



News Release



The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

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URGENT

MRGCD Water Bank Use Curtailed

Albuquerque – Due to drought conditions resulting in inadequate storage of water in El Vado Reservoir and low flows in the Rio Grande, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District is curtailing water deliveries to Water Bank users as of today.

Water Bank users were advised that curtailments this year were almost certain; given the limited supplies of water.

Water Bank irrigators are advised to cease irrigation immediately.

“Last week’s cool off coupled with diversions in the San Luis valley in Colorado coming online, has dropped flows in the Rio Grande.” says MRGCD Hydrologist David Gensler.

Under the MRGCD policy, Rule No. 23, each water bank lease is subject to curtailment in times of shortage.

The district established target water levels, both at El Vado Reservoir and the flows in the Rio Grande, as triggers to curtailment of Water Bank users. Those triggers are 91,000 acre feet at El Vado and 780 cubic feet per second in the Rio Grande as of this date. Today El Vado has approximately 31,000 acre feet of water and the Rio Grande is flowing at 650 cubic feet per second.

“I don’t expect this curtailment to last very long, but the target flows were established by our Board of Directors and we must adhere to our rules.” Gensler notes.

Currently there are approximately 250 irrigators on the Water Bank affecting roughly 2650 irrigable acres.

All irrigators can get updates on river flows and Water Bank delivers by visiting the MRGCD website at www.mrgcd.com.

About the MRGCD: The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District has been promoting sustainable agriculture for the past 75 years. The District delivers water to about 70,000 acres of cropland in the Middle Rio Grande Valley. That water is reused time and time again. It waters crops, sustains the cottonwood bosque along the Rio Grande, helps sustain the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow and recharges the aquifer. The District owns 30,000 acres of bosque in the valley, a stretch of land that provides unprecedented recreational opportunities and an irreplaceable swath of greenbelt in New Mexico largest metropolitan area. The District was formed in 1925 to alleviate flooding and to reclaim farmland in the valley. Its boundaries stretch 150 miles from Cochiti to the northern boundary of the Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, running through Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia and Socorro Counties. It operates more than 1,200 miles of canals, laterals and drains, which are used to convey water to and from cropland. The District is funded by water service charges and property assessments on the benefited lands within its boundaries.

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