**Fact Sheet with Virtual Connection Information for the**

**Triennial Review of New Mexico’s Surface Water Quality Regulations**

**Public Comments Needed – July 13th to possibly July 16th, 2021**

**Why is the Triennial Review important to you?** If you live near or recreate on a New Mexico river, stream, or lake or irrigate from one, check out how the [NM Surface Water Quality Standards](https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2017/06/Integrated-Rule-Effective-for-State-Purposes-20200522.pdf) protect these waterbodies. The Triennial Review process provides an opportunity for public input into these standards. Find out how your watershed is protected, including the criteria (limits) used to protect water quality. If you find that more protections are needed for your watershed, be sure to make comments during the Triennial Review virtual public hearing, beginning on July 13th, 2021. **Virtual connection information below.**

**Overview of the NM Water Quality Standards and the Triennial Review.** The federal Clean Water Act and the NM Water Quality Act require the state to review its surface water quality regulations at least every three years. Thus, the process is called the Triennial Review.

The process begins with the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB) hosting public meetings to gauge public interest and priorities. NMED then prepares a draft of proposed amendments for review by the public and industry with an opportunity to submit written comments. The NMED then submits their final proposed changes to the standards to the NM Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) and requests a hearing. Other parties can also submit proposed changes to the Commission in advance of the hearing. The WQCC then holds a public hearing to hear testimony about the proposed changes.

**The Triennial Review Begins on July 13, 2021.** On that day, the WQCC will begin the Triennial Review public hearing to gather evidence in support and in opposition to the proposed amendments to the existing surface water regulations. The hearing is expected to take 4 to 10 days. <https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/2020-triennial-review/>

**Who Are the Parties to the Triennial Review?** The industries supporting and challenging the proposed amendments are the New Mexico Mining Association, the San Juan Water Commission, and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), a Department of Energy (DOE) facility. Three non-governmental organizations are supporting and opposing the proposed amendments. They are: Amigos Bravos, Communities for Clean Water (CCW), and the Gila Resources Information Project (GRIP). The Buckman Direct Diversion Board, a governmental body composed of the City of Santa Fe and Santa Fe County, are supporting and opposing portions of the proposed amendments.

CCW and GRIP are providing rebuttal testimony. They are represented by Charlie de Saillan, of the New Mexico Environmental Law Center.

**How to Participate and When to Make Verbal Public Comments.** There will be opportunities for the public to submit written comments before and during the multi-day virtual hearing. CCW and GRIP have prepared sample public comments you can use, modify and submit to the WQCC.

Verbal public comments will be accepted each day of the hearing from 5 to 6 pm. Beginning on Wednesday, July 14th, public comment will be accepted from 8 to 9 am. All public comment is limited to five minutes. Be sure to express your displeasure to the WQCC that public comments are limited to five minutes. There are many issues in this proceeding, and they are complicated. Five minutes is not enough time for many people to address these issues adequately.

**Hearing Hours: 9 am to noon and 1 to 6 pm MDT (approximately).**  Beginning on Wednesday, July 14th, the hearing will begin at 8 am. 15-minute breaks will be declared at various times by the Hearing Officer.

**Connection Information.** The public hearing will be virtual on WebEx online meeting platforms or you can participate by phone. For more information, scroll down to “Agenda” under “Next Meeting.” [www.env.nm.gov/water-quality-control-commission/wqcc/](http://www.env.nm.gov/water-quality-control-commission/wqcc/)

**Beginning Tuesday, July 13, 2021:**

To connect via video conference, go to:

Meeting link: <https://nmed-oit.webex.com/nmed-oit/j.php?MTID=m173d2e7c86c3828b4dbdcb4d1fe06be6>

Meeting number: 177 706 1008

Password: phQAE7KmR47

Host key: 171483

Join by video system:

Dial 1777061008@nmed-oit.webex.com

You can also dial 173.243.2.68 and enter your meeting number.

Join by phone:

+1-415-655-0001 US Toll

Access code: 177 706 1008

During the hearing, the rules of decorum apply. Use the “chat” to sign up to provide public comment. **Please be sure to mute yourself until it is your turn to speak.** This will minimize background noise. The meeting will be recorded and posted on the WQCC’s website as soon as practicable.

To ensure you have the most current information, please visit the WQCC website prior to the hearing for any updates: <https://www.env.nm.gov/water-quality-control-commission/wqcc/>

Submit your written public comments by email – **with** **Docket No. WQCC 20-51(R) in the subject line –** to:

Pamela Jones, WQCC Administrator

New Mexico Environment Department

P.O. Box 5469

Santa Fe, NM 87502

telephone: (505) 660-4305

email: pamela.jones@state.nm.us