



NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
Surface Water Quality Bureau

Public Involvement Plan (PIP)
for the State of New Mexico- Addendum to the United
States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration
Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan

February 2026
APPROVAL PAGE

Shelly Lemon
Chief, Surface Water Quality Bureau

Date

Kate Lacey-Younger
Program Manager, Surface Water Quality Bureau

Date

I. Public Involvement Plan (PIP) Overview

The New Mexico Environment Department (Department), Surface Water Quality Bureau (Bureau) developed this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan.

The Bureau encourages public comments for the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan in accordance with New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Public Participation Policy 07-13 by the Bureau's Watershed Protection Section (WPS). The purpose of this PIP is to provide public participation opportunities and information that may be needed to participate in the public comment period. This PIP integrates information about the community and identifies resources needed by the Bureau to successfully incorporate community participation. The PIP identifies the Department staff and resources needed to accomplish these activities. The Bureau will meet the public participation requirements by following this PIP, which includes all applicable policy, regulatory, and statutory public participation requirements.

In developing this PIP, state-wide community participation needs were assessed to ensure appropriate promotion of public outreach by identifying whether there is a combination of environmental and demographic factors (i.e., low income community, minority community, limited English proficiency individuals, Linguistically Isolated Households, etc.) that may impact public participation.¹ This assessment identifies community outreach needs and provides for public access opportunities above and beyond statutorily mandated requirements, and underscores the provision of adequate public access to information about the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan.

As much as possible, public participation and informational activities related to the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan will be held within the timelines outlined in the table below. The 30-day comment period shall begin on the date of the public notice.

This Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan impacts a relatively large community of Spanish speakers, and the Bureau will provide pertinent information in both English and Spanish in public meeting notices, public comment notices, and other announcements (radio broadcasts, brochures, signs, postcards, fact sheets, etc.), as necessary. During public comment periods, hardcopies of relevant documents may be reviewed at the information repositories listed in "Public Participation and Outreach Activities" – Section V.H.

More detailed information about planned Bureau outreach is available in this PIP.

¹ See IV. Location and Demographics – Demographic Summary below.

Activity	Dates
Notice PIP (invite public input)	February 23, 2026
Public Comment Period	30 days
Public announcements (radio, brochures, signs, postcards, factsheets, etc.)	As needed

This PIP is a “living” document that may be amended after considering public comments and feedback. The Bureau Chief provides final approval of the PIP and amendments.

II. Contacts

Bureau contacts for questions regarding the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan, the Bureau’s website, or this PIP, are listed below:

Kate Lacey-Young, Program Manager
 Surface Water Quality Bureau
 1190 South St. Francis Dr.
 Santa Fe, NM 87505
 Phone: (505) 946-8863
 Email: Kathryn.lacey@env.nm.gov

Jocelyn Harimon
 Surface Water Quality Bureau
 1190 South St. Francis Dr.
 Santa Fe, NM 87505
 Phone: (505) 819-9623
 Email: Jocelyn.Harimon@env.nm.gov

If you need to contact the Bureau regarding the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan, please call or email the bureau contacts listed above.

A. Non-English Language Speaker Assistance and Accommodations

Non-English speakers may call the Bureau contact listed in this PIP and request language assistance services, such as an interpreter, so they can learn more about the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan.

B. Department Websites

New Mexico Environment Department - <https://www.env.nm.gov/>
 Surface Water Quality Bureau - <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/>

C. The Document the Bureau is Reviewing

Additional information regarding the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan will be available at the Public Notices Page <https://www.env.nm.gov/public-notice/> or upon request.

III. Regulatory Framework

The public participation requirements of specific water quality programs are described in New Mexico’s Statewide Water Quality Management Plan and Continuing Planning Process

(WQMP/PPP). At a minimum, the public participation process for New Mexico's water quality programs consists of the following:

- Providing the public with the information and assistance necessary for meaningful involvement;
- Providing a central location of reports, studies, plans, and other documents;
- Maintaining a list of affected or interested parties and stakeholders; and
- Notifying stakeholders in a timely fashion prior to consideration of major decisions (generally at least 30 days).

To fulfill this requirement, the Bureau invites the public to submit comments on the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan to the Bureau for consideration. Formal comments for inclusion in the public record must be submitted in writing via email to Jocelyn.harimon@env.nm.gov

IV. Location and Demographics

The Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan is located in Catron County, New Mexico. Approximate beginning and ending locations respectively: Latitude 34.57972°N, Longitude -108.39709°W to Latitude 33.21156°N, Longitude -108.52788 °W.

