



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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

OCT 27 2010



Mr. Abraham Franklin
Watershed Protection Section
New Mexico Environmental Department
1190 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

Dear Mr. Franklin:

We have completed our review of the Rio Santa Barbara Watershed Plan, sectioned from a previous watershed plan titled: "Upper Rio Grande, La Jicarita through Embudo Vaiey Watershed Management Plan", dated September 1, 2007. We appreciate the in-house and stakeholder revision of this plan's Rio Santa Barbara section, as a separate 12-digit HUC watershed-based plan addressing the nine planning elements essential to the 319 NPS Program. For this purpose, we hope you'll find the sub-watershed scale much more efficient and manageable as noted in our initial review.

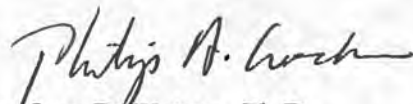
EPA acknowledges data gaps exist which adds some uncertainty concerning quantification of loads, and targeting of BMP's. At the same time, there's sufficient information to implement the TMDL and other watershed pollutants affecting the stream's designated use. Through implementation, however, we anticipate that the plan will be refined as data collection continues and milestone reviews determine effectiveness in relation to its intended objective.

We strongly encourage continual guidance and support of stakeholders as they assume a genuine sense of partnership in resolution of the TMDL and other pollutant concerns. Stakeholder and landowner support is a key to successful outcome of any implementation effort and we continue to underscore their importance in the program.

You may consider this letter as our acceptance of the Rio Santa Barbara Watershed Plan. This conveyance means that the State of New Mexico is now eligible for CWA Section 319 implementation funding for activities supporting this plan. We request that any future work plans requesting funding for the Rio Santa Barbara Watershed specifically reference this plan and corresponding sub-sections.

If you or your staff have any questions regarding our review of this watershed-based plan, please feel free to contact Bobby Hernandez of my staff at 214-665-7234.

Sincerely,


for Jane B. Watson, Ph.D.
Associate Director
Ecosystems Protection Branch

Cc: Glenn Saums, NMED

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