Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee
2026 2nd Quarter Summary Report
Pursuant to Santa Fe County Resolution 2024-038

Introduction

This Summary Report highlights WPAC progress made on its 2026 Work Plan in the 2nd Quarter of 2026. It is responsive to the Santa Fe County Resolution 2024-038, paragraph 19 requirement which states: “WPAC shall present a report of its activities and recommendations to the Board on a quarterly schedule…” for the second quarter of 2026.

Greater detail is presented in an Addendum to this Summary Report. (Attached.)

Unified Water Authority

On February 12, 2026, WPAC considered and approved a letter stating “WPAC Findings and Recommendations Regarding the Pursuit of a Unified Santa Fe County–City of Santa Fe Water Authority.” WPAC remains ready to continue work on this effort once County and City elected officials develop a MOU to explore creation of a utility authority pursuant to the Regional Water System Resiliency Act, consistent with BCC action taken at its April 14, 2026 meeting.

Drinking and Wastewater Management

Drinking and Wastewater Management Working Group has reviewed and commented on the following consultant reports made available by staff:

1. LC/LC PER/Water Planning Study & Rapid Watershed Assessment
2. PFAS study
3. Aquifer Storage Recovery at the Quill Plant
4. Preliminary draft report on a “Santa Fe County Water Utility Master Plan”

The Working Group comments were presented to the full WPAC at its May 14, 2026 meeting. Other consultant efforts listed in the 2026 Work Plan have not yet produced reports for WPAC consideration.

Outreach

The Outreach Working Group is monitoring community discussions concerning an ongoing County project concerning the Santa Fe River Greenway Project, Section B. for purposes of exploring how the County can consider community input for future water related projects. The WG will be commenting on proposed changes to the SLDC when drafted by the consultant.

Stormwater Management

The Working Group continues to provide comments on staff and consultant efforts regarding implementation of the Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) through its County’s Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC).

Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee
Addendum to 2026 2nd Quarter Report
Pursuant to Santa Fe County Resolution 2024-038

PREAMBLE

This Addendum supplements the WPAC 2nd Quarter 2026 Report pursuant to Santa Fe County Resolution 2024-038, paragraph 19 requirement which states: "WPAC shall present a report of its activities and recommendations to the Board on a quarterly schedule…"

INTRODUCTION

The WPAC 2026 Work Plan (Plan) was approved by the Board on January 27, 2026. (Attachment 1.) The Plan identified three WPAC working groups, and assigned specific tasks to each group. Those working groups include: 1) Stormwater Management Working Group; 2) Drinking & Wastewater Management Working Group; and 3) Outreach Working Group.

This Addendum describes 2nd quarter 2026 WPAC activities for each working group, by specific tasks.

The abbreviation "WG" used throughout this Report stands for "Working Group".

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

Task 1

Review and comment on the County staff and consultants' effort on: 1) revisions and additions to the Sustainable Land Development Code related to water conservation, harvesting and reuse, stormwater management, and code requirements for new developments; 2) Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Facility Master Plan); 3) GSI Installation and Maintenance Guide; 4) Subdivision review; and 5) Arroyo Stormwater Management component for the Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP).

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

The WG is reviewing consultants' (BHI and Raincatcher) recommendations for modifications to the Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC) to implement relevant portions of the Sustainable Growth Management Plan. The WG is reviewing case studies from other cities in the region and will consider incentives for implementation.

Task 2

Explore and recommend projects and policies for promoting wastewater reuse in new and existing residential and commercial developments including updates to County's Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC) and Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) to include incentives and/or requirements for wastewater reuse.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

The WG is developing a recommendation for development of a Green Stormwater Master Plan that integrates green infrastructure in comprehensive stormwater management including arroyos.

Task 3

Review information included in the Hazard Mitigation Plan on flood control structures that are owned by the Santa Fe-Pojoaque Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

The WG is exploring best practices and policy recommendations for managing high flow conditions in Arroyo Hondo and Arroyo Chamisa as they impact La Cienaga.

