

APPENDIX B

Albuquerque Scoping Meeting

APPENDIX B

**ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC MEETING, SEPTEMBER 23, 1999
SUMMARY MEMORANDUM**

Drinking Water Project EIS Scoping Meeting Summary Memorandum

Albuquerque Public Meeting 9/23/99

Disposition of Comments Received

The scoping summary memoranda prepared following the public scoping meetings for the Drinking Water Project detailed the issues raised by public comment at those meetings. This memorandum addresses each of the comments received, and states the action that will be taken to address each comment. The verbatim comment text is shown in a table, with the action to be taken shown to the right. In some cases, the comments are presented slightly out of order (from the original scoping memorandum [file /albuqu~1.doc]) to allow for grouping of similar comments.

Background: The Water Resources Division of the City of Albuquerque Public Works Department held a scoping meeting for the Drinking Water Project, as part of NEPA compliance requirements for public input in the draft Environmental Impact Statement process. The meeting was held from 6-8pm on Thursday, 9/23/99 in the Cimarron/Doña Ana Rooms of the Albuquerque Convention Center. The meeting consisted of an “open house” format, with 6 display stations of project information, poster boards, and maps. The intent of the “open house” format was to allow the public to browse at their leisure and interest level, obtain information, and ask questions.

Presentation:

The displays at the six stations were organized topically as follows:

- 1) Overall Water Resources Management Strategy, including Aquifer Storage and Recovery
- 2) Provisional Action Alternatives A, B, C – Combining Diversion Options with Chappell Road/
Site P
- 3) Delivery of Water – How the City Plans on Delivering SJC Water
- 4) Diversion Options – Angostura, New Surface Diversion, Radial Collector Wells, In-River
Subsurface Collector
- 5) NEPA Process, Scoping Process
- 6) Plant Siting Options with Drawing and Picture of What Plant Would Look Like and Evaluation
Criteria

In addition to either a portable tape recorder or human recorder, a flip chart was placed at each station to record public comments and questions. An expert manned each station to answer questions and records comments.

A presentation kicked off the meeting, in which John Stomp, Manager of the Water Resources Division, gave a project overview, and Lori Robertson and other representatives from the US Bureau of Reclamation gave an overview statement of the NEPA process and encouraged public participation.

Hirst Company Role:

The Hirst Company provided media, public relations and public involvement support to the public meeting as required, including:

- 1) Ad design development and placement in Sun 9/12, Wed 9/15, Sun 9/19, Wed 9/22 editions of the Albuquerque Journal;
- 2) Coordination of legal notice placement in same editions;

- 3) Direct Mail notices to all city neighborhood associations;
- 4) Follow up phone calls to all neighborhood associations encouraging attendance;
- 5) Draft of press release to Mayor's office for distribution to all major media outlets;
- 6) Development of mailing list and distribution to 400 key water stakeholders;
- 7) Counsel on attendees, contact with specific opinion leaders, and mobilization of attendees;
- 8) Counsel on information, assistance with preparation of materials and presentation.

Attendees:

There were 127 attendees at the 9/23 meeting (headcount during presentation) although only 98 officially signed in. In addition, there were 19 project-related attendees: John Stomp and Mark Schmidt of the City of Albuquerque; 3 representatives of the Bureau of Reclamation; 9 engineer/NEPA-related representatives from Parsons, CH2MHill, and Ecosystems; 4 Hirst Company representatives; and 1 Cooney Productions representative.

Drinking Water Project
Albuquerque Public Scoping Meeting 9/23/99
Emerging Issues/Public Relations Implications

During this meeting, several issues emerged as common public concerns or comments regarding the Drinking Water Project:

Site Selection

Heavy opposition to Site C surfaced several days prior to the meeting, which attracted considerable press coverage. Given this, the City should pay careful attention to the community and public relations aspects of the eventual site selection and finalization, and address any potential opposition there very quickly. While the S. Valley residents mobilized quickly, any site - even one that is already zoned commercial and “a gravel pit”- could attract foes. The City should be prepared to respond quickly so that more opposition to another site does not escalate unnecessarily.

Quality/Taste of River Water

Many comments were recorded concerning the anticipated quality of drinking water after it has been diverted and treated. Will it taste different and how? Is there more risk for contamination? An emerging related issue was the number of comments recorded about **pollution from the water treatment plant – noise, smell, etc.** City materials should be expanded to address how and why the taste of water will change, how the treatment plant works, what processes and chemicals are used, how safe it is, what type of contaminants should be expected, what would happen if contaminants are found, and any potential upstream contamination from Pueblos, Santa Fe, Los Alamos (plutonium), etc. The Hirst Company recommends that an issue brief be written about this subject.

Aquifer Storage and Recovery

Many were concerned about this idea – about whether it could actually be done and, again, expressing concerns about polluting the groundwater. The Hirst Company recommends contacting media outlets to run a feature story explaining this process further and profiling success stories in other cities, in order to address this concern and educate consumers.

As recommended earlier, an issue brief should be prepared.

Diversion Methods and Impact to Bosque

The public appeared very interested in the pros and cons of proposed diversion methods. While the impact to the bosque of each method was not clearly identified, it was clear that the public was very concerned about that issue in general. Whatever option is chosen, the ensuing construction impacts and overall short term and long term impacts to the bosque and surrounding habitat need to be evaluated thoroughly during selection and the Environmental Impact Statement process. Underground diversion methods seemed to be clearly preferred, both for less environmental impact and prefiltering advantages. An issue brief is recommended on this subject as well.

Effect on Farmers, Irrigation Water

Again, not clearly explained in project materials, but garnered comments and concerns. The City should identify what these effects will be and address them so that the eventual reaction to this won't be the “big bad city is taking water from the farmers.” The expectation that the City will be taking agricultural water in the years ahead should be addressed carefully. Again, an issues brief is recommended.

Effects on Residential Wells

Concerns were recorded during the scoping meeting, though not addressed in city materials. City materials should be provided to answer this question, as well as related issues on land subsidence. This is a major concern to all residents.

**Drinking Water Project
Albuquerque Public Scoping Meeting 9/23/99
Recorders/Flip Charts
Detailed Summary of Comments**

Organized topically into areas as follows:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
<p>Main Issue – Opposition to South Valley Site Option and Related Environmental Justice Issues, Other Siting Issues: During the presentation section, approximately 75-85 people in the crowd stood up together united against any potential selection of the South Valley site. The action was led by Yvette Griego of the South Valley (see sign-in sheet). Other written and verbal comments included:</p>	<p>Identification, screening, and evaluation of potential facilities sites will be detailed in a CH2M Hill/Parsons ES Technical Memorandum, and summarized in the Draft EIS. The selected sites will be a component of the project alternatives that are evaluated in the environmental analysis in the Draft EIS.</p>
<p>“No site C! Directly by houses.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Why site C since it is so far south and a northern site is preferred?”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C land use is A-1 agricultural – shouldn’t be converted to M-1.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C – adjacent land use is residential and small farms – very highly developed on 3 of 4 sides.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C – extremely shallow water table...used to be a lake.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Diversion costs and transmission, in and out costs, are extremely high and Site C is farthest from population center.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C is prime agricultural land...don’t use it for this.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C has a very shallow water table – 5-6ft...rail line is across the river, 3.5 miles...”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C is especially unsuitable due to lack of roads, possible contamination of private wells, and negative financial impact to residents, many of whom are retirees for whom lower property values and/or increased taxes would be devastating.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“This does not belong in an agricultural and residential neighborhood.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C has no downhill water flow...would have to pump uphill.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Avoid shallow water table in the area of Site C.”</p>	<p>Considered during screening process</p>
<p>“Site C would mean pumping water back up north (costly), it’s a nice residential area, its far from population centers, its prime agricultural land, has a shallow water table, its far from rail lines, and it’s a major route for migrating animals.”</p>	<p>Project cost will be discussed in the Draft EIS.</p>
<p>“Site C – if a park, who will handle drug and homeless problems?”</p>	<p>Rezoning and lands disposition will be addressed in the Draft EIS.</p>
<p>“How will site C affect property values and taxes?”</p>	<p>Socioeconomic effects will be discussed in the Draft EIS.</p>

