



UTTON TRANSBOUNDARY
RESOURCES CENTER

JOE M STELL OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

Providing **statewide**
impartial water adjudication
education and outreach resulting
in a **more effective adjudication**
process



Scan above to go to our website

<https://uttoncenter.unm.edu/>

WATER | ADJUDICATIONS | EDUCATION | OUTREACH

WHAT WE DO

Within the Utton Center, the Joe M Stell Water Ombudsman Program acts as a neutral, unbiased, third-party advisor to help **pro-se* water rights claimants understand their options for responding to adjudication documents and procedures. A water rights adjudication is a legal procedure that defines all water rights in a stream or basin by court order. The Ombudsman program can also assist with general water law information and education. The Ombudsman Program does not offer legal advice but can provide legal information. Claimants who need legal advice are encouraged to consult with an attorney. **The Ombudsman Program is independent and is not associated with any court, the federal government, or the Office of the State Engineer.**



**Stephanie
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*Ombudsman
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SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

*WHAT ARE PRO-SE CLAIMANTS?

A person representing themselves in a case without an attorney.

WHAT ARE WATER ADJUDICATIONS?

A legal procedure that defines all water rights in a stream or basin by court order.

The Ombudsman Program provides education about water rights for:

- Adjudication participants
- Water professionals
- Community organizations
- Students of all ages, particularly law students
- And more!

For questions about our educational programs and outreach efforts, please contact the Ombudsman directly or visit the website for a list of readily available resources. The Joe M Stell Water Ombudsman Program is funded through public and private sources. The Program welcomes tax-deductible contributions through the UNM Foundation. **Fee arrangements can be made for special projects.**

ADJUDICATION STEPS

**Hydrographic
Survey**

*2-5 YEARS**

**Subfile
Phase**

*3-10 YEARS**

**Consent
Orders**

TIME VARIES

**Disputed
Claims**

TIME VARIES

**System Stream
Issues**

*1-4 YEARS**

Inter Se

*1-3 YEARS**

**Partial Final
Decrees &
Final Decrees**

**TIMES VARY BY ADJUDICATIONS AND ARE APPROXIMATE*

WHAT TO EXPECT

The NM Water Code authorizes the State of NM to file a lawsuit to determine who has the right to use the State's waters. The Water Code requires the State to join the lawsuit against all persons who claim the right to use the waters of the State. Suppose State records show that you may claim rights to use waters in a basin that is being adjudicated. In that case, the State will mail a packet that includes a Summons, General Adjudication Complaint, and other documents. This legal process requires you to respond or be subject to default.

You must include your Name, your Sub-file Number and your Case Number on all Forms filed with the Court. These numbers are on the documents in the packet mailed to you by the State.

Información y ayuda en español está disponible

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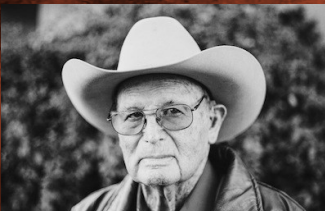
How to find
water rights
adjudications
through the NM
Courts system:



Scan to watch a
video explaining
the adjudication
process:



JOE M STELL



Created in 2005, the Program is named for the late State Representative Joe M Stell of Carlsbad, as a tribute to his years of service to the legislature and his knowledge of New Mexico water issues.

THE UTTON TRANSBOUNDARY RESOURCE CENTER

The Utton Transboundary Resources Center researches and provides information to the public about water, natural resources and environmental issues, with a particular focus on New Mexico and the Southwest. It supports collaborative natural resource management using multidisciplinary expertise and inclusive, diverse stakeholders.



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