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SECRETARY

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For Immediate Release

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**State Environment Department Seeks Public Comment on  
Proposed Revisions to the Statewide Water Quality Management Plan**

(Santa Fe, NM) -- The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) is inviting the public to comment on revisions to the statewide Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) and to attend a public meeting in Santa Fe on February 17, 2003, on the matter.

The WQMP document is a statewide planning tool developed to ensure that the long-range goals of the federal Clean Water Act are met. These goals include “restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters.” The WQMP provides a consistent approach for maintaining, improving and protecting surface water quality. Revisions are proposed for two sections of the plan: the Introduction and Work Element 11, Public Participation Program.

The public meeting will be held in Santa Fe to present a summary of proposed revisions and to provide a forum for interested parties to ask questions and provide comments. The meeting will be held Monday, February 17, 2003, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Wild Oats Community Room located behind Wild Oats Market, 1090 South St. Francis Drive.

The 45-day comment period on the two sections of the WQMP begins January 14, 2003 at 8:00 a.m. and ends February 28, 2003 at 5:00 p.m. Formal comments for inclusion in the public record should be submitted to the SWQB, in writing, at the meeting or to the address below, attention Stephanie Stringer

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(if possible, please submit an electronic copy as well; SWQB will provide a confirmation of receipt for electronic mail submissions).

Following consideration and revisions based on public comment, the SWQB will approach the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission at its regular monthly meeting tentatively set for April 8, 2003 to request final review and approval of the revisions for incorporation into the WQMP, or to schedule a formal public hearing if warranted by the public participation process.

To comment on the proposed revisions, contact Stephanie Stringer, in the NMED Surface Water Quality Bureau, at P.O. Box 26110, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87502, or by calling (505) 827-0418, or e-mail: [stephanie\\_stringer@nmenv.state.nm.us](mailto:stephanie_stringer@nmenv.state.nm.us). The draft revisions of the WQMP are available upon request and will be posted on the Surface Water Quality Bureau's website at: <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/swqb.html>.

For more information, contact Stephanie Stringer, Outreach Coordinator for the SWQB, NMED at (505) 827-0418, or Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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