

**WORK PLAN FOR 319(h) LAS CRUCES – EL PASO WATERSHED COUNCIL
AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. PROJECT TITLE
- II. PROBLEM STATEMENT
- III. GENERAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION
- IV. TASKS, OBJECTIVES, SCHEDULES, DELIVERABLES AND COSTS
- V. COORDINATION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
- VI. BUDGET
- VII. MAP OF PROJECT AREA

I. PROJECT TITLE

Las Cruces – El Paso Watershed Council and Plan development – Using and building on resources of the existing Paso del Norte Watershed Council (PdNWC), the work plan will involve coordination, outreach, and a data survey of current conditions related to the 2004 New Mexico 303 (d) – 305 (b) Report. This report identifies fecal coliform as the most likely cause of impairment in the HUC 13030102, the downstream portion of the watershed approximately 105 miles of the Rio Grande between Percha Dam and the NM-TX state line. The watershed group will identify priorities for potential best management practices for fecal coliform abatement. This work will result in a Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS), expanded stakeholder involvement/participation in decision making, and a possible platform from which the PdNWC could seek funding for the implementation of best management practices through 319 (h) funding and other sources.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Land Use: The Lower Rio Grande watershed in New Mexico encompasses an area of approximately 5,000 square miles in southern New Mexico, including parts of four counties: Catron, Socorro, Sierra, and Doña Ana. The Rio Grande flows through the watershed from the headwaters of Elephant Butte Reservoir to the International Boundary and Water Commission’s sampling station above the American Dam in El Paso, Texas. The river flows in and out of Texas several times at the lower end of the watershed.

This proposal focuses on HUC 13030102, the downstream portion of the watershed and approximately 105 miles of the Rio Grande between Percha Dam and the NM-TX state line. The project area includes a mix of desert uplands, farmland and urbanized areas in the Rincon and Mesilla Valleys located in Sierra and Dona Ana counties. The largest city in the area is Las Cruces with a number of smaller communities located upstream and downstream including Hatch, Doña Ana, Mesilla, Anthony, Anthony (TX), Canutillo (TX), Sunland Park and Santa Teresa. The region’s population is growing rapidly (2.9% average annual growth rate for Doña Ana County between 1990 and 2000, versus 1.31% for the U.S.), resulting in rapid conversion of farmland and open space to urban/suburban development.

Surface water management within the project area is dominated by the federal Rio Grande Project. This project was constructed to store and regulate flows of the Rio Grande for agricultural use in southern New Mexico, west Texas and Mexico, and consists of two major storage dams (Elephant Butte and Caballo), four diversion dams, and hundreds of miles of irrigation canals and drains. Elephant Butte Irrigation District distributes Rio Grande Project water to approximately 101,500 acres within the project area, including nearly 11,000 acres in Texas.

This project will address nonpoint source water quality issues by promoting water quality in the context of watershed health. In this workplan, we will identify the steps necessary to:

- a) Work with watershed stakeholders to bring forward their various perspectives to the scope and severity of the problem.
- b) Data survey and analysis.
- c) Write a WRAS based on stakeholder feedback and the data survey.
- d) Identify resources needed to further refine a bacterial source tracking study to characterize potential sources of fecal coliforms.

III. GENERAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project applicant is the Paso del Norte Watershed Council (PdNWC) which was established in 2000 to improve the Rio Grande ecosystem and water quality in the sub-basin between Elephant Butte Dam and Fort Quitman, TX. Membership is open to anyone, and extensive efforts have been made to solicit participation by as many stakeholders throughout the watershed as possible. Current members of the Council represent a wide variety of stakeholders, including federal, state and local governmental agencies, representatives from stakeholder groups in Mexico, universities, a tribe, NGOs, environmental interests, and the general public. The PdNWC has built collaborative relationships among stakeholders, but recognizes the need to expand stakeholder participation among key groups including the farming and ranching community, the Elephant Butte Irrigation District, conservation interests, city, county, flood control commission and other local governmental entities, and federal entities including the Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service.