Demographic Summary

Using U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS) Report for Catron County, an estimated population of **3,727**; **15.8%** identify as Hispanic or Latino (which may be of mixed race). The percent of persons that communicate in a language other than English (non-English) at home is **18.3%**, compared to **22%** for the United States. The per capita income for New Mexico is **\$34,823** (2019-2023) as compared to the national per capita income of **\$43,289**, with **17.8%** of New Mexico's population living in poverty compared to the national poverty rate of **12.5%**. These results indicate that for the area, the percentage of Spanish-speaking communication is considerable and there are demographic factors (i.e., low-income community, minority community, limited English proficiency individuals, Linguistically Isolated Households, etc.) that may impact public participation.

Therefore, the Bureau will provide information in Spanish and in English for public comment notices, public meeting notices, and other announcements (radio broadcasts, brochures, signs, postcards, etc.), and strive to make public participation efforts as inclusive as possible within Bureau budget and time limitations. Specific information repositories that may be used depending on the need are provided in Section V.H. of this PIP.

V. Public Participation & Outreach Activities

The public may ask questions about the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan at any time. However, the Bureau emphasizes that to be included in the administrative record, comments solicited by public notices about the Addendum must be submitted during the noticed comment period, and in accordance with the public notice.

Specific outreach activities related to the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan Project include:

- Developing a public notice announcing the opening of the 30-day public comment period on the Addendum,
- Posting this notice to the SWQB website,
- Emailing this public notice to SWQB’s extensive email list through the GovDelivery e-mail delivery service (1,875 email addresses as of February 13, 2026), and

The most direct way to learn about and be involved in the decision-making process for this Addendum is to submit a comment to the Bureau.

Based on the demographics report discussed in the PIP, basic information about public involvement opportunities will be in both English and Spanish. This information will include how to request materials in Spanish or to speak with Bureau staff through an interpreter. Further details about public participation for this activity are outlined below.

A. Postal Mailing or E-Mailing of Notices to Persons on the Surface Water Quality Bureau’s Email List

The Bureau maintains an extensive email list (1,875 email addresses as of February 13, 2026) that includes individuals interested in surface water quality issues and activities. This list is a combination of all previously interested persons who requested the Bureau provide them with information about surface water quality in New Mexico. The Bureau regularly maintains contact information, which is updated or supplemented if additional information is found. Interested persons providing both an address and email may receive physical mail and an email. Additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties are added to the email list as requested.

B. Email Updates

If you would like to be added to the Bureau’s email list for information and updates, visit the Bureau’s website at: <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/> and click on the “Click here to subscribe to receive email updates!” button on the bottom of the home page. For help, you can contact the Bureau’s website liaison, Heidi Henderson at (505) 819-9986 or email Heidi.Henderson@state.nm.us.

C. Notices in State Newspaper and Local Newspaper

The notice will not be published in any newspapers

D. Public Meeting Notices, Public Comment Notices, and Other Notices

Based on the Bureau’s evaluation of the community, notices will be translated into Spanish.

E. Informational Pamphlets

The Bureau does not develop informational pamphlets for watershed-based plans.

F. Public Comment Period

The 30-day public comment period on the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan is planned to start February 23, 2026, and end March 25, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

G. Other Outreach

Other means of outreach such as flyers or other hard copy postings will not be used. However, any updates will be posted on the Department's website.

H. Information Repositories

Copies of the Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan may be obtained via download from the Bureau's website at <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/public-notices/>, or by contacting Bureau contacts listed above in Section II.

The Bureau will not provide hard copies and other information at post offices, community centers, public libraries, or other repositories. The Bureau requests that individual's access to Addendum to the United States Forest Service Escudilla Watershed Restoration Action Plan and Watershed Based Plan and information online at the links noted above. If absolutely needed, the Bureau will work with individuals to provide access to hardcopies. If you would like to request hard copies of important documents or information about how to comment on the proposed NWP, please contact Jocelyn Harimon at (505) 629-2140 or email: Jocelyn.harimon@env.nm.gov You may also contact Kate Lacey-Young at (505) 946-8863 or email: kathryn.lacey@env.nm.gov