“Property values in the vicinity will go down.”	Socioeconomic effects will be discussed in the Draft EIS.
“There are environmental justice issues – chlorine gas already exists at the WWTP (waste water treatment plant) in the S. Valley.....don’t want Site C because of more chlorine gas....”	Safety issues will be discussed in the Draft EIS.
“Each site should be evaluated for environmental justice on a 5- and 15-mile radius and the people of the South Valley should not bear twice the chlorine gas risk as the people of the City of Albuquerque elsewhere.”	Environmental Justice is an evaluation category that will be discussed in the Draft EIS.
“...want environmental justice examined area by area, i.e., South Valley, NE Heights, etc.”	Environmental Justice is an evaluation category that will be discussed in the Draft EIS.
“There are environmental justice issues in the South Valley...lack of benefit to the S. Valley to have the location there.”	Environmental Justice is an evaluation category that will be discussed in the Draft EIS.
“Site C concerns about ponding area pollution and mosquitoes.”	Addressed in the Project Description in the Draft EIS
“Site P is the best option – M-1 – a gravel pit.”	The remaining issues listed here and below do not fall easily into a resource category for evaluation in the Draft EIS. In general, the topics will be addressed in the alternatives analysis, Project Description, and resource evaluations in the Draft EIS.
“Please don’t give up beautiful agricultural land for industrial use – we need it for open space.”	
“Site C is a major route for migrating animals.”	
“Site C is a nice residential area.”	
“Site C doesn’t fulfill the north location criteria – also population center is far from site C.”	
“When will the final decision be made on the site?”	
“There is some sentiment from South Valley folks here tonight that the City is trying to sneak something in – like a lack of trust. How can you reassure these people that what you say you aim to do is exactly what you will do?”	
“Thank you for not putting it in La Luz...”	
“South Valley residents want the same quality of life as the rest...we’re tired of being the dumping ground. All residents deserve the same quality of life...(we have) a high rate of poverty and minorities there.”	
“The Chappell Road site (Site P), which is ranked highest in all engineering criteria by city studies, should be purchased even if it is the most expensive site and requires a condemnation suit to obtain. Furthermore, if necessary, a water rate increase should be implemented by city council in order to do this.”	
“We don’t want it in the South Valley.”	
“Site C has migrating birds feeding there.”	
“We don’t want the facility in the S. Valley...we want paved roads and sewer first.”	
“Keep the area agricultural...no treatment plant.”	
“Water treatment plant should not be located at Site C – residents are tired of being dumped on.”	
“Site C will negatively impact the S. Valley to reduce agricultural sites as well as change the rural atmosphere and an historical cultural area. Site P is the ideal site – meets all criteria.”	
“Site C would mean pumping water back north a long distance – costly.”	

“Why would a city project be using county property for Site C?”	
“Site C – how will it affect water table, since many residents have wells.”	
“S. Valley is not a good site except for size...does not meet your criteria...site P is the best site...if (Site C) is chosen, will use every legal means to stop the project.”	
“I want you to hire geologists to tell me which site is better...which substrate is better to recharge and withdraw water from; a gravel pit or clayey farmland and why.”	
“What is the groundwater quality at each site, how far wide does water communicate?”	
“I am concerned that by developing the water plant in the South Valley that it will continue a process where we lose our way of life in favor of the growth of the City of Albuquerque. We want to protect our wells, our ditches, our fields, and our values. I don’t want you to say everything is going to be wonderful and jobs are all that matter, I want an honest, open discussion of the impacts to my neighborhood, its groundwater and way of life before you start this project.”	

Aquifer Storage and Recovery:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“What is the quality of the recharge?”	Addressed in the Water Resources section of the Draft EIS.
“Will ASR contaminate ground water?”	Addressed in the Water Resources section of the Draft EIS.
“...goals of ASR...natural springs?”	Addressed in the Water Resources section of the Draft EIS.
“How do you ensure that the ground water will not flow downstream, and (thus) not be stored?”	Addressed in the Water Resources section of the Draft EIS.
“I’m concerned about chemistry and long term viability of recharging water into the aquifer. – great in concept, shaky in reality.”	Addressed in the Water Resources section of the Draft EIS.
“Will aquifer storage and recovery contaminate groundwater?”	Addressed in the Water Resources section of the Draft EIS.
“I want those snazzy colored computer models that show the operations of the facility injecting and removing water and as it affects the groundwater below – in 3 dimensions – for a variety of scenarios over time.”	Addressed in the Water Resources section of the Draft EIS.
“Do you remove chlorine?”	Addressed in the Project Description of the Draft EIS

Diversions and Distribution to Residents:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“Prefer subsurface for filtration and limiting of mosquitoes...”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Atrisco – how will you solve sediment deposition problems behind dam?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.

“What ditch will you use to transport water from Atrisco to site C – size of ditch?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Will additional plants be needed in the future to feed and maintain the proposed distribution system?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“I prefer underground diversion methods and radial collector wells – more efficient and naturally pre-filtered, also limits mosquitoes.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Surface water diversion will increase plant size.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Surface water diversion will cost more due to increased residual handling at the plant.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Likes Ranney option but I see benefit of in-river...won’t they plug up?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Like water being filtered rather than sandy and susceptible to contamination.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Radial collector is least favorite option.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Favor the in-river subsurface method – less environmental impact both long and short term.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Use existing surface water diversion facilities – known technology, less maintenance, and less environmental impact to bosque and river (don’t have to repeatedly enter the river and/or bosque).”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Existing facilities will keep new facilities out of the bosque, maintenance problems, expansion problems...”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Future water line expansion?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“What will be the size of pipes used?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“New construction?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“Site P is a gravel pit – is the elevation okay for delivery of the water?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation and Project Description.
“How much disruption will there be to neighborhoods/residents in installing the large distribution lines?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.
“How much of a negative impact on the environment will radial collector wells and subsurface collectors have, compared to a surface collection system?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.
“If Angostura diversion is used, I’m concerned about decreased flow in the river, particularly with respect to the flow across the Pueblos.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.

