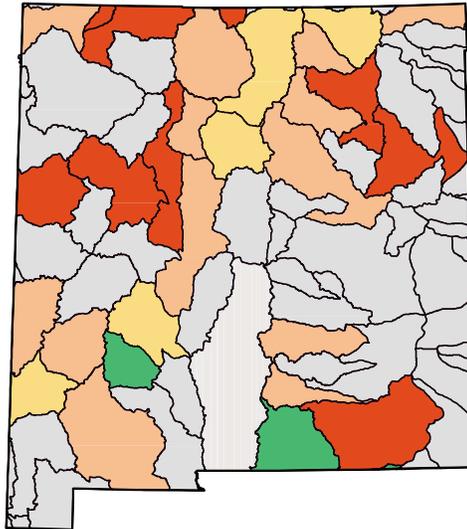


New Mexico

Percent of Assessed Rivers, Lakes, and Estuaries Meeting All Designated Uses

- 80% - 100% Meeting All Uses
- 50% - 79% Meeting All Uses
- 20% - 49% Meeting All Uses
- 0% - 19% Meeting All Uses
- Insufficient Assessment Coverage
- Basin Boundaries (USGS 8-Digit Hydrologic Unit)



For a copy of the New Mexico 1998 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

About 28% of New Mexico's surveyed stream miles have good water quality that fully supports aquatic life uses. Ninety-nine percent of the surveyed river miles fully support swimming. The leading problems in streams include turbidity, thermal modifications, pathogens, nutrients, and metals. Nonpoint sources are responsible for over 91% of the degradation in New Mexico's 2,435 impaired stream miles. Sources of impairment include agriculture, hydrologic and habitat modification, and recreational activities.

Agriculture and recreational activities are the primary sources of nutrients, siltation, reduced shoreline vegetation, and bank

destabilization that impairs aquatic life use in 89% of New Mexico's surveyed lake acres. Mercury contamination from unknown sources appears in fish caught at 23 reservoirs. However, water and sediment samples from surveyed lakes and reservoirs have not detected high concentrations of mercury. Fish may contain high concentrations of mercury in waters with minute quantities of mercury because the process of biomagnification concentrates mercury in fish tissue.

New Mexico did not report on the condition of wetlands.

Ground Water Quality

Approximately 90% of the population of New Mexico depends on ground water for drinking water. The Environment Department has identified at least 1,233 cases of ground water contamination since 1927. The most common source of ground water contamination is small household septic tanks and cesspools. Leaking underground storage tanks, injection wells, landfills, surface impoundments, oil and gas production, mining and milling, dairies, and miscellaneous industrial sources also contaminate ground water in New Mexico. New Mexico operates a ground water discharger permit program that includes ground water standards for intentional discharges and a spill cleanup provision for other discharges.

Programs to Restore Water Quality

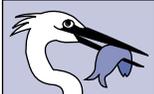
New Mexico uses a variety of state, federal, and local programs to protect surface water quality. The federal NPDES program is used to

protect waters from point source discharges. New Mexico's Nonpoint Source Management Program contains a series of implementation milestones that were designed to establish goals while providing a method to measure progress and success of the program. Implementation consists of the coordination of efforts among NPS management agencies, promotion and implementation of best management practices, coordination of watershed projects, inspection and enforcement activities, consistency reviews, and education and outreach activities.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

New Mexico uses a wide variety of methods to assess its water quality. Second-party data including dischargers' reports, published literature, data stored in EPA's database, as well as data generated by the U.S. Geological Survey are routinely reviewed. The New Mexico Environment Department generates large amounts of data through intensive surveys, assessment of citizen complaints, special studies aimed at areas of special concern (e.g., mercury concentration in water, sediments, and fish), short- and long-term nonpoint source pollution monitoring, TMDL investigations, and effluent monitoring. Special stream surveys conducted in 1996 and 1997 focused on the Gila and Pecos watersheds. These surveys are usually timed to coincide with annual periods of stress for aquatic life (e.g., low flows) and usually include benthic macroinvertebrate assessments to evaluate the integrity of aquatic communities.

Individual Use Support in New Mexico

Designated Use ^a	Percent				
	Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Fair (Partially Supporting)	Poor (Not Supporting)	Not Attainable
Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 110,741)^b					
 Total Miles Assessed					
3,995	28	-	33	39	0
			100		
93	0	-		0	0
	99				
4,134		-	<1	<1	0
Lakes (Total Acres = 997,467)					
 Total Acres Assessed			89		
124,827	11	-		<1	0
			100		
109,909	<1	-		0	0
					
-	-	-	-	-	-

- Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

^a A subset of New Mexico's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the state's 305(b) report for a full description of the state's uses.

^b Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.