The objectives of increasing and broadening the membership of the PdNWC are as follows:

- a. develop trust and increase a sense of ownership in the watershed
- b. develop an understanding of the watershed and issues related to it
- c. understand and develop agreeable best management practices
- d. involve stakeholders in watershed decision making
- e. cultivate volunteers for future watershed implementation projects

A key strategy in stakeholder engagement will be to conduct informal gatherings to discuss how people perceive the issues associated with this watershed. What do they know, how do they understand issues related to nonpoint source pollution, and what would they be willing to do now and in the future. This process will be conducted in advance of identifying (that is to say labeling) the potential sources and contribution of fecal coliforms in the watershed. This approach will enable stakeholders to engage in the process by identifying values they hold regarding the condition of the watershed before potential nonpoint sources are identified. This will provide neutral ground for open discussion and allow maximum creative problem solving.

The objectives of the data survey will be to characterize the existing conditions of the watershed and identify data gaps. The target area is HUC 13030102 which encompasses the lower portion of the Rio Grande Watershed in New Mexico from Percha Dam to the NM-TX state line (approximately 105 river miles). It includes a water quality impaired reach of the Rio Grande between Leasburg Dam and the NM-TX state line (approximately 62 river miles). It encompasses approximately 5,000 square miles of drainage area. We will compile GIS layers from local, state and federal agencies to assist in the description and analysis of watershed conditions. For example, we will need to understand the extent of impermeable surfaces and the alterations in discharge they affect (i.e., from storm water run-off). For this particular variable, we would seek maps from the cities and counties within the watershed and do an analysis regarding discharge, and then integrate those results with other watershed data such as flooding.

It is already clear that a fecal coliform tracking study would benefit the PdNWC's ability to develop best management practices and we will develop a funding proposal for this activity.

IV. TASKS, OBJECTIVES, SCHEDULES, DELIVERABLES, MEASURES OF SUCCESS AND COSTS

Task/Objectives	Schedule	Deliverable/Measure	319 Funds	In-Kind
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Administration and Fiscal Management by NMDA. ▪ Quarterly expenditure and match reporting; billing for reimbursement; financial record keeping; quarterly reports to EPA. 	July 1, 2006- June 30, 2007. 12 months	Quarterly reports, relevant billing and record keeping for the life of the project.	\$18,930	\$58,052
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire Watershed Coordinator. ▪ Watershed Coordinator will be paid over the course of the contract in accordance with said agreement, not in a lump sum. 	October 1, 2006.	Professional Service Agreement completed.	\$40,000	\$25,259
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinator Travel. Travel to meetings within the watershed and for any necessary meetings with NMED; site visits with stakeholders; PdNWC meetings, and other relevant travel for meeting goals and objectives of this workplan. 	October 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007. Meetings will be held as determined by the full suite of contractors.	Mileage and Per Diem in accordance with NMED and State Regulations (.32 per mile & \$85 per day) based on travel logs, meeting location, origin of travel, sign in sheets, etc.	\$4,000	\$0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Volunteer Travel. Travel to meetings within the watershed and for any necessary meetings with NMED; site visits with stakeholders; PdNWC meetings, and other relevant travel for meeting goals and objectives of this workplan. 	July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007. Meetings will be held as determined by the full suite of contractors and in accordance with the meeting schedule of the PdNWC.	Travel log books, meeting or outing sign-in sheets with participants, and origin of travel etc.	\$0	\$7,182
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire Stakeholder consultant. <p>Stakeholder consultant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ identify stakeholders through meetings, site visits, phone calls, and other methods; conduct informal gatherings, focus groups and surveys. ▪ identify and research related watershed activities (groups, literature, barriers to participation, and other watershed council models). <p>Goals include:</p>	Conduct all work from October 1, 2006 – May 31, 2007.	Professional services contract executed. Consultant reports, and other generated documents such as meeting minutes, outreach strategy report, evaluation of success, and number of new stakeholder participants. Activity logs for non-meeting activities and sign-in sheets for meetings will also be kept.	\$40,000	\$25,258