DRINKING & WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

Task 1

Review and Process applications for utility service by existing water and wastewater service providers pursuant to Resolution 2015-121 and as it may be amended. Consider additional amendments specific to Mutual Domestic Community Water Associations (MDCWAs) and long-term coordination with the County's utilities system.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

No applications pursuant to Resolution 2015-121 have been forwarded to WPAC for its consideration.

Task 2

Review and comment on staff and consultant efforts on:

a. LC/LC PER/Water Planning Study & Rapid Watershed Assessment
b. County PFAS study
c. Santa Fe 2100 Water Plan
d. Wastewater treatment plant return flow credits
e. Aquifer Storage Recovery at the Quill Plant
f. Domestic Wells Monitoring Program
g. Return flow credits
h. Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System (PBRWS)
I. Eldorado Area Water & Sewer District (EAWSD) plans for water lines and for acquiring water rights and transfers

Comment on reports once available.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

Consultant reports on items a, b, e, above and an additional preliminary draft report for a "Santa Fe County Water Utility Master Plan" were made available to the Working Group. Review comments were prepared and presented to the full WPAC at its May 14, 2026 meeting. There is no additional actionable work for WPAC at this time for the other task items.

OUTREACH WORKING GROUP

Task 1

Identify options for potential collaboration/partnerships regarding stormwater and wastewater management with the City of Santa Fe and other organizations such as the Santa Fe Watershed Association (SFWA), and with stakeholders and collaborative watershed planning groups in other County watersheds.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

At its May 14, 2026 meeting, WPAC became aware of community concern over the implementation of an ongoing County project concerning the Santa Fe River Greenway Project, Section B. The WG is monitoring discussions among interested parties, including the SFWA. Active intervention and engagement by WPAC is not expected on this project at this time, but the matter will be studied for purposes of exploring how the County can consider community input for future water related projects.

The WG reviewed the Low Impact Green Stormwater Infrastructure Guidebook before its public release in April.

Task 2

Explore opportunities for greater cooperation between NM Environment Department, Office of State Engineer (OSE) and County staff, to coordinate reporting requirements and databases for septic tanks and domestic wells.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

The task leader learned that there is no useful state database for septic systems, and that prior funding for one has been withdrawn. Staff reports that a consultant is preparing suggested changes to the Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC) regarding to water-related issues. The WG will review and comment on the same when ready.

The WG is also reviewing and commenting on materials developed by staff regarding domestic water well metering.

Task 3

Explore options for supporting Community Water Systems for strengthening resiliency in infrastructure, people, and water supply. Support staff, NMED Drinking Water Bureau (DWB),

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), North Central New Mexico Economic Development District (NCNMEDD), and Rural Water Association (RWA) capacity building and training activities for Mutual Domestic Community Water Associations (MDCWAs) including systems regional collaboration for pooling and sharing resources. Propose engagement activities with MDCWA umbrella organizations as a contact point for staff efforts for promoting well monitoring and water conservation and reuse.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

The WG has been working with and participating with the Water Leadership Institute in its educational program for water providers including MDCWAs on topics of governance, water conservation, collaboration models and Open Meetings Act. The WG has responded to the Interstate Stream Commissions new rule for regions creating Water Security Plan, identifying the need for the County to identify a representative, as well as Mutual Domestic Community Water Associations.

Task 4

Explore and recommend strategies with USDA NRCS to increase agricultural producers' and residents' awareness of Soil Health Program. Work with Soil Health New Mexico.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

This is a program managed by the The Santa Fe - Pojoaque Soil and Water Conservation District, which has sponsored this program in the past. Due to administrative challenges with the state agency, the District is not continuing the program this year, but hopes to re-engage next year with improved administrative conditions. There is no additional WPAC WG activity expected for the remainder of this year. However, the WG will review proposed modifications to the SLDC related to this task when they are developed by the consultant.

Task 5

Create a suite of strategies for increasing outreach to any county water-related program (domestic well reporting, for example, to address the question: how do residents find out about a program? (website, newsletter, property tax stuffers (biannual?), informational packets with new home purchases partnering with realtors. E-communication sign-up. Items for fun – water bottles, flow reduction products, videos, press releases, social media)

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

The Work Group conferred with the organizers of the Next Generation Water Summit (NGWS) on the NGWS 2026 program and several members attended the summit.