“Like subsurface option but “well” (Ranney option) a scary thought due to drawdown.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.
“What about contamination in the Angostura Canal.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.
“Ditch safety could be an issue.”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.
“How will the water pumps be operated – if electric, will huge power lines need to be brought in or will you need to find a transformer? Has it been determined yet whether diesel or electric?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.
“What about smells, impact on birds, etc.?”	Addressed in alternatives evaluation, Project Description, and environmental evaluation.

Amount of Water in River:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“Will this enhance the amount of water we have, or just keep it the way its going?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“ I’m concerned about the lack of surface flows of the Rio Grande after the City removes its water.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Will new flows affect flood plain?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS

Impact of Project on Irrigation Water:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“I am very concerned that this project not decrease the availability of irrigation water, especially for small farmers.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What effect will the project have on irrigation flows and erosion of river banks?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Are there conflicts with farmers?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about loss of water in saturated ground around the river and insufficient water for farms.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS

Costs:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“When will we get the cost of these plants?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Cost comparisons....addressed?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about the cost of it all.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What’s the projected cost of the sites?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Who will pay for the project – will it raise our taxes?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS

“Is the money being well spent?”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“Consider sites closer to river to save costs – less distance from river would mean less cost to public and city.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS

Water Quality/Treatment:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“Will the water taste better?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about the quality of the drinking water.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Will river water dissolve the aquifer or change its chemistry?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about arsenic into the ground.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about arsenic levels.....”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I want you to hire a chemist to tell me the composition of river water, the nutrients, any pesticides, minerals or toxic substances and how they will interact and affect the aquifer and groundwater quality from which I draw my well water. Will river water dissolve the aquifer or change its chemistry? Monitoring plans must be developed that are statistically robust enough to identify trends....Protecting groundwater to groundwater standards may not be adequate, many carcinogens like solvents do not have groundwater standards, the City must protect this water as it was the most precious resource in the desert – which, of course, it is.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What will go into the treatment process?”	Addressed in the Project Description of the Draft EIS.
“Are all the chemicals regulated?”	Addressed in the Project Description of the Draft EIS.

Bosque/Wildlife Impacts:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“Will canal lining affect trees?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about wildlife...”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Want to protect animals.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What about fish and waterfowl feeding areas near site C?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Water treatment plant ponds would be hazardous to birds.”	Addressed in the Project Description of the Draft EIS.
“...concern about chlorine’s effects on migrating birds such as cranes and other endangered species.”	Addressed in the Project Description of the Draft EIS.
“Several sites were removed because it would attract birds that could affect airport traffic. Have you developed a plan to manage wildlife access to this 300 acre facility – birds, insects, rodents will all try and colonize it and you should plan or identify ways to prevent their access to this facility and any lagoons, or manage them in some active manner.”	Addressed in the Project Description of the Draft EIS.

Silvery Minnow Issue:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“...Manage water reserves through ASR, not reservoirs...save the water for the Rio Grande Silvery Minnow...”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What about the silvery minnow and spring flows – effects?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS

Treatment Plant Issues - General:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“The aesthetics of the facility should be detailed so people can see what it would look like in their neighborhood, as they drive to work, from their yards. How many trucks will be used in construction and during operations? “How many utility lines and road and services will be provided? What will the lighting be like, I’m having trouble seeing the night sky.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What about evaporation in the canal and at treatment plant?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Make it attractive – building, site, etc..”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What about smells/noise levels?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about noise....”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“What are the noise level expectations for a 24 hour period?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“The smell near the South Second Street Treatment Plant is bad....sludge stinks.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Will there be a chlorination facility and what are the associated risks?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Are there plans for a sewage treatment plant later, in the same location?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“I’m concerned about odor/smell at the treatment plant, pump stations.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“...no flies wanted...”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Make the water treatment plant green-friendly...biofiltration.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Will there be lights a site C – light pollution?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Are there joint use opportunities...who will joint users be?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS

Treatment Plant Issues – Pollution:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“What will you do with sediment, could be hazardous.”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.
“How much noise will the facility generate?”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.
“How will you dispose of heavy metals (arsenic, mercury, lead) that settle out of the water, and how will you transport this hazardous material?”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.

“I am concerned about pollutants and ponding areas created by the treatment plant.”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.
“What will be done with the sludge (solids) that is pumped out?...and what will be done to contain them (to avoid leakage, etc.)?”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.
“I’m concerned about pollution.”	The remaining issues listed here and below do not fall easily into a resource category for evaluation in the Draft EIS. In general, the topics will be addressed in the alternatives analysis, Project Description, and resource evaluations in the Draft EIS.
“Can industrial and agricultural pollution be reduced?”	
“What happens if a truck hauling water wrecks and spills diesel fuel and oil? How much water will be polluted and who pays for the cleanup? What actions will the City take to prevent such accidents at the WTP site?”	

Concern for Residential Wells:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“What will the effects of this project be on shallow private wells?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“...concern for residential wells.....”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Will radial collector wells affect small wells in the No. Valley (that are close to them)?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“...local wells depend on recharge from the drain?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Will the treatment plant affect my nearby well?”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS

Concern About Chlorine:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“I’m concerned about chlorine...”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.
“...concern for chlorine and its lethal effects on surrounding areas...”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.
“...concern about chemicals, like chlorine being used for water treatment.”	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.
“We don’t want chlorine in the drinking water.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“Recently fecal matter has been found in groundwater supplies of New York. One solution is to chlorinate the groundwater supplies for drinking water. I want the City to put into writing whether it plans to chlorinate these groundwater supplies and what the effects are of chlorinated groundwater on my long-term health. I heard that when you chlorinate drinking water, you try and meet the standards at the furthest tap from the source – therefore people	Addressed in the Project Description and environmental evaluation of the Draft EIS.

<p>closest to the facility could likely receive excess chlorine – so much you can taste it. If this is true, I don't want to be close to this facility. Describe this process, the effects of chemicals on taste and gradients. I am concerned that the South Valley is already exposed to chlorine gas risks from its wastewater treatment facility, and now if Site C is selected, from the water treatment facility, with its chlorine gas risks puts undue cumulative burden on our community. I feel like I have a chlorine gas gun pointed in my head. If either of these facilities have an accident, and there is an inversion, people could die. I would be downwind of the water treatment facility and feel threatened by this risk. I would be within one mile of the WTP and five miles within the WWTP. ”</p>	
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Meeting Format:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
<p>“Scoping meetings need to be redone in a town hall format – where people have an opportunity to express themselves and listen to others and develop comments from that.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“Want another scoping meeting in a town hall format.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“There were some people disappointed that there wasn’t enough time where they could speak out with the group present (i.e., formally voice opposition on S. Valley site during presentation) – will there be an opportunity in the future?”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“I would have appreciated a time where all attendees could hear questions and comments.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“I am concerned that no feedback was allowed on the public floor.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“I love the format of the meetings and the one-on-one discussion.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>

Communication:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
<p>“There were many who had not heard of this project until now...I myself had read a good deal about this prior to the meeting.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“If this is as large and important a project as you say it is, then please say more about it, educate everyone and often, get more involvement, coordinate with all regionally affected interests as you make decisions. I want to see universities, national laboratories, and government agencies involved evaluating the potential effects. I want surveys too.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“Would like to see results of public scoping meetings; resolution of comments and answers to questions.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“Make results available to the public.”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>
<p>“Are you going to coordinate with Indian Pueblos and tribes?”</p>	<p>Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS</p>

