

Think Water – Act Now!

Secure NM's Equitable Water Future

The 2023 Water Resilience Planning Act

setting the guidance to move forward effectively

Why is the Act needed?

- The existing 1987 water planning statute does not address current and future water shortages
- Taxpayers are spending millions on water litigation
- Surface and groundwaters are already over appropriated;
 - several aquifers are being rapidly depleted;
 - surface water supply is projected to fall 25% in 50 years
- Climate change-driven drought threatens all economic sectors
- Scarcity without planning causes inequities and insecurity

What is the Act?

- Implements State Engineer's Task Force's recommendations
- Requires state support of regional water planning entities, commitment to implement approved/prioritized plans
- Provides for increased agency capacity for modernizing data systems and water management
- Requires phased plans and budgets to implement the Act

SB-*nnn*

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HB-*nnn*



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What Does the Water Resilience Planning Act Do?

It provides a robust ongoing, multi-level process that allows water resilience planning entities:

- to create an orderly, well-founded prioritization for capital outlay projects
- to create water resilience plans that have actual implementation and impact
- to coordinate and optimize local, regional, and state reactions to climate-driven water shortages
- to ensure decisions are based on sound science and hydrologic reality

It requires state agencies to develop phased plans of action for evaluation and funding by the '24, '25 and '26 legislatures:

- to create an orderly improvement to New Mexico's water governance processes
- to update the planning and management roles of the interstate stream commission and the office of the state engineer
- to establish operational and funding plans for taking the needed actions

The effective water resilience planning regime's key characteristics include:

- Water plans must have impact; approval of plans is a commitment to support implementation
- Planning must be data and science based, driven by hydrologic reality as affected by climate
- Hydrologic data and modeling are provided or supported by the state
- Planned projects must be evaluated and prioritized for capital outlay
- Planning regions are state-established based on common sources of water
- Ongoing, balanced, state-supported regional-level planning entities are created
- Mechanisms exist for self-organized community-level entities to be accomplish water resilience planning
- Planning is conducted at the level appropriate to the problem being addressed

The required set of phased plans of action's are directed toward:

- Improving agency capacity in staffing and hiring competitiveness
- Implementing the water resilience planning regime at state, region, and community levels
- Implementing the Active Water Resource Management regulations
- Enhancing the coordination between agencies for accomplishing related functions
- Developing metrics for evaluating outcomes on infrastructure projects