



State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT



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February 23, 2012
For Immediate Release

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**ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT PROPOSES WATER QUALITY STANDARDS
CHANGES FOR THE
LOWER DRY CIMARRON RIVER AND 62 LAKES**

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) will present a proposal to the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) on April 10, 2012, to consider changes to the surface water quality standards for the lower Dry Cimarron River and dozens of New Mexico lakes. The proposed changes are intended to more accurately describe the waters and how they are used by New Mexicans.

For the lower Dry Cimarron River, NMED proposes to change the aquatic life use designation from "coldwater" to "coolwater" in order to make the standards better fit naturally-occurring conditions. For lakes, the changes provide for new classification specific to dozens of lakes NMED proposes to create lake-only groups containing natural high elevation lakes, reservoirs, and natural sinkholes. The changes will allow for the proper protection of aquatic life and recreation, and improve the ability of the public to identify water quality standards for a particular lake. The lakes included in the proposal are Cabresto Lake, Canjilon Lakes, Fawn Lakes, Hopewell Lake, San Gregorio Lake, Bonito Lake, Monastery Lake, Santa Rosa Reservoir, Cottonwood Lake, Inkwell Lake, Lea Lake, Mirror Lake, Perch Lake, Clayton Lake, Eagle Nest Lake, Shuree Ponds, Springer Lake, Jackson Lake, Quemado Lake, Bill Evans Lake, and 36 high elevation natural lakes in the Sangre de Cristo mountains.

The public hearing on NMED's proposal will begin at the conclusion of the WQCC's regular business meeting that starts on April 10 at 9:00 a.m., in Room 307 of the State Capitol Building; the hearing will continue on subsequent days as needed. To present technical testimony at the hearing, a person must file a notice of intent to present technical testimony with the WQCC Administrator no later than March 19, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. MDT. Any member of the general public may present non-technical testimony and exhibits at the hearing, or submit a written non-technical statement for the record to the WQCC Administrator at any time prior to the close of the hearing. To do so, contact:

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The Environment Department's proposal can be found on its website at:
<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/Standards/>

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