



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

FEB 10 2006

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SURFACE WATER
QUALITY BUREAU

Marcy Leavitt, Chief
Surface Water Quality Bureau
State of New Mexico Environment Department
P. O. Box 26110
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110

Re: Request for EPA review and approval on the *Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Rio Hondo Watershed (Lincoln County) - Pecos River to Headwaters*

Dear Ms. Leavitt:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the seven (7) TMDLs transmitted by your letter to Miguel Flores dated December 22, 2005. By this letter, EPA is approving the loadings as established in the documents grouped together as the *Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Rio Hondo Watershed (Lincoln County) - Pecos River to Headwaters*, to include:

- *Total Maximum Daily Load for Bacteria in Carrizo Creek (Rio Ruidoso to Mescalero Apache Reservation)*, Subsegment No. 20.6.4.209 NMAC, Reach NM-2209.A_22 (formerly NM-PR8-50200)
- *Total Maximum Daily Load for Bacteria in Rio Bonito (Angus Canyon to Headwaters)*, Subsegment No. 20.6.4.209 NMAC, Reach NM-2209.A_10 (formerly NM-PR8-30000)
- *Total Maximum Daily Load for Bacteria in Rio Hondo (Perennial reaches Pecos River to Rio Ruidoso)*, Subsegment No. 20.6.4.208 NMAC, Reach NM-2208_30
- *Total Maximum Daily Load for Total Phosphorus in Rio Ruidoso (Rio Bonito to US Highway 70)*, Subsegment No. 20.6.4.208 NMAC, Reach NM-2208_20 (formerly NM-PR8-40000)
- *Total Maximum Daily Load for Total Nitrogen in Rio Ruidoso (Rio Bonito to US Highway 70)*, Subsegment No. 20.6.4.208 NMAC, Reach NM-2208_20 (formerly NM-PR8-40000)
- *Total Maximum Daily Load for Temperature in Rio Ruidoso (US Highway 70 to Mescalero Apache Boundary)*, Subsegment No. 20.6.4.209 NMAC, Reach NM-2209.A_20 (formerly NM-PR8-50000)
- *Total Maximum Daily Load for Turbidity in Rio Ruidoso (US Highway 70 to Mescalero Apache Boundary)*, Subsegment No. 20.6.4.209 NMAC, Reach NM-2209.A_20 (formerly NM-PR8-50000)

Based on this review, EPA concludes that the TMDLs listed above meet the requirements found in Section 303 of the Clean Water Act and the implementing regulations at 40 CFR 130.7. EPA is therefore pleased to approve the TMDL loadings contained in these documents and their incorporation as updates to the New Mexico Water Quality Management Plan. Please note that while included in the NMED submittal, an implementation plan is not required by current regulations and this approval does not address the existence or the adequacy of any implementation plans contained within these submissions.

Please find enclosed, Final Review reports on the *Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Rio Hondo Watershed (Lincoln County) - Pecos River to Headwaters*. We commend your staff for the considerable effort that went into developing and establishing these TMDLs. If you would like to discuss these approvals, please contact me or Catherine Penland of my staff at (214) 665-7122.

Sincerely,



Miguel I. Flores

 Director,
Water Quality Protection Division

Enclosures