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**NEW MEXICO
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Ron Curry
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For Immediate Release

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Environment Department Hosts Series of Public Meetings on State's Surface Water Quality Standards Triennial Review

WHAT: The New Mexico Environment Department's Surface Water Quality Bureau will hold informational meetings to discuss proposed changes to *State of New Mexico Standards for Interstate and Intrastate Surface Waters* (20.6.4 NMAC). The Standards establish designated uses for surface waters of the state and water quality criteria to protect those uses. To gather input on the proposed changes, the Bureau has scheduled five public meetings. The meetings are being held in advance of the Water Quality Control Commission's Triennial Review of Water Quality Standards Hearing, which is tentatively scheduled for fall 2009.

Proposed changes include new narrative biocriteria, revision of designated uses for unclassified waters, revision of segment descriptions to exclude waters under tribal jurisdiction, updates to human health and domestic water supply criteria, clarification of recreational designated uses, addition of public water supply as a designated use and revisions to segment-specific criteria.

The Bureau will publish its discussion draft of the proposed revisions by August 12, 2008, at www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWQB/Standards/index.html. For more information, contact Pam Homer, Standards Coordinator, Surface Water Quality Bureau (contact information below).

WHERE & WHEN: *Statewide*

Carlsbad - Monday, August 25, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

Riverwalk Recreation Center, Powerhouse Room, 400 Riverwalk Dr.

Two Pecos River proposals may be of particular interest to people in the Carlsbad vicinity: to raise the criterion for boron downstream from the mouth of the Black River and to set benchmarks based on existing conditions for preventing salinity increases from Santa Rosa downstream to the state line.

Las Cruces - Tuesday, August 26, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

NMSU Campus, Hernandez Hall, Room 106.

Statewide revisions only, no area-specific changes proposed.

Albuquerque - Wednesday, August 27, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

NMED District 1 Office, 5500 San Antonio Dr. NE

Proposals that may be of particular interest to people in Albuquerque and surrounding areas include: the addition of public water supply designations and radionuclide criteria for the Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Española reaches of the Rio Grande; new segments for the Rio Puerco, the lower Jemez River, and the Rio Nutria and Ramah Lake in the Zuni basin; and a revised pH criterion on lower Sulphur Creek.

Farmington – Thursday, August 28, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

Farmington Civic Center, Meeting Room C, 200 West Arrington.

Proposals that may be of particular interest to people in the Farmington vicinity include a new segment for Lake Farmington (Beeline Reservoir), and the addition of public water supply designations for the El Rito, Rio Brazos, Rio Chama, Rio Vallecitas, the Los Pinos and Navajo Rivers, Heron and El Vado Lakes.

Raton – Wednesday, September 3, 2008, 6:00 p.m.

NM Game & Fish Conference Room, 215 York Canyon Road.

Proposals that may be of particular interest to people in the Raton vicinity include revised classifications for the Dry Cimarron River and Corrupa creek and the addition of public water supply designations for Cimarroncito and Chicorica Creeks.

HOW: The public is invited to submit written comments on the discussion draft. Please submit written comments (email preferred) by **Tuesday, September 30, 2008** to:

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Surface Water Quality Bureau

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Additional information about water quality and the standards in general is available on the Surface Water Quality Bureau's website: <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/SWQB/>.

For more information, call Marissa Stone at (505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475.

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