



NEWS RELEASE **For Immediate Release**

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The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

Additional \$35 million available for brackish water projects *Second round funding builds New Mexico's water resiliency*

SANTA FE — Communities and water project developers can now apply for a second round of Strategic Water Supply funding, as the New Mexico Environment Department and Office of the State Engineer make approximately \$35 million available for projects that develop, treat and put New Mexico's brackish water resources to beneficial use.

The investment advances Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's 50-Year Water Action Plan, which calls for developing new water supplies alongside efforts to conserve existing supplies and protect water quality as New Mexico prepares for a hotter, drier future.

This year, the Strategic Water Supply Program prioritizes critical infrastructure and projects that can produce treated water for use. The program also introduces a process to encourage public-private partnerships that pair community water needs with private-sector technology, expertise and investment.

Brackish water is naturally occurring salty groundwater that generally requires treatment before use. Developing these resources can create additional water supplies for New Mexico while reducing pressure on freshwater supplies that support communities, agriculture and the environment.

"New Mexico cannot wait for water scarcity to dictate our future," said **Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham**. "By investing in brackish water, we can develop new supplies to support our communities and economy while protecting the freshwater supplies that New Mexicans, agriculture and our environment depend on. This is exactly the kind of forward-looking investment our 50-Year Water Action Plan calls for."

"New Mexico is moving from studying water scarcity to investing in solutions that can deliver results," said **Environment Secretary James Kenney**. "This next round of Strategic Water Supply funding will help move brackish water projects from research and planning to infrastructure, treatment and beneficial use, developing new water supplies while protecting our limited freshwater resources."

“As we face some of the worst drought conditions on record, it is more important than ever to look for opportunities to develop new water supplies,” said **State Engineer Elizabeth Anderson**. “We look forward to working with our partners throughout the state to help communities develop more resilient water supply systems with the assistance of the Strategic Water Supply Program.”

The 2025 Strategic Water Supply Act established the program to support projects from early research and planning through design, permitting and construction. The program helps move promising ideas toward real-world water supplies.

Funding is available for five types of projects:

- **Construction projects:** Build or expand full-scale brackish water treatment facilities and supporting infrastructure.
- **Design pilots:** Test and refine treatment technologies before full-scale implementation.
- **Environmental documentation and demonstration projects:** Support environmental review, permitting and demonstration work needed to advance projects.
- **Feasibility assessments:** Determine whether potential projects are technically and economically viable and identify paths toward implementation.
- **Research studies:** Advance treatment technologies and scientific understanding of New Mexico’s brackish water resources.

NMED and OSE will distribute approximately \$35 million across the five project categories based on program priorities and proposal quality.

Selected projects are expected to help New Mexico:

- Develop new, reliable water supplies
- Move promising water technologies toward real-world use
- Support economic development and community resilience
- Reduce pressure on limited freshwater resources
- Strengthen long-term drought preparedness

The Request for Applications for grant funding opens today and is available [here](#).

The Request for Proposals for contracts will be available [here](#) in the coming weeks.

For questions about the Strategic Water Supply Program, email StrategicWater@env.nm.gov or contact Catherine Conran at (505) 470-7443.

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