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**WATER QUALITY CONTROL COMMISSION APPROVES
STANDARDS CHANGES FOR 62 NEW MEXICO LAKES**

Santa Fe - The New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) has unanimously approved changes to the surface water quality standards for the lower Dry Cimarron River and dozens of New Mexico lakes. The changes are intended to more accurately describe the waters and provide more appropriate protections.

“The quality of New Mexico’s surface waters is a crucial component of a clean and productive environment,” said Environment Department Secretary Dave Martin. “These amendments underscore the importance of our water resources, and our commitment to providing appropriate protection for future generations.”

For the lower Dry Cimarron River, the WQCC approved a change to the aquatic life use designation from “coldwater” to “coolwater” in order to make the standards better fit naturally-occurring conditions. The river was designated “coldwater” in 1973 without benefit of the detailed studies undertaken in subsequent years. Recent studies indicate that the water temperature as determined by the local climate is coolwater, and collection records of native fish support this designation. The change was supported by local residents and landowners.

For lakes, the changes provide for new classification specific to dozens of lakes; the existing classification is based on the rivers and streams that flow into or out of them. The changes create lake-only groups containing natural high elevation lakes, reservoirs, and natural sinkholes. Most importantly, 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.

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