Other:

<i>Potential Issue</i>	<i>Action Required</i>
“When will you decide on alternatives?”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“Want to see demographic analysis of winners and losers for each water treatment option.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“Intel should bear the cost of the water project because they use so much water.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“What about fluctuations in the water level in Heron, El Vado and Abiquiu and competing uses (recreation, etc.)”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS
“Seems like recycling should be a larger portion of the strategy.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“I’m pleased the city is collecting public input on the project.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“The process seems fair and unbiased.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“...Not sure being told the entire truth.”	Addressed in the City’s public information program for the AWRMS
“ I have high expectations for this project. It is a big undertaking. It is regional in scope. All plans then also should be regional in scope. The City and the federal government should prepare a thorough evaluation of the effects this project will have on my environment and at each site considered....The City of Albuquerque is grown up – so paper exercises and cursory evaluations will not do. Your EIS bears the burden of proof to protect the long term quality of our environment, our neighborhood and our community, the bosque and the Rio Grande.”	Addressed in the environmental evaluation in the Draft EIS



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Albuquerque announces

Public Meetings

to review the

Drinking Water Supply Project

Open House from 6:00-8:00 pm

Albuquerque

Thursday, Sept. 23rd
Cimarron/Dona Ana Room
East Complex of the
Albuquerque Convention Center
Downtown at 401 2nd Street NW

Socorro

Tuesday, Sept. 28th
Macey Conference
Center/Upper Lobby
New Mexico Tech
801 Leroy Place

Espanola

Thursday, Sept. 30th
Northern New Mexico
Community College
Cafeteria/Conference Room
Joseph Montoya Building
921 Paseo de Oñate

Mayor Jim Baca and the City of Albuquerque Water Resources Division invite you to attend an open house to review and comment on the proposed Albuquerque Drinking Water Supply Project.

The City of Albuquerque is implementing its water resources strategy, which calls for full utilization of its share of San Juan Chama Project water for drinking water supply. The proposed Albuquerque project includes construction of a diversion facility to take San Juan Chama Project Water from the Rio Grande, a water treatment plant to purify the river water to drinking water standards, and pipelines to deliver the purified water throughout the City's service area. The City will also review an Aquifer Storage and Recovery Program, which allows it to return purified water to the underground aquifer, store it, and pump it back out when water is needed during dry years. These projects are planned to ensure a safe and sustainable water supply for Albuquerque residents.

The meetings are an opportunity for you to express your opinions, concerns and suggestions about the project, and are being held as part of federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for public input.

Individuals requiring special assistance should call Charlene Sandoval at 768-2562 (TTY Relay 1-800-659-8331) by September 20. For more information about the project, please call Charlene Sandoval.



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Albuquerque Drinking Water Project Public Scoping Meeting

September 1999



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Tonight's Open House

- Stations address the Strategy, the Project, NEPA and Public Involvement
- One-on-one exchanges with technical specialists
- Flip charts to document your concerns and questions
- Comment cards to return later
- Thanks for helping!



NEPA and Public Scoping

- National Environmental Policy Act
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is lead federal agency
- Environmental Impact Statement



EIS --Scoping and Coordination



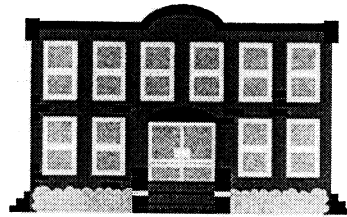
- Cooperative agreement with lead federal agency
- Purpose and Need, Public Scoping
- Endangered Species Act
 - Silvery Minnow Recovery Plan Funding
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
- Consultation with Tribes and Pueblos



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Cultural Resources

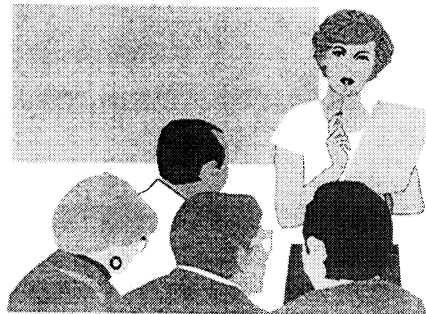
- Historic buildings and structures
- Prehistoric and historic (archaeological) sites
- Places important to traditional communities



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

National Historic Preservation Act Requires:

- Public input to identify significant historical and archaeological sites
- Public input on ways to mitigate project impacts on significant sites
- Consultation with Tribes and Pueblos





WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

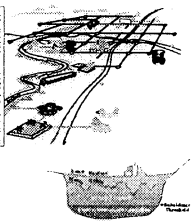
In 1997 the Council Adopted a New Water Strategy Based On:

- 7 years of study
 - New model of the aquifer
 - Considered 30+ alternatives
- Active Ratepayer Participation
 - Customer Advisory Committee
 - Public Forums
 - Community Outreach
- Interaction with regulators, neighbors
- Called for 7 gradual rate increases



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Water Resources Management Strategy

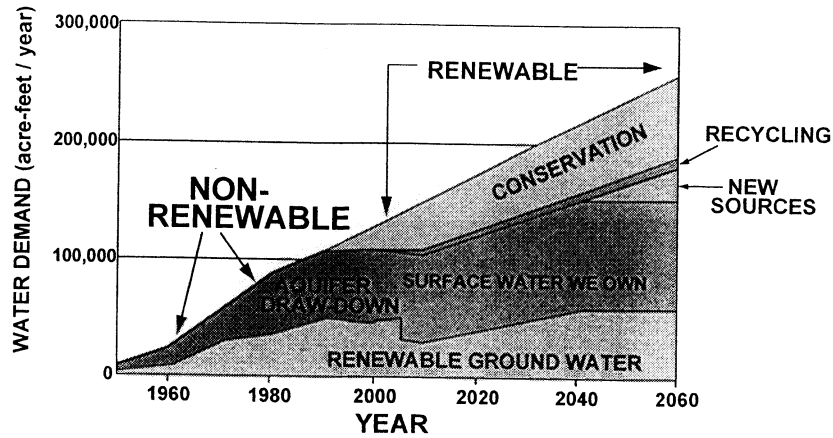


- Establishes policy
- Calls for a series of projects to diversify and fully use renewable supplies
- Creates a drought reserve
- Seeks regional solutions



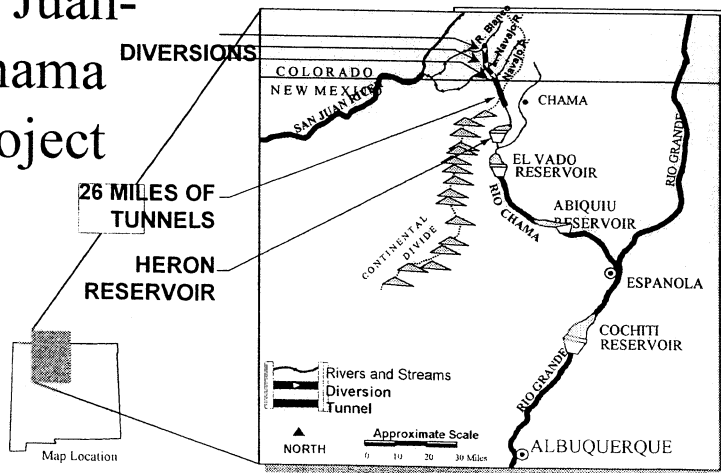
WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Transitioning to a Sustainable Supply