The Work Group commented on the Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Guide, suggesting that once it is formally released in April, that a link be included in utility and tax bills.

Task 6

Continue exploring trends in water data and consider ways of updating these data elements and conveying relevant data to the residents of the county.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

See response to Task 2 above.

Task 7

Explore and recommend processes for additional community engagement regarding County water-related projects. Meet with Acequia Association(s) to better understand needs and identify opportunities for coordination with the County.

2nd Quarter 2026 Activity

Initial outreach has been made with N.M. Acequia Association and N.M. Acequia Commission to facilitate some conversations. A problem has been identified regarding acequias wanting advance notice of land disturbance activities in their areas to protect their assets. Response to this is under consideration. The WG has reviewed applicable provisions of the SLDC for possible modifications, but has not developed any suggested changes yet.

Attachments:

1. 2026 WPAC Work Plan

Attachment 1

Addendum to WPAC
2nd Quarter Report

Water Policy Advisory Committee
2026 Work Plan

(As Revised by BCC 1/27/2026)

Stormwater Management Working Group

1. Review and comment on the County staff and consultants' effort on: 1) revisions and additions to the Sustainable Land Development Code related to water conservation, harvesting and reuse, stormwater management, and code requirements for new developments; 2) Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Facility Master Plan); 3) GSI Installation and Maintenance Guide; 4) Subdivision review; and 5) Arroyo Stormwater Management component for the Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP).

2. Explore and recommend projects and policies for promoting wastewater reuse in new and existing residential and commercial developments including updates to County's Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC) and Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) to include incentives and/or requirements for wastewater reuse.

3. Review information included in the Hazard Mitigation Plan on flood control structures that are owned by the Santa Fe-Pojoaque Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

Drinking & Wastewater Management Working Group

1. Review and Process applications for utility service by existing water and wastewater service providers pursuant to Resolution 2015-121 and as it may be amended. Consider additional amendments specific to Mutual Domestic Community Water Associations (MDCWAs) and long-term coordination with the County's utilities system.

2. Review and comment on staff and consultant efforts on:

   a. LC/LC PER/Water Planning Study & Rapid Watershed Assessment
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   h. Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System (PBRWS)
   I. Eldorado Area Water & Sewer District (EAWSD) plans for water lines and for acquiring water rights and transfers

Comment on reports once available.

Outreach Working Group

WPAC Approved 12/11/2025
BCC Revised 1/27/2026

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2. Explore opportunities for greater cooperation between NM Environment Department, Office of State Engineer (OSE) and County staff, to coordinate reporting requirements and databases for septic tanks and domestic wells.

3. Explore options for supporting Community Water Systems for strengthening resiliency in infrastructure, people, and water supply. Support staff, NMED Drinking Water Bureau (DWB), Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), North Central New Mexico Economic Development District (NCNMEDD), and Rural Water Association (RWA) capacity building and training activities for Mutual Domestic Community Water Associations (MDCWAs) including systems regional collaboration for pooling and sharing resources. Propose engagement activities with MDCWA umbrella organizations as a contact point for staff efforts for promoting well monitoring and water conservation and reuse.

4. Explore and recommend strategies with USDA NRCS to increase agricultural producers' and residents' awareness of Soil Health Program. Work with Soil Health New Mexico.

5. Create a suite of strategies for increasing outreach to any county water-related program (domestic well reporting, for example, to address the question: how do residents find out about a program? (website, newsletter, property tax stuffers (biannual?), informational packets with new home purchases partnering with realtors. E-communication sign-up. Items for fun – water bottles, flow reduction products, videos, press releases, social media)

6. Continue exploring trends in water data and consider ways of updating these data elements and conveying relevant data to the residents of the county.

7. Explore and recommend processes for additional community engagement regarding County water-related projects. Meet with Acequia Association(s) to better understand needs and identify opportunities for coordination with the County.

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