Briefing

New Mexico Water & Natural Resources Committee

Monday, August 27th, 2012

Truth or Consequences, NM

Presented by:

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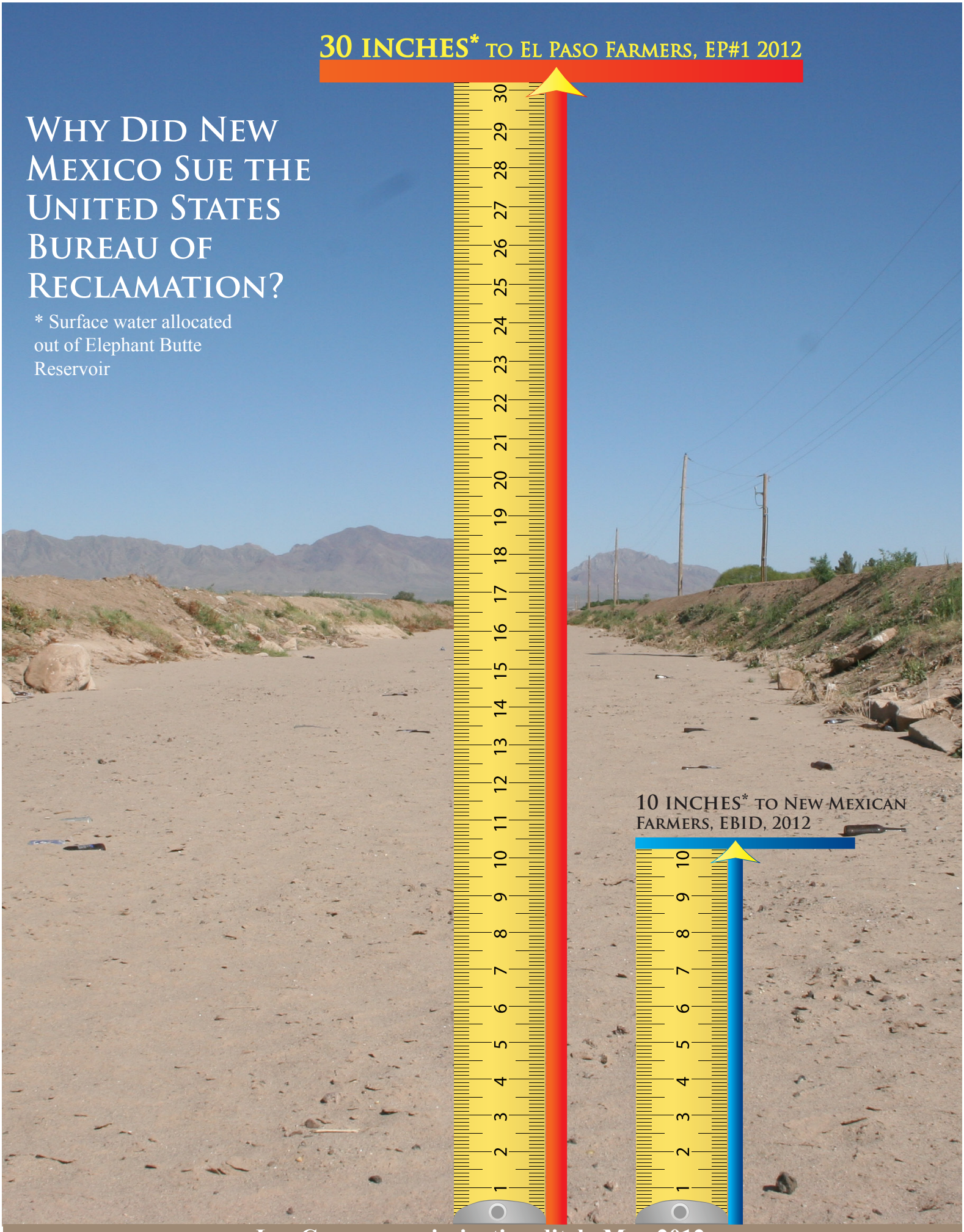

