



News Release



The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

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MRGCD to Exhaust Its Supplemental Irrigation Water Supply July 1

Albuquerque — Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District will release the last of its stored water supply from El Vado Reservoir on July 1, 2013.

Depending upon location, irrigators will see changes between July 3 and July 9.

THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT IRRIGATION SEASON HAS ENDED.

The MRGCD will continue to divert the available natural flow of the Rio Grande into canals and laterals but irrigators will be seeing a reduced flow.

“It will be vitally important for all irrigators to schedule their irrigation and share what water is available.” says MRGCD Hydrologist David Gensler. “We are truly at the mercy of Mother Nature now and rain is our only option for increased water supply.” Gensler adds.

Unusual heavy drought conditions required the District to begin using its supplemental water supply in early May. The district has been releasing up to 950 cubic feet per second of water per day from storage at El Vado for the benefit of middle valley farmers.

Residents in the mid-valley should expect to see a significant drop in the Rio Grande flow. Currently the Rio Grande, below Cochiti Lake, is flowing at about 1000 cfs (cubic feet per second) but by week-end that flow should drop to about 500 cfs.

The river at Central Avenue, in Albuquerque, may drop well below 100 cfs.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation will release water needed to meet the needs of the Rio Grande Silvery Minnow, an endangered species. There will also be some flow available for the six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos prior and paramount lands.

If you need more information, contact Tom Thorpe, MRGCD PIO at 382-9306.

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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