

# URGENT SENATE REQUEST:

## Increase Special Appropriations & Expansions to Meet Water Resources Management Needs!

New Mexico's water-management agencies requested funding to meet existing statutory duties, including the following objectives: advance compact compliance imperatives, reduce extreme Rio Grande Compact risk, implement enacted water laws, and protect water supplies for communities, agriculture, Tribal obligations, and the State's economy.

HB2 now before the Senate funds less than half the State Engineer's urgently needed requests as fully summarized in this [table](#). The critically important requests identified below are especially urgent, as briefly explained on the reverse. →



PURPOSE / LINE ITEM (Thousands of Dollars)	STATE ENGINEER REQUEST	EXECUTIVE BUDGET	LFC	HB2	ADDITIONAL NEEDED FROM SENATE
Rio Grande Compact Compliance	\$50,000	\$22,500	\$0	\$22,500	<b>\$27,500</b>
Indian WR Settlements State cost share	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$0	\$10,000	<b>\$25,000</b>
Regional Water Planning, Modernization	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$2,500	<b>\$2,500</b>
Water Rights Database Replacement	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	<b>\$1,500</b>
Rio Grande Conveyance Improvements	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0	\$0	<b>\$6,000</b>
Middle Rio Grande Field Staff (3 FTE)	\$384	\$384	\$0	\$0	<b>\$384</b>
Indian Water Rights Settlement Staff	\$364	\$364	\$0	\$0	<b>\$364</b>

February 9, 2026

## Line Item Explanations:

**Rio Grande Compact Compliance and Settlement Implementation** - The \$50 million request is required to implement the interstate/federal litigation settlement and to reduce ongoing depletions in the Middle and Lower Rio Grande so that more water reaches Elephant Butte Reservoir and the new El Paso compact stream gage. Partial funding postpones essential corrective action and raises legal, financial, and operational risk. The Lower Rio Grande's pending SCOTUS decree has difficult and costly short-term deadlines. Without State action, Middle Rio Grande compact violation is two or three years away.

**Indian Water Rights Settlement** - The state's cost share of several hundred million dollars matches several billion dollars of federal settlement funding. The State share implements agreed settlement projects to improve the water supply for non-tribal settlement participants. The FY27 request matched the FY26 appropriation. The House budget provides only \$10 million of the \$35 million request to steadily fund this State obligation.

**Water Security Planning Act Implementation and Modernization** - The Legislature unanimously enacted the 2023 Water Security Planning Act. Funding supports regional planning, coordination, and modernization of agency information and engagement tools. Reductions delay the implementation of enacted law and the development of durable, region-specific solutions. HB2 denies FY27 funding to continue the ongoing water rights database replacement. The 30-year-old system will fail. It's fragile.

**Middle Rio Grande River Conveyance and Channel Maintenance** - 2025 demonstrated that substantial volumes of water are lost due to river channel conditions before reaching Elephant Butte. Eliminating funding for extraordinary channel improvement work will continue preventable depletions, directly undermining Compact deliveries and compliance.

**Institutional Capacity: Staffing** - The eliminated staffing expansions address administration of wet water, enforcement of existing water rights, Compact compliance, and implementation of Indian water-rights settlements. These functions are core State responsibilities that cannot be carried out by other entities.

**A Closing Consideration** - The Senate in 2025 cut HB2 funding for water-resources management and planning. The urgency is extreme. The State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission's work is essential to protect the public welfare of the state and preserve interstate obligations, Indian water rights and other settlements, agriculture, communities, culture, and the New Mexico's economy.

**CALL YOUR  
SENATOR TODAY (505) 986-4300**

Demand FULL Funding for Water Resources and River Protection