30 INCHES* TO EL PASO FARMERS, EP#1 2012
WHY DID NEW MEXICO SUE THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF RECLAMATION?
* Surface water allocated out of Elephant Butte Reservoir
10 INCHES* TO NEW MEXICAN FARMERS, EBID, 2012
Las Cruces area irrigation ditch, May 2012

New Mexico Sued the Bureau of Reclamation Because:

- Reclamation stole 10.9 billion gallons of New Mexico Compact Credit Water (water in our savings account) and delivered it to Texas farmers in 2011;
- Reclamation's Operating Agreement gives more surface water to Texas and forces New Mexico farmers to rely more heavily upon groundwater;
- Reclamation's Operating Agreement has taken up to 170,000 acre feet of water from New Mexico farmers, or enough water to supply the City of Las Cruces for 8 years; and
- Reclamation submitted a 2011 mid-year "water audit" where 65,000 acre feet of water (21.2 billion gallons) from New Mexico's savings account was relabeled as "Usable Water".

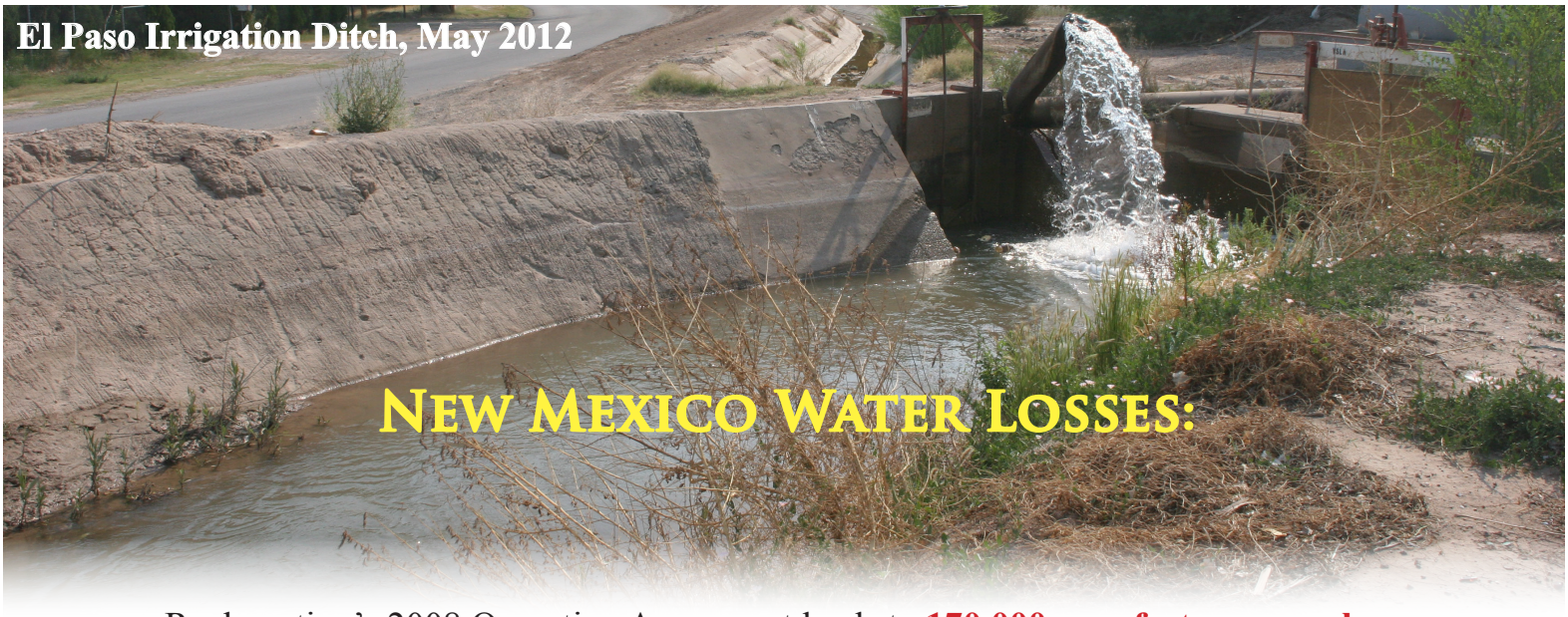
What is the cost of losing?