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

San Juan-Chama Project





WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Evaluation Criteria

Potential WTP Sites

Environment	Public	Technical	Implementable	Cost
Biological Resources	Vehicle Access	Parcel Size	Potential to Acquire	Construction
Cultural Resources	Adjacent Land Uses	Topography & Layout	Zoning	O & M
Historical and Current Land Uses	Development Status	Ground Water	Regulatory Requirements	Land
	Joint Use Opportunities	Convenience to Other Parts	Rail Access	Diversion
			Preliminary Construction Impacts	Transmission Line
				Flexibility



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Chappell Road Site P





WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Methods for Withdrawing Water

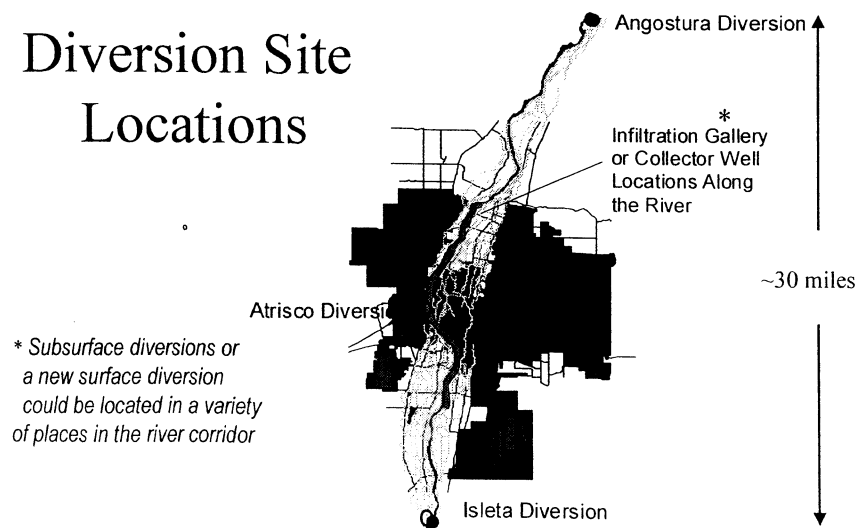
Flow Requirement: 120 mgd

- **MRGCD-owned diversions:** Angostura, Atrisco, Isleta
- **New surface diversion**
- **New subsurface diversions:** infiltration gallery/horizontal wells/in-river variation



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Diversion Site Locations





WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Evaluation Criteria

Diversion Options

Environment	Public	Technical	Health	Implementable	Cost
Biological Resources	Public Support	Suitability for Intended Use	Water Quality	Site Access	Construction
Cultural Resources	Quality of Life	Constructability	Public Health	Zoning	O&M
Historical & Current Land Uses	Joint Use Potential	Convenience to Other Parts		Adjacent Land Uses	Land
		Operational Reliability		Preliminary Construction Impacts	
				Traffic Control	

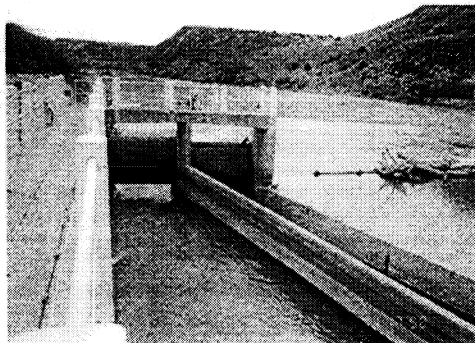


WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Angostura Diversion

Dam

- Currently used to divert MRGCD irrigation water
- 17 miles north of Albuquerque
- Excess capacity available
- Coordination/agreement with Pueblos

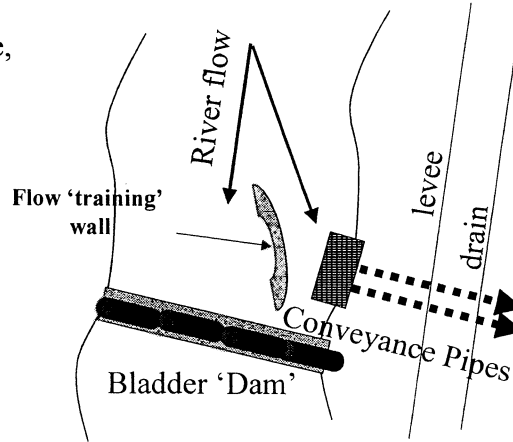




WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

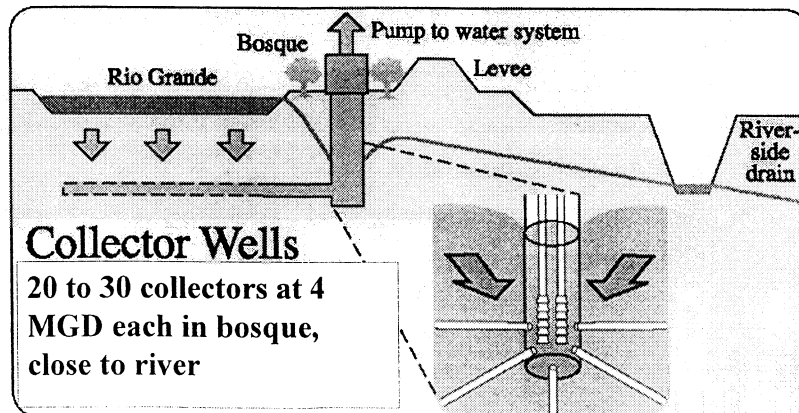
New Surface Diversion Structure

- Piping required for conveyance under bosque, levee, drain
- New inflatable bladder dam or other structure
- Sediment trap, screen & jets set in concrete structure



