



A joint regional project of the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County to build a reliable and sustainable water supply.

June 7, 2019

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor of the State of New Mexico
490 Old Santa Fe Trail Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

James C. Kenney
Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department
Harold Runnels Building
1190 St. Francis Dr. Suite N4050
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Subject: Buckman Direct Diversion Project Board Water Quality Priorities

Dear Governor Lujan Grisham and Secretary Kenney:

The Buckman Direct Diversion Project (the “BDD”) is a joint water supply project of the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County. The BDD diverts its share of San Juan-Chama Project water and native pre-1907 New Mexico water rights from the Rio Grande and treats it to drinking water standards for delivery to the Santa Fe regional water customers. Physically, the BDD is located at the end of Buckman Road on the Rio Grande below Otowi gage and is downstream of the cities of Espanola and Los Alamos as well as a portion of Los Alamos National Laboratory that is in the LA/Pueblo canyon watershed. Due to its location on the Rio Grande the BDD has unique concerns regarding the water quality of the Rio Grande and runoff coming from the Pajarito Plateau, where the City of Los Alamos and the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) are located.

Currently, the BDD relies on a combination of mechanisms to monitor and ensure the safety of the water quality of the surface waters of the Rio Grande and the water that is diverted by the BDD for production of drinking water. Among these mechanisms are the Order on Consent between Los Alamos National Laboratory and the New Mexico Environment Department, a Memorandum of Understanding between the BDD Board and Los Alamos National Laboratories (“BDDDB-LANL MOU”) to monitor surface water flows from the LA/Pueblo canyon watershed which is known to contain legacy wastes; and Rio Grande water quality monitoring under the State’s water quality criteria for this stretch of the Rio Grande.



With this combination the BDD has been able to operate safely and has consistently produced high quality drinking water for its customers. Under the Early Notification System (ENS) as described by the BDDDB-LANL MOU the BDD has had to cease diversions when it received notification that potentially contaminated surface water from the Pajarito Plateau canyons would reach the Rio Grande upstream of the BDD.

Monitoring of the Rio Grande by the Environment Department has resulted in the 2016-2018 Clean Water Act Section 303 Integrated Report (IR) Category of '5/5C' which indicates "available data and/or information indicate that at least one designated or existing use is not being supported but additional data are necessary to verify the listing before TMDLs are scheduled." Furthermore, the last Integrated List for Rio Grande Section 20.6.4.114, between Cochiti Reservoir and San Ildefonso boundary reveals "not supporting" attainment for 5 separate uses including irrigation (IRR), livestock watering (LW), marginal coldwater aquatic life (MCWAL), warmwater aquatic life (WWL) and wildlife habitat (WH). The Environment Department has several tools that should be used to address these violations.

We request that the New Mexico Environment Department enforce the State Water Quality Control Act, strengthen its monitoring and regulation of water quality of the Rio Grande section between Cochiti Reservoir and San Ildefonso. In addition, we request the Environment Department establish a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limit or equivalent on contaminants in its upcoming Triennial review. We will submit a formal petition to this effect and plan on supporting the request in the review process.

We request that the New Mexico Environment Department continue to engage with Los Alamos National Laboratory on the Order on Consent and return to the structure, scope and clean up implementation program as described in the 2005 Order on Consent.

Finally, we ask that the NMED support the re-establishment of a monitoring station at the E109.9 location in LA/Pueblo canyon.

The BDD Board welcomes the opportunity to discuss these matters further with both of you and appreciates your support and commitment to improving the surface water quality of the Rio Grande, the lifeblood of New Mexico.

Sincerely,

/s/ Anna Hamilton

Anna Hamilton, Santa Fe County Commissioner
Chair, Buckman Direct Diversion Board

On behalf of the Buckman Direct Diversion Board:

Michael Harris, Santa Fe City Councilor
Vice Chair, Buckman Direct Diversion Board

Anna Hansen, Santa Fe County Commissioner
Buckman Direct Diversion Board

Peter Ives, Santa Fe City Councilor
Buckman Direct Diversion Board

Denise Fort, Citizen At-Large BDDDB Member
Buckman Direct Diversion Board