

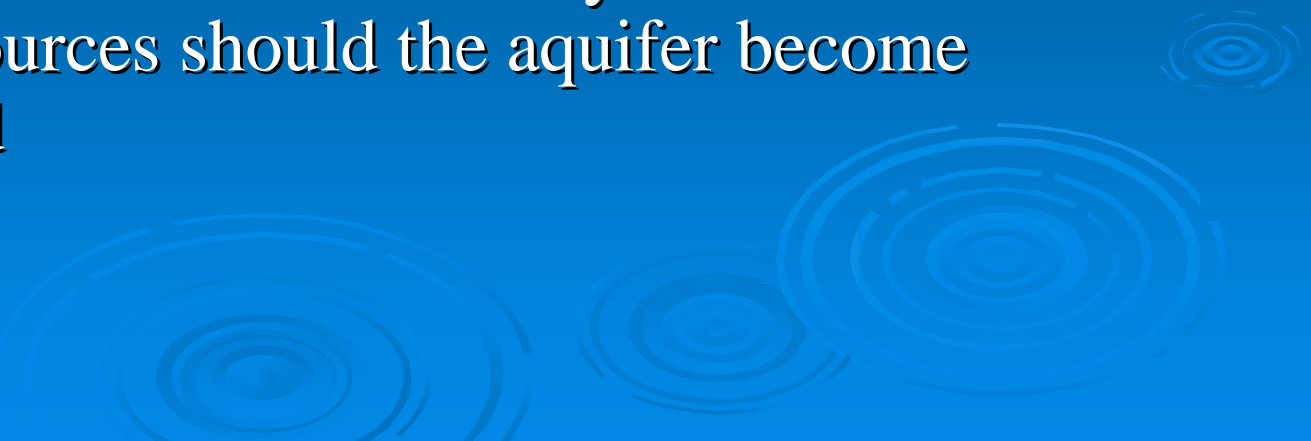
Sole Source Aquifer Program

If the Administrator determines, on his own initiative or upon petition, that an area has an aquifer (or aquifer system) which is the sole or principal drinking water source for the area and which, if contaminated, would create a significant hazard to public health, he shall publish notice of that determination in the Federal Register. After the publication of any such notice, no commitment for Federal financial assistance (through a grant, contract, loan guarantee, or otherwise) may be entered into for any project which the Administrator determines may contaminate such aquifer through a recharge zone so as to create significant hazard to public health

