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Environment Department Provides Funding for Watershed Protection

(Santa Fe, NM) — In order to prevent nonpoint source pollution from entering New Mexico waterways, The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) will be distributing funding to local governments, nongovernmental groups and private citizens in the coming months.

These funds come from the federal Clean Water Act Section 319(h), which is geared toward addressing nonpoint source pollution attributed to runoff or other sources that cannot be traced to a single point of origin.

To announce this drive, the Department will issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) on August 14. Public meetings will be held to introduce the 319 Grant process and answer questions from those who wish to submit proposals.

The public meeting locations and dates are as follows:

SILVER CITY August 21, 6-8pm; Town of Silver City Annex, 1203 N. Hudson.
GALLUP August 22, 6-7:30 pm; Octavia Fellin Public Library, 115 W. Hill Ave.
SANTA FE August 22, 6-8 pm; Santa Fe Public Library, 145 Washington Ave.
ROSWELL, August 23, 6-8pm, Chaves County Extension Building, Auditorium, 200 E. Chisum
FARMINGTON August 31, 6-8pm; Farmington Civic Center, Board Room, 200 W. Arrington

This year, NMED intends to focus the RFPs to provide a stronger emphasis on watersheds that contain stream segments with approved Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for pollutants or where data has been assessed for future TMDLs.

A TMDL is a watershed budget for pollutant influx to a watercourse. TMDLs are developed by the Department with the cooperation of local water users and citizens. These planning documents provide pollution reduction targets and guidance on how to reduce pollutant loads.

The RFPs are separated into two initiatives. One RFP will fund the creation of watershed groups that will address TMDLs in the future. A second RFP will provide financial support for

established watershed groups that are ready to implement on-the-ground projects to address TMDLs. All governmental, non-governmental, or private citizens are encouraged to apply.

The RFP will be issued on August 14, 2006 and will be available at www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb or by mail upon request. **Proposals are due October 2, 2006.**

For more information about the 319 Grant process contact: David Hogge, NMED Surface Water Quality Bureau Watershed Protection Program Manager (505) 827-2981.

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