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Surface Water Quality Bureau

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**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPENED FOR
USE ATTAINABILITY ANALYSIS FOR STREAM REACHES IDENTIFIED AS
EPHEMERAL THROUGH APPLICATION OF THE HYDROLOGY PROTOCOL**

The Surface Water Quality Bureau ([SWQB](#)) is inviting the public to comment on a Use Attainability Analysis ([UAA](#)) supporting proposed amendments to surface water quality standards ([WQS](#)) for four (4) surface waters in Grant, Luna, Lincoln and Otero Counties in southern New Mexico. These specific waters include portions of San Vicente Arroyo, San Andres Canyon, Agua Chiquita and Grindstone Canyon.

The amendments would change these four waters to unclassified ephemeral waters subject to §20.6.4.97 NMAC. The current default status of these waters is unclassified nonperennial waters subject to §20.6.4.98 NMAC, with the designated uses of marginal warmwater aquatic life, primary contact, wildlife habitat, and livestock watering. This UAA demonstrates that primary contact and marginal warmwater aquatic life are not attainable in these waters, and that the most protective attainable uses are limited aquatic life and secondary contact. The UAA is based on the Department's [Hydrology Protocol](#).

After considering public comments, the SWQB may submit the UAA and response to comments to the United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 ([EPA](#)) for technical approval. If EPA grants approval, the waters will be considered unclassified ephemeral waters subject to §20.6.4.97 NMAC. The SWQB will petition the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission ([WQCC](#)) at a future date to add these waters to 20.6.4.97 C. NMAC.

The 30-day Public Comment Period on this document will open **August 14, 2013** and will close **September 13, 2013** at 5:00 p.m. MDT.

The UAA is now available on the New Mexico Environment Department's ([NMED](#)) website at www.nmenv.state.nm.us/swqb/UAA. Comments may be submitted to Deby Sarabia at the NMED - SWQB, P.O. Box 5469, Santa Fe, NM 87502, 505-827-0417 or by email to Deborah.Sarabia@state.nm.us.