



BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Surface Water Quality Bureau
Harold Runnels Building Room N2050
1190 St. Francis Drive - Zip 87505
P.O. Box 26110 - Zip 87502-6110
Santa Fe, New Mexico
Telephone (505) 827-0187
Fax (505) 827-0160

www.nmenv.state.nm.us



RON CURRY
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN MOORE
DEPUTY SECRETARY

**THE NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT, SURFACE WATER QUALITY BUREAU
ON THE PROPOSED TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDLs) FOR THE RIO HONDO
WATERSHED**

NOTICE OF A 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND COMMUNITY MEETING

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) is inviting the public to comment on draft "total maximum daily load" (TMDL) documents for the Rio Hondo watershed, defined as Pecos River to headwaters. Draft TMDLs include: Carrizo Creek (bacteria), Rio Bonito (bacteria), Rio Hondo (bacteria), and Rio Ruidoso (temperature, total phosphorus, total nitrogen, turbidity).

A TMDL is a planning document that establishes specific goals for water quality conditions. It includes current pollution loadings, reduction estimates for pollutants currently exceeding state surface water quality standards, and information on probable sources of pollution that need to be addressed to restore or protect the health of the waterbody.

The 30-day comment period will open October 12, 2005 and will end November 11, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. MDT. Formal comments for inclusion in the public record must be submitted to the SWQB, in writing, to **Heidi Henderson at mailing address: NMED SWQB, Room N2163, P.O. Box 26110, Santa Fe, NM, 87502; fax number (505) 827-0160; or e-mail: <heidi.henderson@state.nm.us>** (if possible, please submit an electronic copy in addition to paper).

The SWQB will approach the NM Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) at their regular monthly meeting, tentatively set for December 13, 2005, to request approval of the final draft Rio Hondo TMDL document. Following the close of the public comment period, copies of the final revised draft document as amended will be available to the public upon request and on the SWQB website at least 10 days prior to the WQCC meeting referenced above. For more information, or to request a copy of the TMDL, contact Heidi Henderson at the address provided above, or by calling (505) 827-2901. The draft TMDLs are also posted on the front page of the Surface Water Quality Bureau's website, which can be found at: <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb>.

A public meeting will be held to summarize the information and to provide a forum for interested parties to ask questions and provide comments. We set a meeting date of approximately halfway through the comment period to allow the public time to review the document and generate questions or comments. The meeting will be held in Ruidoso on October 27, 2005 from 6-7 p.m. at the Ruidoso City Hall Council Chambers (313 Cree Meadows Dr., off HWY 48). Formal written comments for inclusion in the public record may be submitted at this meeting as well.

Persons having a disability and needing help in being a part of this hearing process should contact Judy Bentley by October 17, 2005, at the New Mexico Environment Department, Personnel Services Bureau, P.O. Box 26110, 1190 St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87502, telephone 505-827-9872. TDY users please access her number via the New Mexico Relay Network at 1-800-659-8331.