Sole Source Aquifer Program

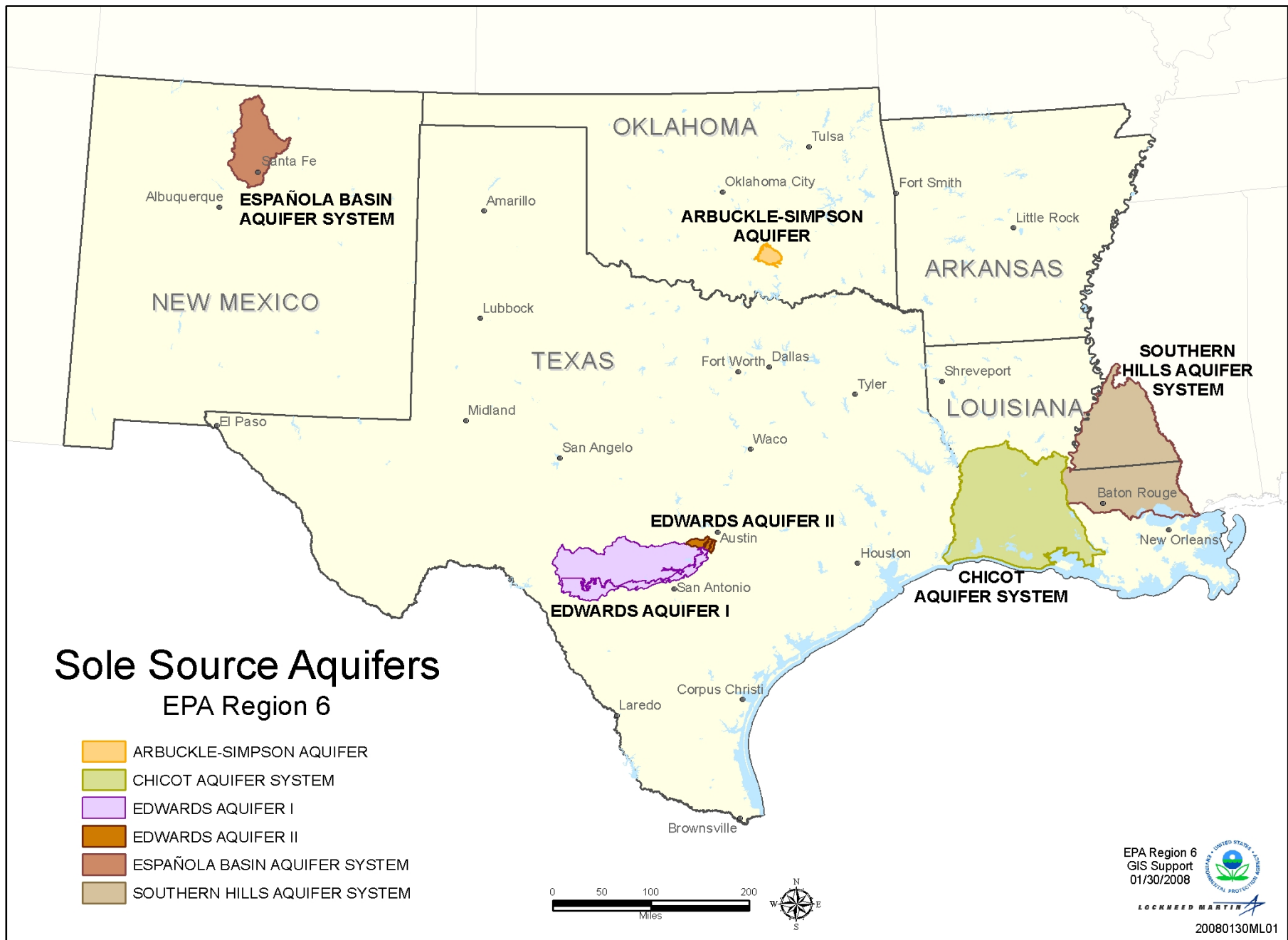
- Under Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act, an aquifer can be named a Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Any person or group can petition EPA to designate an aquifer as a SSA
 - Before an aquifer can be declared a Sole Source it has to meet three criteria

Sole Source Aquifer Definition

- A SSA is an aquifer or aquifer system designated by EPA as the "sole or principal source" of drinking water for a given service area and have acceptable boundaries
 - The aquifer or aquifer system supplies 50% or more of the drinking water for that area
 - For which there are no reasonably available alternative sources should the aquifer become contaminated
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History and Project Reviews

