



**NEW MEXICO'S
WATER FUTURE IS
IN YOUR HANDS.**

**ATTEND THE WATER
PLANNING OPEN
HOUSE FOR YOUR
REGION TO SHARE
YOUR VOICE.**

What is Regional Water Planning?

Regional water planning is a state-guided effort to help New Mexicans identify and address water challenges at a regional level with the goal of developing and funding innovative solutions to drought, declining water supplies, and climate change. The 2023 Water Security Planning Act wrote the current regional water planning approach into state statute and tasked the Interstate Stream Commission (ISC) with conducting and supporting regional planning. However, regional water plans will be primarily developed by local planning entities in each region. Those participating in their local planning entity can advocate for programs and projects to improve rural and municipal wastewater and drinking water systems, support irrigation efficiency upgrades, or protect culturally and ecologically important waterways.

The ISC is currently taking feedback on how the regional water planning process will work. They will use this feedback to draw regional boundaries and develop the rules and guidelines by which regional plans will be assessed. Input from regional residents at this stage will help determine how the ISC guides regional water planning, and will eventually influence how water projects are developed and funded.

How can you get involved?

Visit ISC's "MainStream New Mexico" to find your region and see where your open house will be held: <https://mainstreamnm.org/>. **Attend your region's open house and provide your feedback.** These meetings run from April 22nd - August 7th. At this very early stage, ISC is developing the rules, guidelines, and geography for the planning process. If you miss your region's open house or you wish to give additional feedback, visit mainstreamnm.org/online-open-house to fill out their feedback survey.

What will it be like when you get there?

The ISC has set up the meetings to be open-house style. There won't be any presentations, just a series of informational tables and survey questions (Be prepared for about 20 of them). While some of the suggested talking points (below) can be incorporated into the survey format, others cannot and will have to be written into the comment boxes.

You will also have a chance to speak with ISC members, as well as staff from the Office of the State Engineer, your neighbors, and other organizers in your area. So, come prepared to also use your talking points or the talking points below with these staff and organizers!

Talking Points

Consider communicating the following points to the ISC during the planning meetings or through the online form:

- Regional Water Plans need to be Equitable; Actionable; Informed by data; Funded; and Holistic.
- Every water use, including water for nature, outdoor recreation, cultural, and traditional uses should have a voice in the process with equal decision-making power.
- Plans should demonstrate a clear and informed prioritization of sustainable long-term water use so that future generations have reliable, healthy and safe water resources.
- In order to succeed, ample funding must be made available for setting up regional planning entities and to incentivize robust and equitable public participation. Travel stipends and childcare are just some examples of how to ensure that everyone who wants to participate is able to.
- Plans should acknowledge water shortage and rely on choices about water uses that are most beneficial to our communities, not sourcing "new water."
- Rules and guidelines should ensure that any projects or programs identified in the regional plans are actionable and democratically prioritized, and recognize that this will require sustained funding.
- While not formally part of the regional water planning process, it is critical to fully fund the 2019 Water Data Act so that we can make informed choices.
- These priorities can be accomplished through a comprehensive rulemaking process like the one the New Mexico Environment Department uses in which all groups can participate by filing petitions to be parties to a rulemaking.