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ develop trust and increase a sense of ownership in the watershed; ▪ develop an understanding of the watershed and issues related to it; ▪ understand and develop agreeable best management practices; ▪ involve stakeholders in watershed decision making; ▪ cultivate volunteers for future watershed implementation project. <p>Integrate Watershed Report results with stakeholder watershed group (feedback loop) in order to develop the WRAS.</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire data survey/WRAS preparation consultant. <p>Data Survey/WRAS preparation consultant will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gather data layers ▪ Create GIS for watershed ▪ Identify data gaps ▪ Compile and Analyze data ▪ Write watershed report 	<p>October 1, 2006.</p> <p>October 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007.</p>	<p>Meet with WSC and Watershed Coordinator to begin project tasks. Report back to WSC and Watershed Coordinator regarding progress on data collection, and GIS. Draft preliminary watershed report. Incorporate feedback from all sources on the watershed report. Draft WRAS and vet with appropriate parties. Incorporate changes and finalize WRAS</p>	\$40,000	\$25,259
<p>Watershed Restoration Action Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare draft WRAS based on the data survey's watershed report, GIS, and stakeholder input. ▪ Draft WRAS submitted to NMED project officer. ▪ WRAS finalized. 	<p>April 1, 2007 – June 30, 2007.</p>	<p>WRAS completed and submitted to NMED.</p>	\$0	\$0
<p>These items are not tasks, but the budget associated with these items is included in order to provide accurate budget numbers: meeting rentals, publications, public meeting announcements, supplies, postage, etc.</p>	<p>July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007.</p>	<p>Invoices for the cost of these items.</p>	\$2,200	\$5,000
<p>Total Costs</p>			\$145,130	\$146,010

V. COORDINATION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Paso del Norte Watershed Council (applicant) / New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) - Fiscal Agent

To accomplish the goals of this workplan, we will organize a subcommittee within the PdNWC that will oversee the activities of the Watershed Coordinator and hired consultants. The subcommittee will be responsible for project deliverables. Core members of the subcommittee will include:

Julie Maitland, New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Jennifer Montoya, World Wildlife Fund
Kevin Bixby, Southwest Environmental Center
Sue Watts, PhD, Chair of the Paso del Norte Watershed Council
Brian Hanson, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Phil King, PhD, New Mexico State University
Chris Canavan, New Mexico Environment Department

Additional support may be provided by other members of PdNWC's Executive Committee as needed:

Christopher Brown PhD, New Mexico State University
Tim Darden, New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Alfredo Granados PhD, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez
Joe Groff, Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue
Inga Groff, El Paso League of Women Voters
Ed Hamlyn, University of Texas at El Paso
Ari Michelsen PhD, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station
Zhuping Sheng PhD, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture has agreed to act as fiscal agent for this project. Julie Maitland will be the primary contact within NMDA.

The Watershed Council Coordinator

A part-time Watershed Coordinator, who will be hired by NMDA, will devote 60-75% of his/her time to the 319 (h) grant; the balance of the Watershed Coordinator's time will be dedicated to the ongoing activities of the PdNWC. (The PdNWC has been in existence since 2000 and has some funding available to support a portion of the Watershed Coordinator's salary.)