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Radial Collector Wells

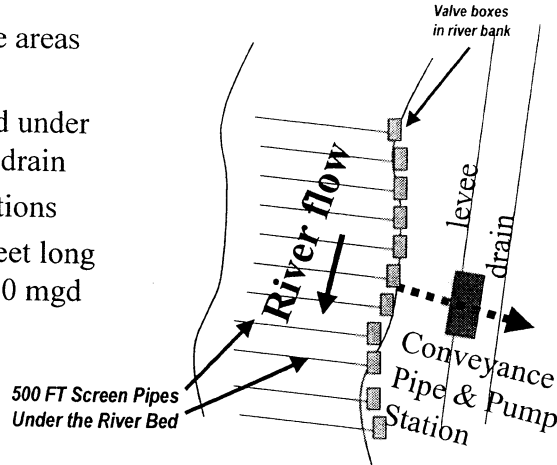




WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

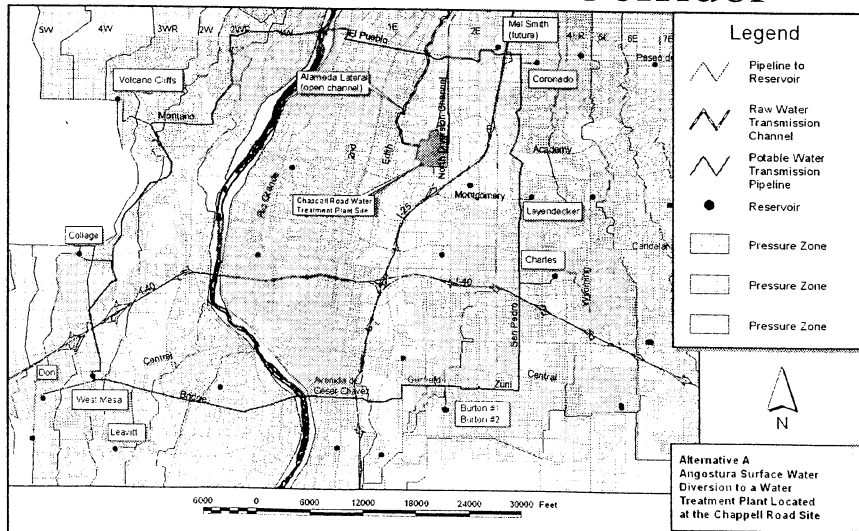
In-River Collector

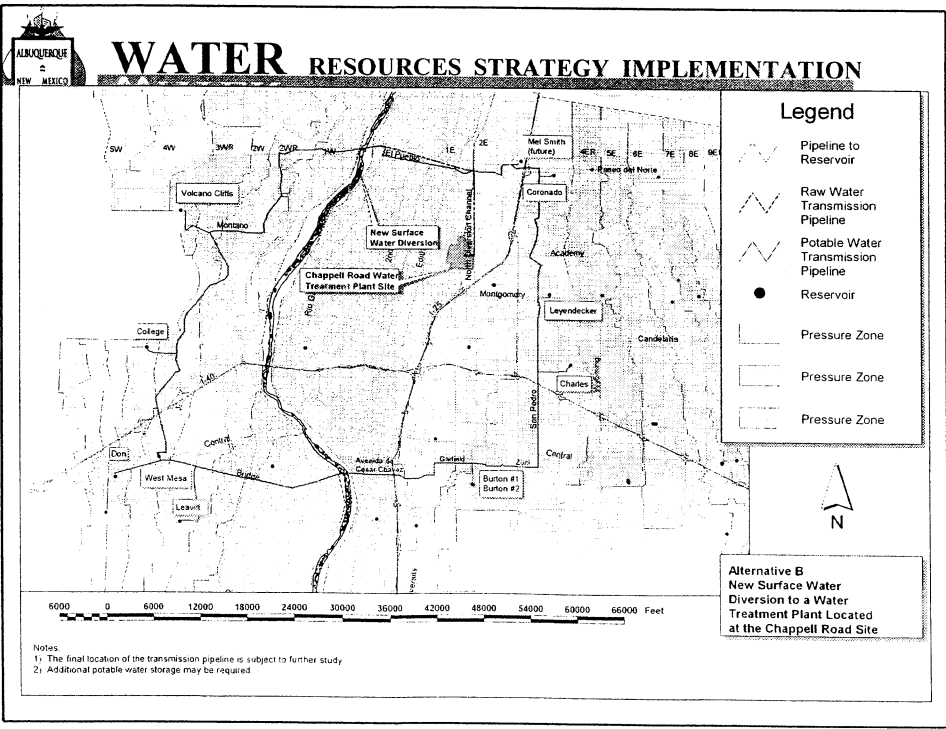
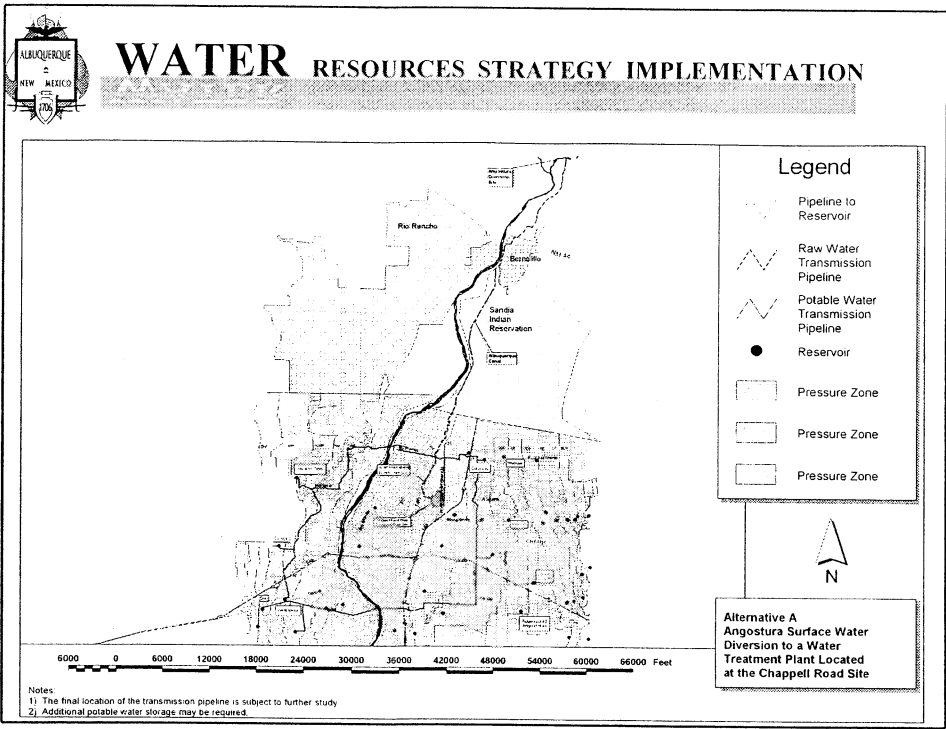
- Many riverside areas suitable
- Piping required under bosque, levee, drain
- New pump stations
- 3 'sets' 2000 feet long required for 120 mgd capacity