New Mexico is estimated to lose **$183 million minimum in total economic losses** and costing nearly **1,000 NM jobs every year.**

- Estimate does not include increased costs to New Mexico farmers associated with increased electrical or diesel fuel costs for groundwater pumping, well construction, pump installation and maintenance and other costs;
- Estimate does not include impact to local, state, and federal tax revenues; and
- Estimate is based upon Federal government actions to take about 170,000 acre feet of water away from New Mexico.

Estimates based on cropping data from NMSU and an open model that measures the direct and indirect effects of an economic activity available from the USDA at: USDA Economic Research Service; http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/agricultural-trade-multipliers/ers

estimates/openmodel-multipliers-and-margins.aspx



New Mexico Water Losses:

Reclamation's 2008 Operating Agreement leads to **170,000 acre feet per year loss.**

Lower Rio Grande (Las Cruces, Hatch, Mesilla)

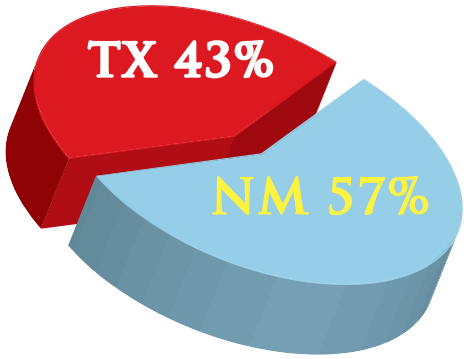
- Lost aquifer recharge;
- Lost surface water storage in Elephant Butte;
- Lost sustainable supply of water for farmers;
- Lost sustainable surface water supply for the City of Las Cruces; and
- Destruction of New Mexico's aquifer supporting 200,000 people.

Middle Rio Grande (Elephant Butte to Espanola)

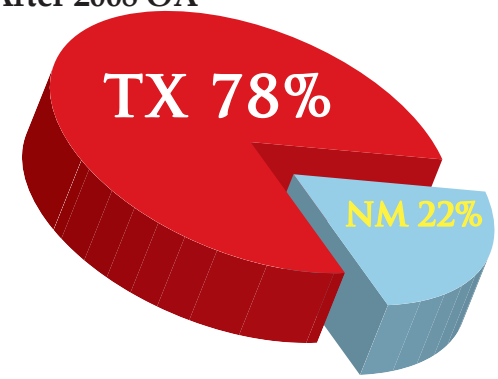
- Loss of ability to store relinquished water in reservoirs;
- Less water for farmers;
- Less water for municipalities;
- Less water for endangered species and the associated; and negative and severe economic impacts to the middle valley.

