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Immediate Release

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Environment Department Seeks Public Input on Pecos and San Juan Water Quality; Meetings Planned for March 23 in Pecos, March 30 in Farmington

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) is seeking public input and involvement in surface water quality planning for the San Juan Watershed in northwestern New Mexico and the Pecos Headwaters in the northern part of the state.

The Department will hold public meetings to inform stakeholders of watershed activities and programs, and to provide a forum for interested parties to ask questions, and supply comments and suggestions on watershed needs and priorities. The public meeting for the **Pecos Headwaters watershed** will be on **Wednesday March 23, from 6-7 pm at the Village of Pecos Municipal Building (54 S. Main St., Rt. 63)**. The public meeting for the **San Juan watershed** will be held in **Farmington on Wednesday March 30th from 6-7 pm at the Farmington Civic Center (200 W. Arrington St.)**.

At these meetings, representatives from the Environment Department SWQB will discuss the draft Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) documents for these watersheds. A TMDL is a planning document that establishes specific goals for water quality conditions. It includes reduction estimates for pollutants currently exceeding state surface water quality standards and an implementation plan suggesting what actions might be carried out to restore or protect the health of the body of water.

NMED is also currently accepting written comments on these TMDLs. The 30-day comment period for both TMDL documents opened March 15, 2005, and will end April 14, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. MDT. Formal comments for inclusion in the public record must be submitted to the SWQB, in writing, to **Lynette Guevara, mailing address NMED SWQB, Room N2056, P.O. Box 26110, Santa Fe, NM, 87502; fax number (505) 827-0160; or e-mail: <Lynette_Guevara@nmenv.state.nm.us>** (if possible, please submit an electronic copy in addition to paper).

The Pecos Headwaters Watershed is defined as Sumner Reservoir to the headwaters. Draft TMDLs include: Bull Creek (temperature), Cow Creek (temperature, turbidity), Pecos River (temperature, turbidity, and Gallinas River (temperature).

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TMDL PR

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The San Juan Watershed is defined as Navajo Nation Boundary at the Hogback to Navajo Dam. Draft TMDLs include: Animas River (fecal coliform), La Plata River (fecal coliform, sedimentation/siltation), San Juan River (fecal coliform, sedimentation/siltation), Gallegos Canyon (selenium).

Additional information can be found on the Environment Department's website at <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb> or by contacting Jill Turner, Outreach Coordinator for the NMED SWQB at (505) 476-1866, or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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