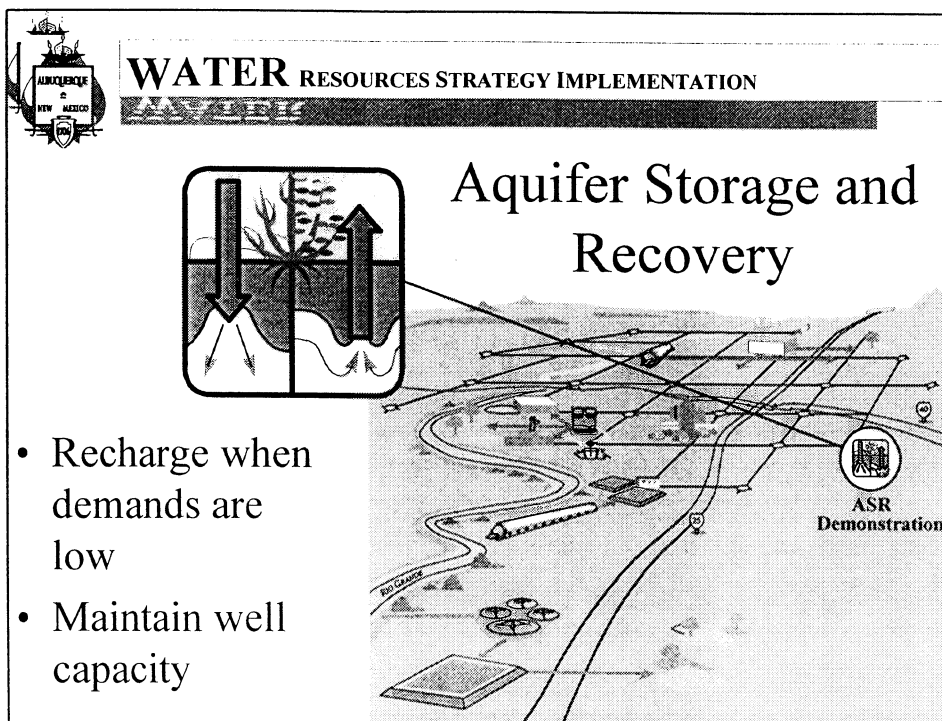
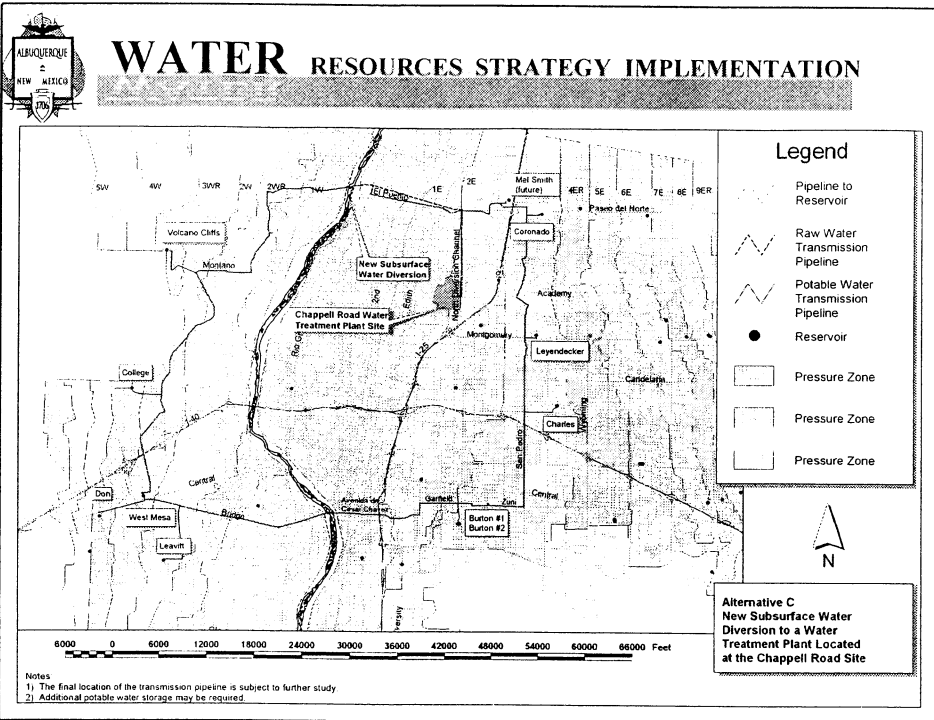


WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Potential Transmission Corridor









WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Next Steps for Implementation

- Public Scoping Meetings
 - September 23--Albuquerque
 - September 28--Socorro
 - September 30--Española
- Complete conceptual designs
- Permitting
 - Local, state, and federal



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The NEPA Process

- NEPA Is The National Environmental Policy Act Of 1969
- What Is The NEPA Process?
 - It Is A “Public” Process To Document The Potential Environmental Effects Of Proposed Projects And How Those Effects Will Be Minimized
 - Public Input And Feedback Are Sought To Make Sure That All Aspects Of The Proposed Project Are Known
- Why Is The Process Conducted?

NEPA Is Triggered When Some Federal Action Is Needed To Implement A Project

- The City Will Seek A License Agreement With The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) To Install Or Use Any Proposed Diversion Facilities
- The Bureau Of Reclamation (The Lead Federal Agency) Is A Concurring Party On These Types Of MRGCD Agreements
- The City’s Project Will Use Their San Juan–Chama Project Water; The San Juan–Chama Project Is A Bureau Of Reclamation Water Supply Project
- The NEPA Process Is A Sound Way To Develop Project Implementation Plans. It Assures Public Participation And Full Consideration Of Environmental Issues



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The NEPA Process

- What Environmental Documentation Will Be Prepared?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Of The Potential Effects Of Project Alternatives Will Be Prepared And Made Available For Public Review And Comment

- What Is The Outcome Of The Process?

The Bureau Of Reclamation And The City Of Albuquerque As Joint Lead Agencies Issue Findings Regarding The Potential Effects Of The Proposed Project

- Comments Received From The Public And Interested Agencies Will Be Considered To Modify Project Alternatives To Minimize Or Eliminate Potential Environmental Effects
- A Preferred Alternative Will Be Identified And Possibly Modified To Avoid, Minimize Or Compensate For Potential Environmental Effects; And
- Record of Decision (ROD) Prepared By Bureau Of Reclamation Addressing The Decision And Its Basis, The Environmentally Preferred Alternative, Other Alternatives And Mitigation Measures



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Scoping Process

- **What Is Scoping?**

Scoping Is An Early And Open Process For Determining The Scope Of Issues To Be Addressed And For Identifying The Significant Issues Related To A Proposed Project

- **Scoping Is An Information Gathering Process To Identify:**

- Significant Resource Issues
- Study Participants
- The Potentially Affected Geographical Area
- Resources Available For The Study
- Study Constraints
- Alternatives To Be Considered

- **Scoping Activities Include:**

- Public Meetings
- Contacts With Other Agencies (Federal, State, And Local)
- Coordination With Stakeholders, Special Interest Groups, Potentially Affected Individuals Or Groups
- Consultations With Pueblos And Tribes

- **Purpose Of Scoping**

- To Obtain Information That Will Focus The NEPA Document On Significant And Relevant Environmental Issues
- Encourage And Facilitate Public Involvement In Decisions That May Affect The Quality Of The Human Environment
- Provide Information To The Public About The Proposed Project And The Environmental Effects
- Identify Public Concerns And Potential Issues Associated With The Proposed Project And Its Alternatives



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Resources And Candidate Issues To Be Addressed In The Environmental Impact Statement

- Air Quality
 - Effects During Construction – Dust, Emissions
- Aesthetics/Visual Resources
 - Visual Changes Resulting From Locating Project Facilities In The Project Area
- Biological Resources
 - Construction Of Project Facilities In The Floodplain
 - Operation Of Project Facilities In The Floodplain
 - Rio Grande Silvery Minnow
 - Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
 - Riparian Habitat (Bosque)
 - Wetlands
- Cultural Resources
 - Potential Effects From Construction Of Project Facilities (Diversion, Pipeline, Pump Stations)
 - Effect On Registered And Unknown Prehistoric and Historic Sites And Traditional Cultural Properties
 - Effect On Historic Districts Or Structures
 - Consultation With NM State Historic Preservation Officer
 - Consultation With Pueblos And Tribes



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Resources And Candidate Issues To Be Addressed In The Environmental Impact Statement

