solutions have all been discussed before
- Most recently at the ISC's December 2017 Town Hall
- Action has been minimal, as shown in the draft State Water Plan
- We want to stimulate change – legislative, executive (ISC, OSE and NMED)
- *Making the Case for Change* provides detail on each of the identified problems and proposed solutions

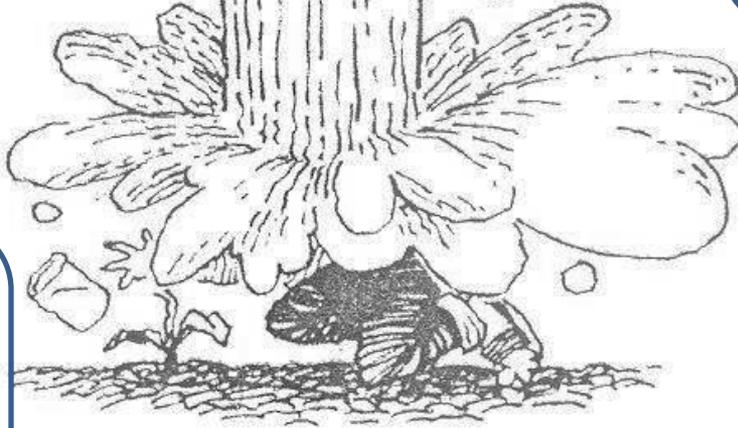
# What Should the Legislature Do?

- **The HM1 Working Group Requests:**
  - **Seriously consider *Making the Case for Change***
  - **Act to effect the needed changes:**
    - **Direct the ISC to finalize and implement, through a public process, the *Executive Guidance for Water Planning***
    - **Enact a suite of improved policies to address our most urgent problems**
    - **Develop bills based on the *Legislative Suggestions for Implementation***

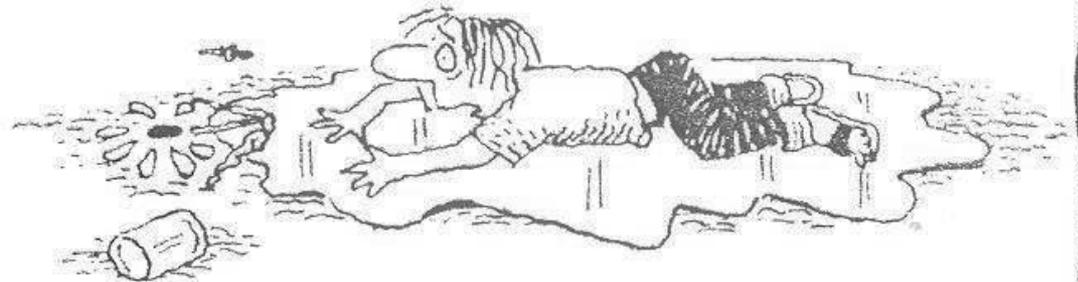
RAIN, WE NEED  
RAIN.



WHOMP!



x. OK, OK, OK.



**Thank You!**

**Questions?**

**Comments?**

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