



NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Surface Water Quality Bureau

DRAFT
Public Involvement Plan (PIP)
for the
San Juan & Animas Watersheds TMDL

April 2026

APPROVAL PAGE

Shelly Lemon

Digitally signed by Shelly Lemon
Date: 2026.06.02 10:58:53 -06'00'

Shelly Lemon
Chief, Surface Water Quality Bureau

Date

Lynette Guevara

Digitally signed by Lynette Guevara
Date: 2026.06.01 16:01:42 -06'00'

Lynette Guevara
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 2026 San Juan and Animas Watersheds TMDL. The Bureau encourages the public to learn about and get involved in regulatory decision-making opportunities for the TMDLs. The purpose of this PIP is to provide public participation opportunities and information that may be needed to participate in the TMDL process. This PIP integrates information about the community and identifies resources needed by the Bureau to successfully incorporate community participation activities into the decision-making process for the TMDLs. The PIP identifies the Department staff and resources needed to accomplish these activities. The Bureau will meet the public participation requirements for the TMDLs by following this PIP, which includes all applicable policy, regulatory and statutory public participation requirements.

In developing this PIP, 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 TMDLs.

As much as possible, public participation and informational activities related to the TMDLs will be held within the timelines outlined in the table below. This timeline is tentative and subject to change. Per the federal requirement, a 30-day public review and comment period is allotted.

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

Activity	Dates
Notice PIP (invite public input)	June 15, 2026
Public Notice	June 15, 2026
Public Review Period	June 15 – July 14, 2026
Public announcements (radio, brochures, signs, postcards, factsheets, etc.)	June 15, 2026
Request approval of draft at WQCC Meeting	August 11, 2026

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.

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

II. Bureau Contacts

Bureau contacts for questions regarding the Jemez Watershed TMDLs, the public review and approval process, the Bureau's website, or this PIP, are listed below:

Avery Simpson, TMDL Writer
Surface Water Quality Bureau
PO Box 5469
Santa Fe, NM 87502
Phone: (505) 479-2739
Email: avery.simpson@env.nm.gov

Heidi Henderson, MASS TAT Supervisor
Surface Water Quality Bureau
PO Box 5469
Santa Fe, NM 87502
Phone: (505) 819-9986
Email: heidi.henderson@env.nm.gov

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 San Juan and Animas TMDLs.

B. Department Websites

- New Mexico Environment Department - <https://www.env.nm.gov/>
- Surface Water Quality Bureau - <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/>
- New Mexico Environment Department Non-Discrimination and Environmental Justice - <https://www.env.nm.gov/general/environmental-justice-in-new-mexico/>
- New Mexico Environment Department Public Notices - <https://www.env.nm.gov/public-notices/>
- New Mexico Environment Department Public Comment Portal - <https://nmed.commentinput.com/comment/search>
- New Mexico Environment Department Events Calendar - <https://www.env.nm.gov/events-calendar/>

A. Total Maximum Daily Loads Website

The Bureau maintains a website location for Total Maximum Daily Loads (see website address below). The website will be kept up to date and has information about the site and important documents. <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/tmdl/>

III. Regulatory Framework

The public participation requirements of specific water quality programs are specified in 40 CFR Section 25.4 and described in the Water Quality Management Plan and Continuous Planning Process (WQMP/CPP). 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 comment on the draft San Juan and Animas Watershed TMDL report. The report contains a summary of surface water data and information that quantifies how particular surface waters of the state are currently not meeting their designated uses as detailed in the State of New Mexico Standards for Interstate and Intrastate Surface Waters (20.6.4 NMAC), through application of the Department’s Comprehensive Assessment and Listing Methodology (CALM). The TMDL further quantifies the maximum pollutant loads that the water bodies can assimilate without exceeding the above-mentioned standards.

IV. Location and Demographics

This TMDL document contains surface water information for Sandoval County. The Bureau collects surface water quality data on a watershed basis via an approximate eight-year rotational schedule as resources allow. The San Juan and Animas Watershed was surveyed in 2017-2018 with further data collected in a multijurisdictional monitoring project from 2022-2025.