- Environmental Justice
 - Effects On Minority Or Low-Income Neighborhoods
- Hazardous Or Toxic Materials/Waste
 - Contamination Of Land/Water/Air Resources
- Human Health And Safety
 - Drinking Water Standards
 - Project Operations
- Indian Trust Assets
 - Coordination With Pueblos And Tribes
- Land Use
 - Construction Of Project Facilities In Or Near The Rio Grande Floodplain
- Noise
 - During Construction And Operation – Proximity To Residences
- Recreation
 - Construction Of Some Project Facilities May Make Portions Of Some Bike Paths And Recreation Areas Near The Rio Grande Temporarily Unavailable



WATER RESOURCES STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Resources And Candidate Issues To Be Addressed In The Environmental Impact Statement

- Socioeconomics
 - Project Cost And Effect On Utility Rates For Customers
- Soil/Vegetation
 - Effect Of Wind And Water Erosion During Project Facilities Construction
- Traffic
 - Effects During Construction – Traffic Delays, Street Blockages
- Water Resources
 - Potential Changes In River Flows As A Result Of Project Operation
 - Net Long-Term Benefit To The Aquifer From Groundwater Recharge
 - Potential Downstream Flow Depletion In The Rio Grande
- Cumulative Effects
 - Effects Of Project Construction And Operation Of Project Facilities When Other Ongoing And Planned Projects In The Area Are Considered Together
- Mitigation Considerations
 - Approaches To Minimize Any Environmental Effects From Project Implementation

Rio Grande Restoration

A Voice for the River

Scoping Comments on the City of Albuquerque's Proposed Surface Water Diversion Project and Use of San Juan Chama Project Water. Submitted by Steve Harris, September 28, 1999

While Albuquerque's city government and water utilities managers are to be commended for taking early actions seeking to secure additional water supplies and construct water delivery systems with which they might supply the needs of urban residents into the coming century, there are serious issues to be addressed, and underlying assumptions to be examined, in the Environmental Impact Statement for this project. Among the assumptions behind the project that must be questioned are:

- That the region's rate of water consumption will continue to be high.
- That rates of population growth will be high.
- That the city's San Juan Chama Project contract confers an absolute entitlement, superseding both San Juan River claims and the requirements of the federal Endangered Species Act.

Demand Reduction

Exactly why does Albuquerque need this project? Planners recognize that the city presently removes from the groundwater reservoir each year almost twice as much water as flows in to replenish it. This groundwater is the city's sole source of supply and supplementing this source with water from new surface water diversions is seen as a strategy for extending the usable life of the primary, underground water source.

There is uncomfortable evidence that the city's strategy leans too heavily on increasing supplies, but does little toward reducing per capita consumption. Planners are evidently comfortable with 1999 rates of consumption, which are reported to have dropped to 203 gallons/person/day, still placing Albuquerque among the most profligate water users in the Desert Southwest region.

Not only is Albuquerque's water use 20-30% higher than comparable municipalities, its water rates are among the region's lowest. Further, the very modest reduction of per capita consumption in 1999 can be attributed, not to intentional conservation measures, but to the unusually high summer precipitation. A rebound toward greater consumption can be anticipated, as rainfall returns to normal.

If the city were to implement demand reduction and could bring consumption in line with other southwestern cities, it might be possible to conserve as much as one-half of its current groundwater overdraft.

RECOMMENDATION #1: The planning process should establish a target of 150 gallons/person/day and assess the need for the project based on this figure. Raising consumer rates, an obvious primary strategy for achieving this goal, should be fully considered, as this approach would be technically simple and require no capital investment.

A potential secondary benefit of intentional water rate increases could be to dampen immigration, indirectly addressing the issue of regional growth management and the desirability of reducing the scale of the future demand for water upon which the project is based.

Impacts to the Rio Grande

The greatest challenge facing the project's planning process is to adequately mitigate the potentially devastating impacts to the Rio Grande ecosystem of fully depleting 48,000+ acre feet of San Juan Chama water, while simultaneously reducing the volume of groundwater discharged to the river. Under a full production scenario, actual depletions could approach 100,000 acre feet and would almost certainly exceed 65,000 acre feet, annually.

The environmental effect of removing an additional 65 kaf from the Rio Grande must be very carefully assessed. The regional water budget is presently in a very tenuous balance and habitat conditions for the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow, already marginal as a result of current and historical diversions, may be expected decline further if the city's project results in reduced streamflows. For the city to achieve its goal of full utilization of its SJC entitlements, without incurring negative environmental impacts, will require the city to commit to a specific, intentional program which protects the river.

Certain mitigation strategies, if rigorously implemented by the city, could each partially offset the anticipated environmental impacts, but these must be independently and realistically assessed in the EIS. The EIS should consider, and set, specific goals for maintaining acceptable environmental conditions; flexible, adaptive strategies for reaching the city's goals should be specified.

The city's universe of potential mitigation strategies includes:

- **Diverting surface water, in normal and low runoff years, only in October-April.** Because of uncertainties in the state's authority and willingness to enforce environmental prescriptions on water projects, the city's project should offer both incentives and sanctions to ensure that its diversion schedules do not result in environmental declines.
- **Storing San Juan Chama water in the aquifer.** Plans to recharge the aquifer with surface water must be viewed holistically, as part of a regional drought reserve whose aim is to satisfy minimum domestic, environmental and agricultural needs and not simply as a city storage reservoir.
- **Storing environmental water in Abiquiu Reservoir.** The city's present authorized reservoir storage capacity of 150,000 acre feet offers the potential flexibility to store and release water on schedules that benefit the natural environment. At least 100 kaf of this capacity should be dedicated to this purpose.
- **Appropriating "surplus" streamflows.** The city has filed a "Notice of Intent to Appropriate Surface Water" for the unappropriated flood flows of the Rio Grande. The city should recognize this "occasional" water as a source of supplemental streamflow.
- **Recycling wastewater.** Plans to recycle wastewater should also made more specific, so as to permit assessment of their impacts to river flows.
- **Improving Habitat.** Planners suggest that projects to improve silvery minnow physical habitat in the project reach could offset habitat losses associated with increasing net water depletions. The EIS should recognize that any benefits are, at present, purely speculative and plan to closely monitor them to assess their long-term effectiveness.
- **Conservation.** Absent a firm commitment to achieving rigorous municipal and industrial water conservation targets (as above), the project is likely to continue to be viewed by agricultural and environmental interests as unfairly weighted toward urban expansion.

- **Reallocating water.** Even given implementation of the mitigation strategies just discussed, the project planning process should recognize that the sum of the strategies, outlined above, may not fully offset the project's impacts to streamflow and the natural environment. The EIS must assess the likelihood that some quantity of water may have to be acquired and/or dedicated to environmental protection and restoration purposes.

RECOMMENDATION #2: The city should make much more specific its plans to mitigate the effects of diverting more surface water than is presently taken. Vague, unduly optimistic references to the efficacy of proposed practices are not acceptable, when the fate of the silvery minnow (and the expectation of downstream water users) is at stake.

RECOMMENDATION #3: Once specific strategies have been offered and assessed, the city should seek a biological opinion from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and defer selection of its preferred alternative until a finding of "no jeopardy" is assured.

