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## 7.0 MONITORING PLAN

Pursuant to Section 106(e)(1) of the Federal CWA, the SWQB has established appropriate monitoring methods, systems and procedures in order to compile and analyze data on the quality of the surface waters of New Mexico. In accordance with the New Mexico Water Quality Act, the SWQB has developed and implemented a comprehensive water quality monitoring strategy for the surface waters of the State.

The monitoring strategy establishes methods for identifying and prioritizing water quality data needs, specifies procedures for acquiring and managing water quality data, and describes how these data are used to progress toward three basic monitoring objectives: to develop water quality-based controls, to evaluate the effectiveness of such controls, and to conduct water quality assessments.

The SWQB utilizes a rotating basin system approach to water quality monitoring. In this system, a select number of watersheds are intensively monitored each year with an established return frequency of approximately every eight years. The next tentatively scheduled monitoring date for the Río Puerco and Rio San Jose watersheds is 2012. The SWQB maintains current quality assurance and quality control plans for the respective sample year to cover all monitoring activities. This document, called the QAPP, is updated and certified annually by USEPA Region 6. In addition, the SWQB identifies the data quality objectives required to provide information of sufficient quality to meet the established goals of the program. Current priorities for monitoring in the SWQB are driven by the CWA Section 303(d) list of streams requiring TMDLs. Short-term efforts were directed toward those waters that are on the USEPA TMDL consent decree list (U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico 1997), however NMED/SWQB completed the final remaining TMDL on the consent decree in December 2006.

Once assessment monitoring is completed, those reaches showing impacts and requiring a TMDL will be targeted for more intensive monitoring. The methods of data acquisition include fixed-station monitoring, intensive surveys of priority assessment units (including biological assessments), and compliance monitoring of industrial, federal, and municipal dischargers, as specified in the SWQB assessment protocols (NMED/SWQB 2006b).

Long-term monitoring for assessments will be accomplished through the establishment of sampling sites that are representative of the waterbody and which is revisited approximately every eight years. This information will provide time relevant information for use in CWA Section 303(d) listing and 305(b) report assessments and to support the need for developing TMDLs. The approach provides:

- a systematic, detailed review of water quality data which allows for a more efficient use of valuable monitoring resources;
- information at a scale where implementation of corrective activities is feasible;
- an established order of rotation and predictable sampling in each basin which allows for enhanced coordinated efforts with other programs; and

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- program efficiency and improvements in the basis for management decisions.

SWQB developed a 10-year monitoring strategy submitted to USEPA on September 30, 2004. The strategy details both the extent of monitoring that can be accomplished with existing resources plus expanded monitoring strategies that could be implemented given additional resources. According to the rotational cycle, which assumes the existing level of resources, the next time SWQB will intensively sample the Río Puerco watershed is during 2010.

It should be noted that a watershed would not be ignored during the years in between intensive sampling. The rotating basin program will be supplemented with other data collection efforts such as the funding of long-term USGS water quality gaging stations for long-term trend data, and on-going studies being performed by USGS and USEPA. Data will be analyzed and field studies will be conducted to further characterize acknowledged problems and TMDLs will be developed and implemented accordingly. Both long-term and intensive field studies can both contribute to the State's Integrated §303(d)/§305(b) listing process for waters requiring TMDLs.