Demographic Summary

The New Mexico portions of the San Juan and Animas Watershed have an estimated population of 122,925. Of the population 22% identify as Hispanic, 37% identify as white, 36% identify as native American/Alaska native, 1% identify as Asian, 1% identify as Black, and 3% identify as multiracial. Of this population 25% speak a language other than English at home, and 5% of the population live in limited English households. The per capita income for the area is \$25,229. These results indicate that for the project area, the percentage of Spanish-speaking communication, and Native American is considerable (i.e., substantially greater than the state or national percentage) and there are demographic factors (i.e., low-income community, minority community, limited English proficiency individuals, etc.) that may impact public participation.

Therefore, the Bureau will provide information in Spanish, Navajo/Diné 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 of this PIP.

V. Public Participation & Outreach Activities

The public may ask questions about the draft San Juan and Animas TMDL document at any time. Interested community members do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact the Bureau. However, the Bureau emphasizes that to be included in the administrative record, comments solicited by public notices must be submitted during the noticed comment periods, and in accordance with the public notice.

Specific outreach activities related to the draft San Juan and Animas TMDL document include:

- Developing a public notice announcing the opening of the 30-day public comment period,

- Posting this notice to the SWQB website, and
- Emailing this public notice to SWQB’s extensive email list through the GovDelivery e-mail delivery service (over 3000 email addresses as of April 2026)

Copies of the draft San Juan and Animas TMDL document may be obtained via download from the Bureau’s website at <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/tmdl/> , or by contacting Heidi Henderson at (505) 827-2901, heidi.henderson@env.nm.gov, NMED SWQB, P.O. Box 5469, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87502.

This is the most direct way to learn more about and be involved in the decision-making process for the San Juan and Animas TMDL document. Additionally, the public may request to review the document at the Bureau or one of the information repositories listed below.

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 (3956 email addresses as of April 30, 2025) 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

The Bureau’s email list is regularly updated and is available on the Bureau’s website at: <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/> by clicking on the “Click here to subscribe to receive email updates!” button on the bottom of the home page. The Bureau’s website liaison is Heidi Henderson at 505-819-9986 (or email heidi.henderson@env.nm.gov).

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

Based on the Bureau’s evaluation of the community, public notices will be translated into Spanish. In addition, the Bureau will post notices on the Department’s Events Calendar at: <https://www.env.nm.gov/events-calendar/>

D. Informational Pamphlets

The Bureau may develop informational pamphlets for the San Juan and Animas TMDL report that briefly explain what is happening relative to the TMDLs, the appropriate Bureau contacts, and next steps in the TMDL process. To the extent such informational pamphlets are produced, the Bureau may determine whether they will be available in languages other than English, online (e.g., Bureau website) and in print (hardcopy) at the information repositories listed in this PIP. They may also be distributed via email to interested organizations and individuals, including those who sign up for email notices through the website.

E. Public Comment Period

The 30-day public comment period on the draft San Juan and Animas TMDL document is planned to start June 15, 2026, and end July 14, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

F. 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.

G. Information Repositories

Copies of the draft San Juan and Animas TMDL document may be obtained via download from the Bureau's website at <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/tmdl/> or by contacting Avery Simpson at (505) 479-2739, avery.simpson@env.nm.gov, NMED SWQB, P.O. Box 5469, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87502.

The Bureau will not be providing hard copies and other information at post offices, community centers, public libraries, or other repositories. If you would like to request hard copies of important documents and information about how to comment on the draft TMDL, please contact Avery Simpson at (505) 479-2739, avery.simpson@env.nm.gov, NMED SWQB, P.O. Box 5469, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87502.

H. TMDL Proceedings, Outcomes and Responses to Comments

To address stakeholder and community member's submitted comments, the Bureau will prepare the final draft San Juan and Animas TMDL document as amended, which includes a "Response to Comments" section as an Appendix, following the close of the public comment period. The Bureau is required to present the final draft to the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) for review and approval per requirements in the WQMP/CPP. The final draft will be available to the public via download from the Bureau website, or upon request, 10 days prior to the scheduled WQCC meeting. WQCC meetings are open to the public. Their exact schedule and proposed agendas are maintained on the WQCC website². The Bureau will also send a copy of responses to comments directly to the commenter, at least 10 days prior to the WQCC meeting. The San Juan and Animas TMDL document, as approved by the WQCC, will then be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 for review and approval.

