

## PRESERVING NEW MEXICO'S WATER RESOURCES

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As this great nation continues to grow at a rapid rate...the question of adequate water ranks among our major problems. Here in New Mexico...we are daily faced with new problems involving our water supplies...and because of the type of land...the control of our water in the form of flood protection.

Since New Mexico's primary water source is from precipitation...it is necessary that our state continue to rapidly improve our storage system, to plan for the continuing growth of this state.

Federal projects have played an important part in the development of our water and water-use programs. Such projects as the Navajo Irrigation project...the Roswell saline water plant...and the San Juan-Chama diversion projects are examples. Presently, the majority of New Mexico's cities obtain their water from wells. However, as these cities grow the need for more water grows.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has been the Federal Government's principal water resources development agency since 1824. Through its Civil Works program...the Corps carries out a nationwide comprehensive water resources planning, construction, and operations effort in cooperation with all other interested agencies of the government at all levels.

Additionally, the Corps of Engineers have been assigned the responsibility of flood control. This has been one of New Mexico's most trying problems. Las Cruces is now working thru, and with, the Corps of Engineers programs to try to solve their flood problems.

Municipal and industrial water supplies are gaining increasing importance as one of the major benefits of the Army Engineers' multiple purpose water conservation projects. Through the Civil Works program, the Corps of Engineers provides for more public recreation than any other agency.

When local interests feel that a need exists for any type of flood control, water supplies or other improvements...it will be most profitable for them to consult at the outset...the District Engineer of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Another Federal Agency that plays a vitally important role in the development of water supplies in New Mexico is the Soil Conservation Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The SCS is responsible for developing and carrying out a national soil and water conservation program in cooperation with individuals, community agencies, regional resource groups, and

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other federal, state and local bodies. The program is carried on through technical help to more than 3,000 soil conservation districts covering almost 2 billion acres in all of the states.

In 1965 Congress approved the Water Quality Act and created the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration now under the Department of Interior. This agency is responsible for enhancing and improving the quality of water in the Nation's streams, lakes, and other sources with the express purpose of providing adequate supplies for all foreseeable appropriate uses. The technology now exists for improving water quality and for making productive use of municipal sewage plant effluents and industrial effluents. However, construction of new facilities and the conversion of present facilities will require considerable money and time. The Water Resources Council has estimated capital outlays required for waste treatment, sanitary sewers and water cooling requirements at \$20 billion for the five year period of 1969 to 1973. President Nixon has authorized Interior Secretary Hickel to spend the \$800 million appropriated by Congress for FY 1970 for sewage treatment plants alone.

During the first session of the 91st Congress the House and the Senate passed slightly differing versions of the Water Quality Improvement Act. Final Congressional action is still pending. The House version authorized \$348 million over a three year period to protect public waters from pollution and to authorize grants for water quality research and education.

In his State of the Union address President Nixon announced he would propose a five year, \$10 billion nationwide clean waters program to put modern waste treatment plants in every place where they are needed. The Clean Waters Act he is proposing will authorize \$4 billion immediately for fiscal year 1971, to cover the full federal share of the total \$10 billion cost on a matching fund basis.

These funds would be allocated at a rate of \$1 billion a year for the next four years, with a reassessment in 1973 of needs for 1975 and subsequent years. The President has proposed creation of a new ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCING AUTHORITY to ensure that every municipality in the country has an opportunity to sell waste treatment plant construction bonds. Under this plan, if a municipality cannot sell waste treatment construction bonds, the Environmental Financing Authority will buy them and sell its own bonds on the taxable market. Thus, construction of pollution control facilities will not necessarily depend on a community's credit rating, so much as in some instances, but on its waste disposal needs.

The President has proposed that the present rigid grant allocation formula be revised so that special emphasis can be given to areas where facilities are most needed and where the greatest improvements in water quality will result.

The elimination of water pollution will, of course, provide a major step forward in new water resources. The leading source of controllable man-

made water pollutants in the U. S. is manufacturing. Domestic wastes are second. However, percentage-wise, here in the Southwest domestic wastes rank higher because of limited manufacturing. To enforce the controls of water pollution from industrial and municipal wastes, the President has proposed that the failure to meet established water quality standards or implementation schedules be made subject to court imposed fines...and, further, that federal operating grants to State pollution control enforcement agencies be tripled over the next five years.

The Water Resources Council has made the following findings concerning the nation's water resources needs based on a projected population of approximately 468 million in the year 2020...only 50 years from now:

Requirements for municipal water systems are expected to triple.  
Industrial water use will increase by over 300%  
Electric power is projected to increase its fresh water needs from 63 billion to 411 billion gallons per day  
About one-fourth of all outdoor recreation is, and will continue to be, dependent on water...and pleasure crafts are estimated to increase from about 8 million to 30 million.

The proposals made by President Nixon to this session of Congress, calling for a massive clean up of this nation's environment have been received with enthusiasm. At the same time..this is an election year...and the proposals have started a political game of "one-upmanship"...whereby the politically motivated are already attempting to out-spend and out-innovate the President.

Although some individuals are calling for the expenditure of \$25 billion for water pollution abatement...the President's request for \$4 billion in Federal funds, to be combined with \$6 billion from state and local governments, is based on the best estimates of total investment needs to bring the Nation up-to-date on waste treatment facilities. The 1970 "Cost of Clean Water Study" has estimated the need for about \$9.9 billion. A canvass of the states by the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration has arrived at about the same figure.

While actions to clean up our air, water, and land are urgently needed; it is also important that we not permit ourselves to be misled into thinking that massive outlays of money will solve all our problems. In the search for a cleaner Nation, as well as in the day-to-day search for better national defense and use of human resources, we must always be mindful that allocating money is one thing...but how it is spent is also most important.

We must do what needs to be done...while realizing that what one wants is not always what one needs or what one can afford. The National Administration needs your support in this battle to meet tomorrows water needs. I look forward to continued progress in assisting the people of New Mexico to develop, conserve and wisely use their most precious natural resource...for in the future of water development...is the future of our State.