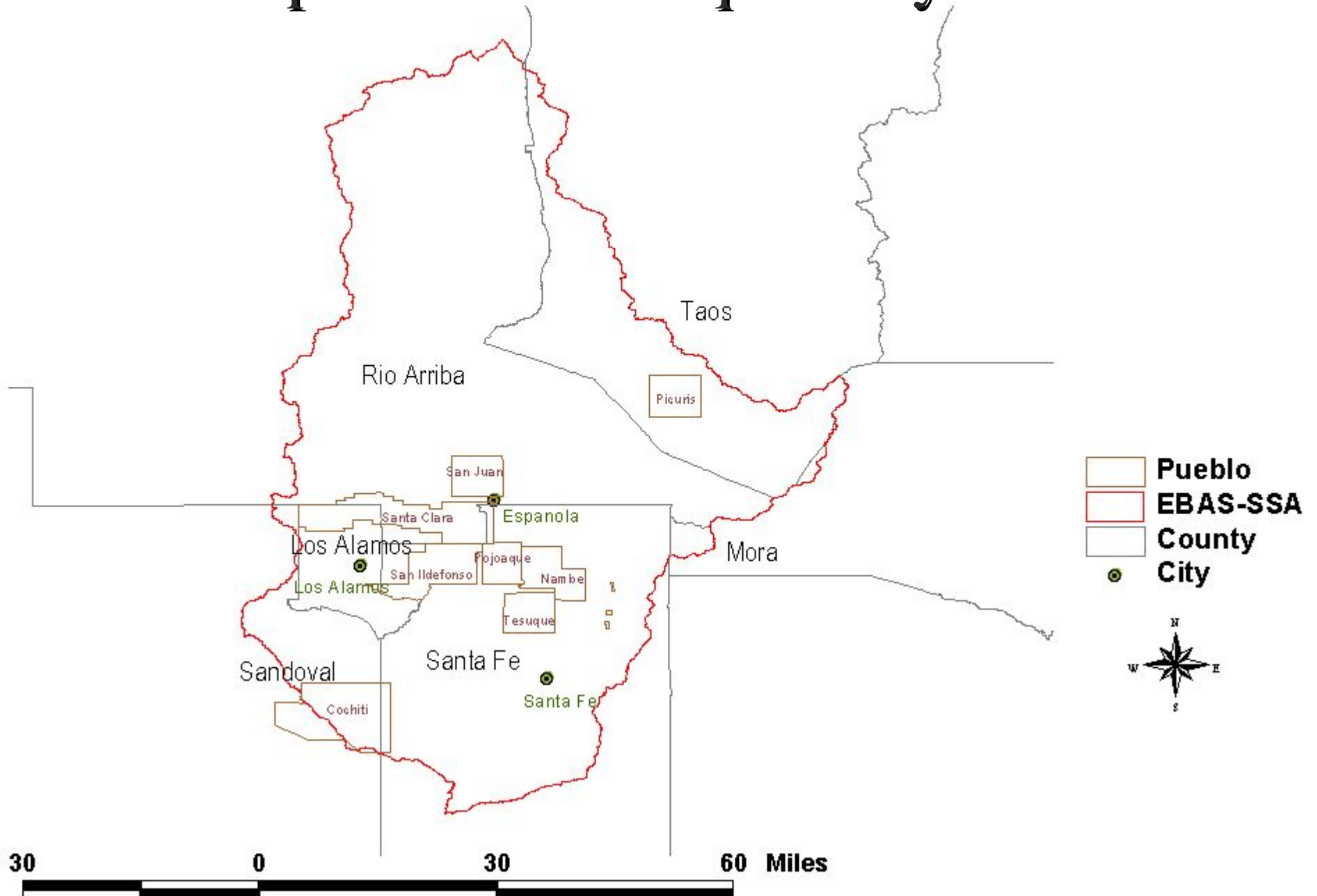
- The SSA program was authorized in 1974 (SDWA)
- In 1975 the Edwards Aquifer (San Antonio/Austin) was the first designated SSA in the U.S.
- SSA regulations were promulgated in 1977 and the SSA program was reauthorized in 1986 and 1996
- Nationally there are 75 + designated SSAs and six are located in Region 6
- Typically, Region 6 reviews between 60 and 80 work plans per year. Since 1977, only three projects have had to adjust their plans due to SSA review



The Benefits of Designating an SSA

- Proposed Federal financially-assisted projects which have the potential to contaminate the SSA area are subject to EPA review
- This review could either cause a redesign of the project or prevent a commitment of Federal funding
 - If any project modification is required, there will be tribal consultation
 - Designation imposes no regulatory requirements or direct compliance costs on the Pueblo. If the overall cost of such a project increases due to project changes made to avoid contamination of the SSA, a corresponding increase in the local share might occur
 - Examples are runoff drainage from HWYs, sewer/septic systems, lagoon construction and manure storage. Since 1977, only 3 projects out of over 2,000 projects have been modified due to SSA review

Española Basin Aquifer System




Projects which EPA does NOT normally need to review

- Construction projects served by municipally or publicly owned and operated sewage treatment plants, unless excavation of any type will occur
- Private domestic septic systems
- Financial assistance including refinancing on existing projects where no changes will take place
- Funding of public services, planning activities, technical assistance, or training activities
- Projects which do not receive Federal financial assistance or that do not fall within the designated area

Projects EPA will need to review

- All projects for which an EIS or EA/FONSI will be prepared
- Projects involving livestock holding facilities or feedlots
- Any projects requiring on-site sewage treatment
- All projects which involve storage or handling of hazardous or toxic materials
- New construction that has the potential to contaminate the aquifer
- Projects for which the impacts to the Aquifers is uncertain

What should be Submitted for EPA Project Review

- Short project description
 - Name of funding Agency
 - Amount funded
 - Project location
 - Project contacts
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For Further Information on the Sole Source Aquifer Program

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Region 6 SSA Website at

<http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6wq/swp/ssa/>