Comparison of Project Allocations

Before 2008 OA



After 2008 OA

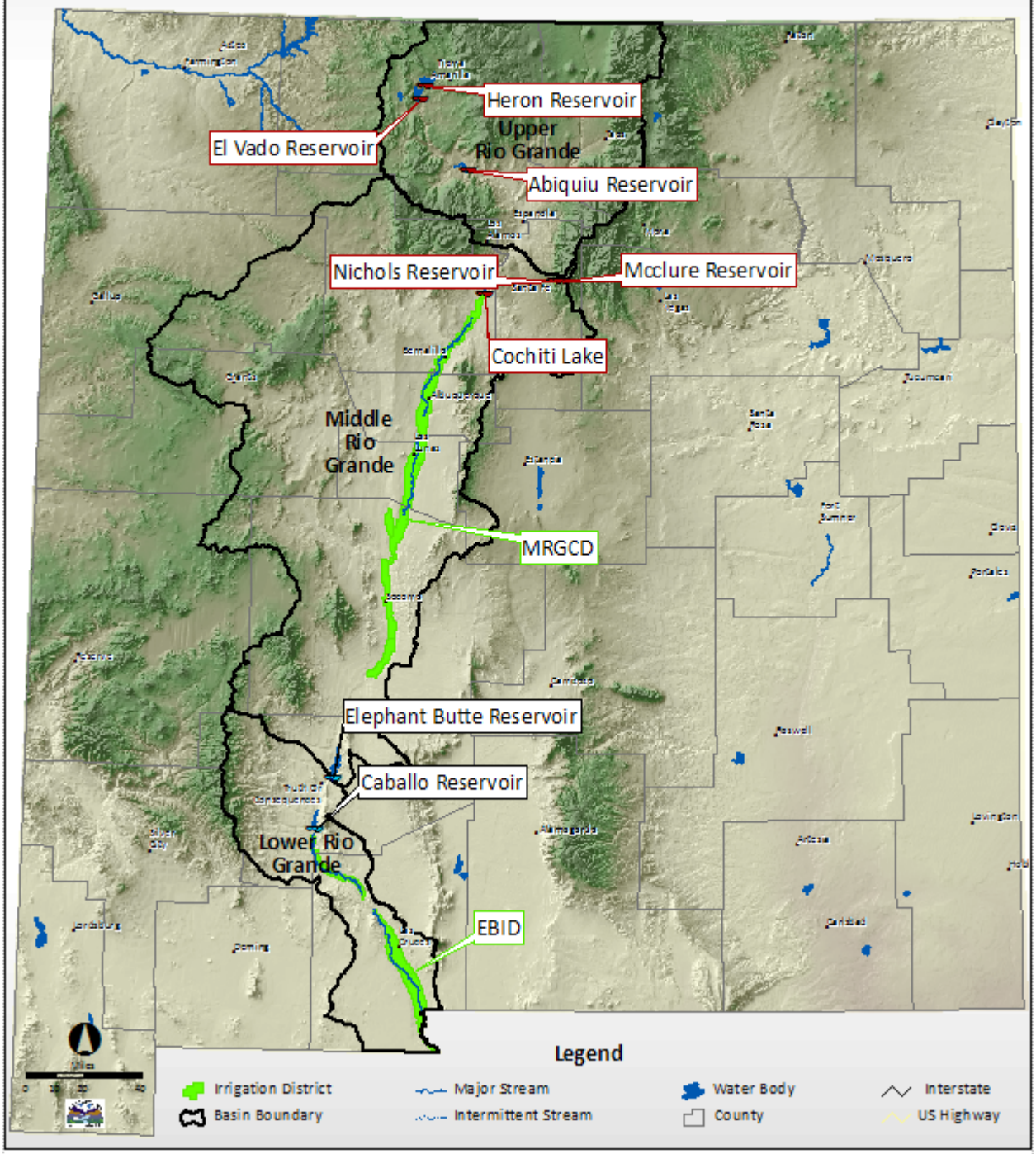


If we lose
New Mexico remains trapped in a bad deal.

- If lawsuit fails, New Mexico continues to lose control over water to the federal government;
- If lawsuit fails, Las Cruces and Santa Fe lose their ability to plan ahead;
- If lawsuit fails, the middle valley becomes vulnerable because of lost ability to store water upstream; and
- If lawsuit fails, New Mexico no longer has control south of Elephant Butte Reservoir.

Major Rio Grande Basin Reservoirs

Due to low water elevations at Elephant Butte Reservoir, water cannot be stored in upstream Rio Grande basin reservoirs.



Who Benefits From the 2008 Operating Agreement?

EL PASO COUNTY WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT No. 1
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August 9, 2012

MEMO

To: **All Employees of EPCWID #1**
Ed Archuleta, President/Chief Executive Officer-El Paso Water Utilities
Gary Esslinger, General Manager-Elephant Butte Irrigation District
Bert Cortez, Area Manager-United States Bureau of Reclamation
Commissioner Ed Drusina-International Boundary and Water Commission

From: **Jesus Reyes, General Manager**

Subject: **Allocation for 2012 Irrigation Season**

On August 8, 2012 the El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 Board of Directors increased the allocation from 2.167 acre feet per acre of irrigable land to 2.5 acre feet per acre of irrigable land for the 2012 irrigation season. The small tract parcels will receive an additional irrigation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.