

**Middle Rio Grande Water Assembly
President's Report
June 27, 2013**

The Assembly continued to work on its major projects which are:

- Regional Water Budget Update Project
- Futures Project
- Community Conversation Project
- Quarterly Forum Project
- Regional Water Plan Update Project
- Science Fair Water Awards Project
- Annual Water Assembly Convocation
- Miscellaneous Activities

In the environment of limited human resources, the Assembly continues to make progress in encouraging implementation of the recommendations in the Middle Rio Grande Regional Water Plan. The Plan reported an annual deficit of 55,000 acre feet per year between the Region's renewable supply and consumptive (evaporative) use. The mission of that Plan is "Balance Use with Renewable Supply". All of our projects are intended to work toward that mission.

Regional Water Budget Update - The Assembly recognized the Water Budget document that we published in 1999 acted as a catalyst and basis for the regional water planning activities that followed. The original water budget tabulated the scientific estimates of inflows and consumptive uses in the Region. It was developed by El Grupo Técnico, thirty some technical experts. We believe any update to the Regional Water Plan must have as its basis an updated water budget, to let us understand whether and how much progress has been made or ground has been lost against the deficit, and whether climate change is already affecting the supply Bruce Thomson and Frank Titus have agreed to head up El Grupo Técnico Dos and the drafting of the water budget update Initial product, to be discussed in public forums, is anticipated by late summer or early fall of 2013.

Futures Project – Back in 2009, the Water Assembly recognized the need to increase the attention that was being paid to the ongoing deficit spending of water in the Region. An interdisciplinary team developed a future scenario in the form of retrospective history of the Region. The scenario description was looking back from the year 2025, under the assumption that there would be no new policy changes. That dystopian scenario garnered some attention, but not nearly as much as had been hoped. The Assembly then worked on developing four future scenarios under four different policy assumptions. (borrowing from the *Mont Fleur* process for public dialogue). The intent is for the public to latch onto and debate the relative merits of the assumptions and resultant scenarios, thus raising awareness and political will relative to the water issues. One such scenario has been developed. The project has been moving very slowly because of a shortage of human resource to press forward.

Community Conversations – As a part of the Updated Water Budget process, the Assembly is planning a series of Community Conversations.

Quarterly Forum Project – The Assembly decided to sponsor a series of (approximately) quarterly forums, each addressing a particular aspect of the Region's water issues. Formats and topic lists were developed. This project also has been progressing slowly because of human resource shortage.

Regional Water Plan Update – The Assembly has been collaborating with state officials and the New Mexico Water Dialogue in preparing for the ISC’s declaration that it would be encouraging updates of the state’s regional water plans. This activity included working on the proposed template for update of regional water plans, suggesting criteria for state funding, and offering guidance to the state officials.

Science Fair Water Awards – The Assembly issued its seventh annual awards for the four projects at the Central New Mexico Regional Science Fair. These \$100 awards are intended to incentivize mid- and high-school students to become interested in addressing water issues. Two of this year’s awardees agreed to have their projects posted on the Water Assembly’s website.

Annual Water Assembly Convocations – The Fifteenth Water Assembly convocation was held in November of 2011. There, outlines of the four futures scenarios were developed. The next Water Assembly was postponed, awaiting the matured versions of those scenarios. Recently, with the ISC’s anticipated action on regional water planning, we expect to conduct that Assembly in late 2013 and focus on the initial draft of the updated regional water budget and what that might mean to our region.

Miscellaneous Activities - The Water Assembly provided letter support to the plaintiff in a lawsuit seeking enforcement of water rights in the actual distribution of wet water. We made some changes to our bylaws to bring them up to date. We continue to sponsor and operate a list serve and a website, both focused on water issues in region.

Overall - We are looking forward to the next water assembly convocation in which we will use the updated water budget as a vehicle to arouse interest and participation in our activities, particularly in the further refinement of the water budget, in the regional water plan update, and in the futures project scenario development.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Wessely, President