² <https://www.env.nm.gov/opf/water-quality-control-commission/>

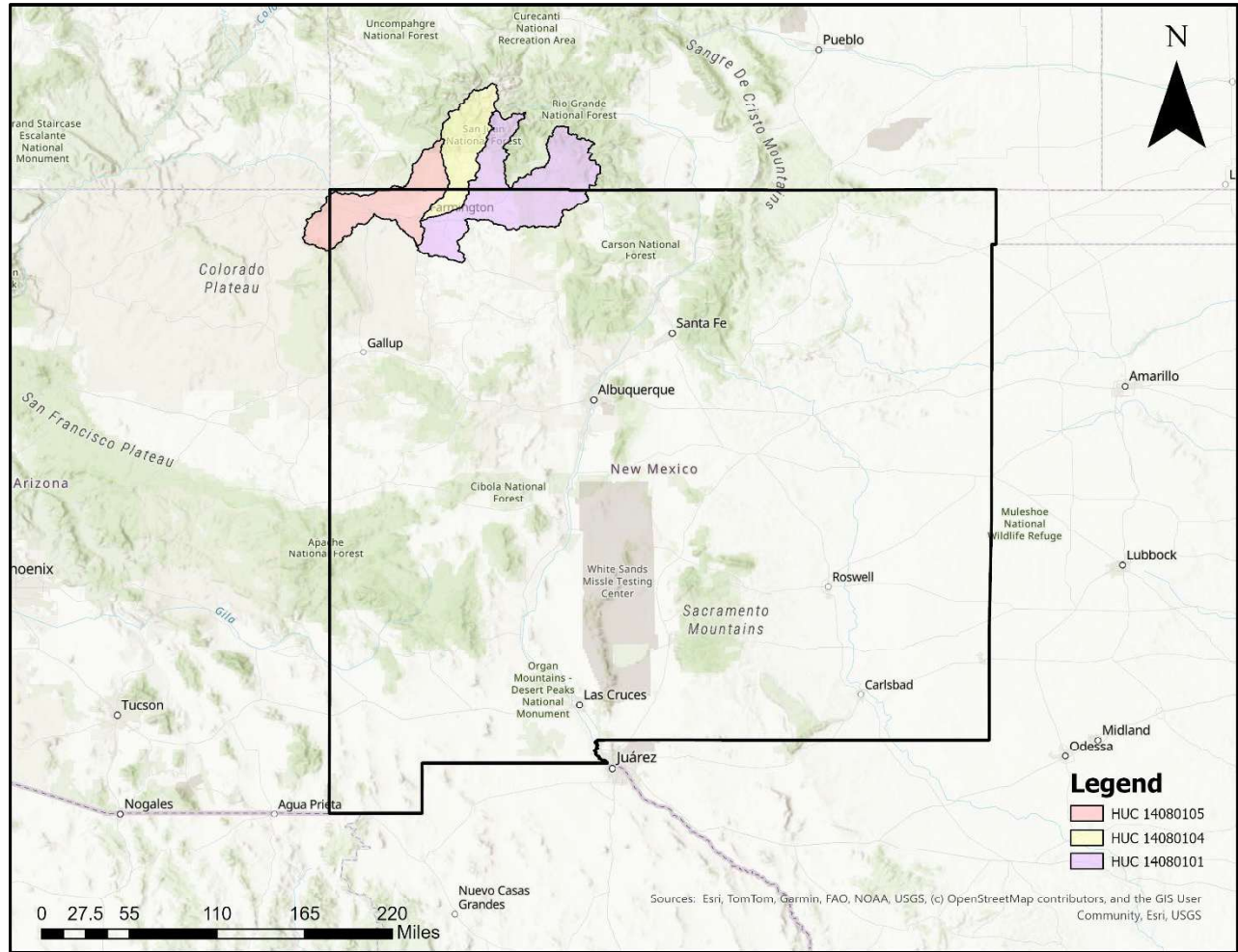


Figure 1. Project Area

SCIENCE | INNOVATION | COLLABORATION | COMPLIANCE
 1190 Saint Francis Drive, PO Box 5469, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-5469 | (505)827-2855 |
www.env.nm.gov