

Michelle Lujan Grisham's Water Policy:  
Managing and Conserving our Water to Preserve  
our Culture, Communities and Future  
Generations of New Mexicans

John L. Mitchiner, PhD  
Climate Reality Leadership Corps

# Water Policy Drivers

- Existing Drought
- Climate Change
- New Industry and Development
- Litigation
  - *Texas vs New Mexico and Colorado* before the Supreme Court

# Basic Principles of New Mexico Water Management

- **Stewardship.** We must be good stewards of our precious water supply and prepare for the impact of our changing environment.
- **Sustainability.** We must manage our water to meet the needs of today while ensuring a reliable supply of clean water for future generations.
- **Equity.** We must manage our water in a way that meets our basic notions of fairness with a system that serves all New Mexicans.

# Water Stewardship

- Create a 50-year water plan for the state and a robust, ongoing statewide water management program.
- Strengthen our state water agencies.
- Bring competing interests together at the same table.
- Strengthen our working relationships with other jurisdictions.
- Engage New Mexico's Tribes and Pueblos in the state's water management activities.
- Prioritize cooperation and negotiations over litigation.
- Work with the New Mexico Acequia Commission.
- Collect more information about our water resources.
- End work on the Gila River Diversion Project.

# Water Sustainability

- Expand water conservation practices.
  - Water reclamation / reuse programs.
  - Watershed restoration and protection programs.
  - Better data collection.
  - Water conservation.
  - Sustainable Agriculture practices.
  - Goal setting.
  - Upgrading local management systems.
  - Updated laws and regulations.
- Invest in and promote adoption of new water technologies
  - Water reuse.
  - Desalination of brackish water.
  - Well monitors

# Water Equity

- All New Mexico communities have reliable access to clean drinking water.
- Protect vulnerable communities from speculative water transfers and support fair adjudication of water rights.
- Collaborate with Tribal and Pueblo neighbors.
- Make sure that the colonias are treated fairly and fully as we invest in our state's water infrastructure.
- Invest our resources wisely and leverage additional investments for critical projects.
  - Federal funding programs
  - Public-private partnerships.
  - Regional compacts.
  - Lab tech transfers.

# Conclusions

- New Mexico's future depends on a reliable supply of water.
- Water management will become a priority and will stay a priority throughout Lujan Grisham's administration.
- This administration should welcome you as a partner in developing a strategic 50-year water plan built on consensus, based in reality and science.