

## 2.0 INDIVIDUAL WATERSHED DESCRIPTIONS

**Table 2.1. Summary of Lower Chama Watershed Impairments to Be Addressed in This TMDL Document**

<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Impairments</b>	<b>Delistings*</b>
Cañones Creek	Turbidity Chronic aluminum Fecal Coliform	Temperature
Rio Nutrias	Turbidity	
Poleo Creek	Turbidity	
Polvadera Creek	Temperature	Stream Bottom Deposits
Rio Vallecitos	Turbidity Chronic aluminum Temperature	
Abiquiu Creek	Dissolved Oxygen	Stream Bottom Deposits Plant Nutrients

\*A summary of delisting letters for these reaches and other reaches in the Lower Chama watershed can be found in Appendix A. The actual letters are in the SWQB Administrative file, available upon request.

### 2.1 Cañones Creek

The Cañones Creek watershed is approximately 84 square miles. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has jurisdiction over 94 percent of the watershed, while the other 6 percent is privately owned. Land cover consists of 67 percent forest and 33 percent rangeland. Cañones Creek (Abiquiu Reservoir to headwaters) (20.6.4.119 NMAC), is listed on the 2002–2004 CWA Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) list for turbidity, chronic aluminum, and fecal coliform. The probable sources of turbidity are rangeland, silviculture, removal of riparian vegetation, and streambank destabilization/modification. The probable sources of chronic aluminum include unknown and natural sources. The probable sources of fecal coliform are rangeland and on-site wastewater systems. A listing for temperature was subsequently removed from the list upon analysis of existing data.



**Photo 2.1. Cañones Creek at Forest Road 167  
(Photo taken in 1999)**

## 2.2 Rio Nutrias

The Rio Nutrias watershed is approximately 106 square miles. Most of the watershed (74 percent) is privately owned, the USFS has jurisdiction over 12 percent of the watershed, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages 10 percent, the State of New Mexico owns 2 percent, while the other 2 percent is owned by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Land cover consists of 67 percent forest and 33 percent rangeland. Rio Nutrias (Rio Chama to headwaters) (20.6.4.119 NMAC), is listed on the 2002–2004 CWA Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) list for turbidity. The probable sources of turbidity are agriculture, removal of riparian vegetation, and streambank destabilization/modification.



**Photo 2.2. Rio Nutrias  
(Photo taken in 1999)**

## 2.3 Poleo Creek

The Poleo Creek watershed is approximately 47 square miles. The USFS has jurisdiction over 80 percent of the watershed, while the other 20 percent is privately owned. Land cover consists of 71 percent forest and 29 percent rangeland. Poleo Creek (Rio Puerco de Chama to headwaters) (20.6.4.119 NMAC), is listed on the 2002–2004 CWA Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) list for turbidity. The probable sources of turbidity are silviculture, rangeland, removal of riparian vegetation, and streambank destabilization/modification.

## 2.4 Polvadera Creek

The Polvadera Creek watershed is approximately 33 square miles. The USFS has jurisdiction over 98 percent of the watershed, while the other 2 percent is privately owned. Land cover consists of 71 percent forest and 29 percent rangeland. Polvadera Creek (Cañones Creek to headwaters) (20.6.4.119 NMAC), is listed on the 2002–2004 CWA Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) list for temperature. The probable source of elevated

temperature is removal of riparian vegetation. A listing for stream bottom deposits was subsequently removed from the list upon analysis of existing data.



**Photo 2.3. Polvadera Creek  
(Photo taken on June 11, 2002)**

### **2.5 Rio Vallecitos**

The Rio Vallecitos watershed is approximately 183 square miles. The USFS has jurisdiction over 80 percent of the watershed, while the other 20 percent is privately owned. Land cover consists of 82 percent forest and 18 percent rangeland. Rio Vallecitos (Rio Tusas to headwaters) (20.6.4.115 NMAC), is listed on the 2002–2004 CWA Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) list for turbidity, chronic aluminum, and temperature. The probable sources of turbidity are agriculture, resource extraction, hydromodification, road maintenance or runoff, recreation, removal of riparian vegetation, and streambank destabilization/modification. The probable sources of chronic aluminum are resource extraction and hydromodification. The probable source of elevated temperature is removal of riparian vegetation.



**Photo 2.4. Rio Vallecitos 8.4 Miles Above Vallecitos Where Road Crosses River  
(USFS boundary) (Photo taken April 29, 2002)**

## 2.6 Abiquiu Creek

The Abiquiu Creek watershed is approximately 45 square miles. The USFS has jurisdiction over 59 percent of the watershed, while the other 41 percent is privately owned. Land cover consists of 45 percent forest, 54 percent rangeland, and 1 percent urban. Abiquiu Creek (Rio Chama to headwaters) (20.6.4.116 NMAC), is listed on the 2002–2004 CWA Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) list for stream bottom deposits. The probable sources of the impairment to dissolved oxygen were identified as rangeland, hydromodification, and road maintenance/runoff. Data collected in 1999 were used to list Abiquiu Creek for dissolved oxygen. Listing for stream bottom deposits and plant nutrients were subsequently removed from the list upon analysis of existing data.



**Photo 2.5. Abiquiu Creek at US Highway 84 Bridge  
(Photo taken on June 10, 2002)**