- In consultation with watershed council subcommittee (WCS), develop RFPs for outreach consultant and technical consultant; circulate to PdNWC executive committee (ExCom) for review and finalize
- Distribute/advertise RFP to potential consultants
- In consultation with WCS, develop scope of work/contract for consultants; circulate to ExCom for review and finalize
- Oversee implementation of contracts, including completion of deliverables in coordination with NMDA and WCS
- Serve as point of contact between contractors, WCS and NMDA on contract implementation and fiscal matters
- Provide coordination and support services to WCS
- Write and submit required grant reports
- Coordinate with NMDA to ensure compliance with grant administration requirements

- Coordinate completion of watershed report: meld and integrate contributions from contractors and WCS; write additional portions; edit entire report

Stakeholder Consultant

The Council has tentatively identified a number of stakeholder groups or organizations that can contribute to resolving the fecal coliform impairments identified for this watershed. We will also hire a consultant with expertise in community outreach, and to identify and engage with important stakeholders not currently involved in the PdNWC activities.

- Identify and contact current and potential watershed stakeholders in consultation with watershed coordinator and WSC
- Develop strategy to engage stakeholders
- Conduct focus groups and hold informal meetings
- Develop outreach materials in coordination with the watershed coordinator
- Conduct interviews and survey stakeholders as necessary to solicit input regarding the watershed
- Organize, set and facilitate stakeholder meetings
- Evaluate stakeholder needs, responses, and success of outreach effort
- Provide preliminary feedback and report to WSC and watershed coordinator
- Interact with data survey consultant

Data Survey/WRAS Preparation Consultant

The consultant must have access to GIS, an understanding of natural resources data analysis (including hydrology, geography, vegetation, soils, land use, and urban impacts) and excellent report writing skills.

- Undertake characterization of the watershed
- Gather data and map watershed
- Identify GIS resources and existing maps, data, etc.
- Create appropriate GIS characterization of the watershed
- Create initial report and identify data gaps – submit report to watershed coordinator and WSC – revise, as needed, with assistance from watershed coordinator and input from WSC
- In consultation with WSC and watershed coordinator, write preliminary draft WRAS based upon input from outreach contractor and report findings
- Circulate to WSC and watershed coordinator, important stakeholders, and NMED for review
- Incorporate feedback and revise draft WRAS

VI. BUDGET

CATEGORIES	CWA 319 FUNDS	CASH OR IN KIND MATCH	TOTAL
Personnel			
Project Coordinator (see contractual)			
Project Administration (contract and subcontract administration; 15% of CWA funds (\$126,200))	18,930		18,930
Volunteer participation, planning, review, monitoring ¹		75,776	75,776
Travel			
Lodging for coordinator (per diem =\$85/night, in-state)	2,000		2,000
Mileage reimbursement for coordinator (@\$0.32/mile)	2,000		2,000
Mileage match for volunteers		7,182	7,182
Supplies			
Office/meetings/public announcement supplies	1,000		1,000
Contractual (Direct Labor, Outside Services)			
Contract for administrative help (Paso del Norte Watershed Council Coordinator)	40,000		40,000
WRAS consultant	40,000		40,000
Outreach consultant	40,000		40,000
Publications, drafting, printing		5,000 (WWF)	5,000
Other			
Map & photo duplication	200		200
Postage/mailing	500		500
Misc	500		500
Total direct costs	145,130		
Indirect contributed by NMDA (normally 46%)		58,052	58,052
TOTAL	145,130	146,010	291,140
	% of adjusted total	49.8%	50.2%
			100%

¹ Match is estimated at \$146,010.

Itemized personnel-

Regularly scheduled watershed council meetings:

40 Council members will attend 6 meetings a year for a total of 5 hours each meeting. 40 x 6 x 5 x \$16.00/hour = \$19,200

Clean water subcommittee:

- Outreach to stakeholders: Water subcommittee members (8 members) to meet with 25 different groups for a total of 10 hours (over course of a year) x \$16.00 = \$32,000
- Project oversight: 8 members x 10 hours/month x 12 months = \$15,360

Watershed Council Officers Coordination with Watershed Coordinator:

Providing direction, feedback and assistance to Coordinator: 4 officers x 12 hours a month for 12 months x \$16/hour = \$9,216

VII. Map of the Watershed

