

2027 WATER AMBASSADORS OUTLOOK

PREPARING NEW MEXICO FOR LONG-TERM WATER SECURITY

Our 2026 priorities are about building the capacity and tools New Mexico needs to act. Our 2027 priorities focus on how we govern, allocate, and sustain water over the long term.

- Regional Budgeting & Demand Management
(Guiding Principle 5)
- Policy Modernization & Legal Reform
(Guiding Principle 8)
- These priorities require broader stakeholder engagement and statutory complexity best suited for a 60-day legislative session

PURPOSE

The Water Ambassadors are pursuing a **sequenced, disciplined approach** to water policy. Following a short 2026 legislative session focused on capacity, data, and implementation, the 2027 session provides the opportunity for deeper structural and policy reforms to secure New Mexico's water future.

The priorities below reflect **longer-horizon actions** that benefit from the groundwork laid in prior legislative sessions and are best addressed in a 60-day legislative session with adequate time for stakeholder engagement, analysis, and identification of evidence- and consensus-based solutions. Our principles and major focus areas will be guided in part by work of regional water planning entities that will be setting priorities and developing water sustainability initiatives as the Water Security Planning Act is implemented.

2027 LEGISLATIVE FOCUS AREAS

1 Regional Water Budgeting & Enforceable Demand Management

Guiding Principle 5

Advance statutory authority and funding for regional water budgets, enforceable shortage-sharing frameworks, and basin-specific drought contingency plans aligned with hydrologic realities and climate projections.

2 Policy Modernization & Legal Reform

Guiding Principle 8

Review and modernize elements of New Mexico water law that limit adaptive management, including outdated interpretations of beneficial use, constraints on reuse and storage, and insufficient tools to protect and sustain groundwater.

3 Scaling Sustainable Agriculture & Working Lands Programs

Guiding Principle 9

Expand and institutionalize producer-led, water-smart agricultural programs introduced in 2026, supporting long-term water conservation while sustaining agricultural viability, rural economies, and local food security.

4 Institutionalizing Local, Tribal, and Regional Capacity

Guiding Principle 7 & 11

Transition from pilot investments to durable, recurring support for Tribal co-governance, regional water planning, rural technical assistance, and local implementation.

5 Integrated Statewide Water Planning & Decision-Support Systems

Guiding Principle 6

Advance integrated, accessible statewide water data platforms and decision-support tools that connect surface water, groundwater, regional planning, and long-term scenario modeling.

6 Long-Term Water Supply Resilience & Infrastructure Alignment

Guiding Principle 1,2 & 3

Align natural and built infrastructure investments with long-term water availability by integrating watershed health, aquifer protection, climate resilience, and regional planning into capital and programmatic decision-making.

LOOKING AHEAD

Together, these 2027 priorities move New Mexico from **capacity-building to system-level transformation**—ensuring that water governance, allocation, and investment decisions are durable, equitable, and grounded in science.

The Water Ambassadors remain committed to collaboration, transparency, and pragmatic solutions that honor New Mexico's communities, landscapes, and future generations.