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**Environment Department Seeks Public Comment
on Water Quality Standards for Lakes**

Santa Fe, NM -- The New Mexico Environment Department seeks public comment on several proposed amendments to surface water quality standards for New Mexico lakes. The Department proposes to classify approximately 70 New Mexico lakes into new “lake-only” segments. Each lake segment would contain a lake (or group of lakes) with similar characteristics, appropriate designated uses, and protection criteria.

Currently, lakes are often classified with nearby streams, even though they may significantly differ from streams in an aquatic community that provide recreational opportunities and other uses. By classifying the lakes separately, the Department will be better able to conduct accurate assessments of water quality. In addition, because many of these lakes are not named in the current standards, the proposal will make it easier for the public to identify what standards apply to a particular lake.

The Department is convening two public meetings to discuss the lakes proposal:

- Santa Fe, Wednesday, August 24, 5:30 p.m. at the Oliver La Farge branch of the Santa Fe public library, 1730 Llano Street
- Roswell, Tuesday, August 30, 5:30 p.m. at the New Mexico Environment Department Field Office, 1914 West Second Street

The proposal includes the following lakes:

In the Rio Grande basin:

All high mountain cirque lakes and the following reservoirs: Cabresto Lake, Canjilon Lakes, Eagle Rock Lake, Fawn Lakes, Hopewell Lake, McClure and Nichols Reservoirs, San Gregorio Lake.

In the Pecos basin:

All high mountain cirque lakes; the following reservoirs: Bonito Lake, Monastery Lake and Santa Rosa Reservoir; and the following sinkholes: Cottonwood Lake, Figure Eight Lake, Inkwell Lake, Lea Lake, Mirror Lake, Perch Lake.

In the Canadian basin:

All high mountain cirque lakes and the following reservoirs: Clayton Lake, Eagle Nest Lake, Shuree Ponds and Springer Lake.

In the San Juan basin:

Jackson Lake.

In the Little Colorado basin:

Quemado Lake.

In the Gila basin:

Bill Evans Lake.

The proposal is available on the Environment Department's website at:

<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/Standards/>

Click under "What's New"

Comments are being accepted through September 9, and may be submitted at a public meeting or sent to Deby Sarabia of the Surface Water Quality Bureau (deborah.sarabia@state.nm.us) or PO Box 5469, Santa Fe, NM 87502). She may be reached by telephone at (505) 827-0417.

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