

Effects of Drought on Interstate Compact Compliance

New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission
Rolf Schmidt-Petersen, Director

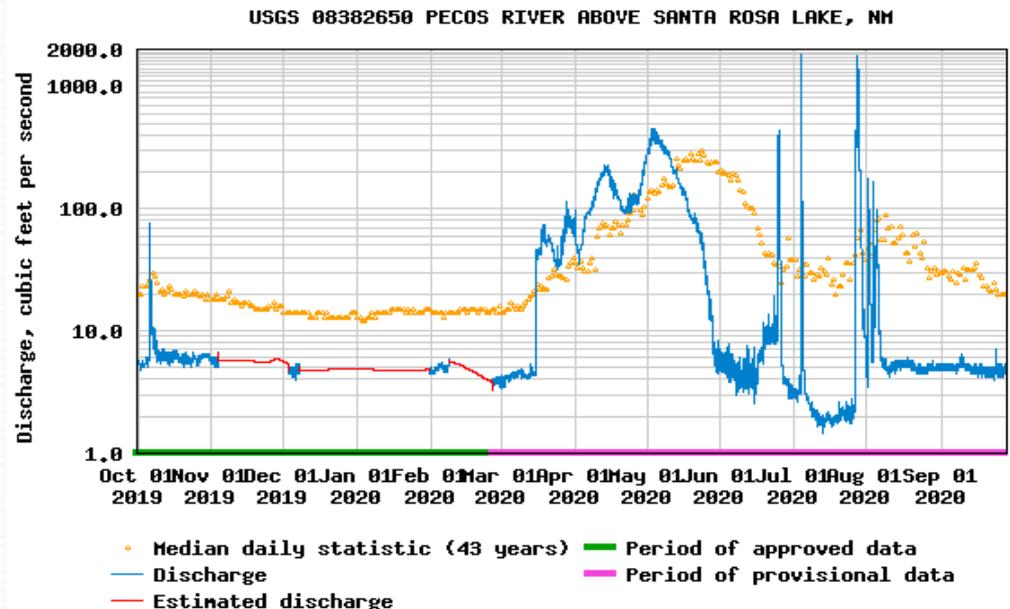
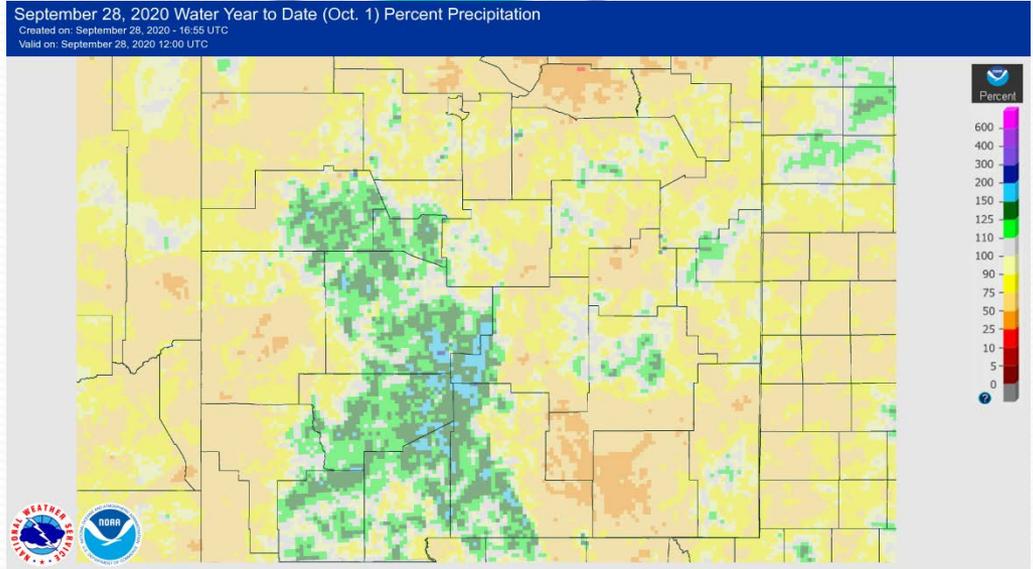
New Mexico Drought Task Force
September 30, 2020
Location: Tele-conference Via Zoom



Pecos River Basin

Current Conditions

- 2020 precipitation
 - Almost the entire basin has received below average precipitation in water year 2020
- 2020 streamflow
 - Early snowmelt runoff peak
 - Below normal flows the rest of the year
 - Extremely poor monsoon season
- Combined reservoir storage (as of 9/28/2020)
 - 21,509 af (12%)



Pecos River Basin

Pecos Compact Compliance Status

- Overall Credit of 166,300 acre-feet
- For 2020, as of the end of August:
 - Stateline deliveries through August: 26,200 af
 - Calculated 2020 under-delivery as of end of August: 6,800 af

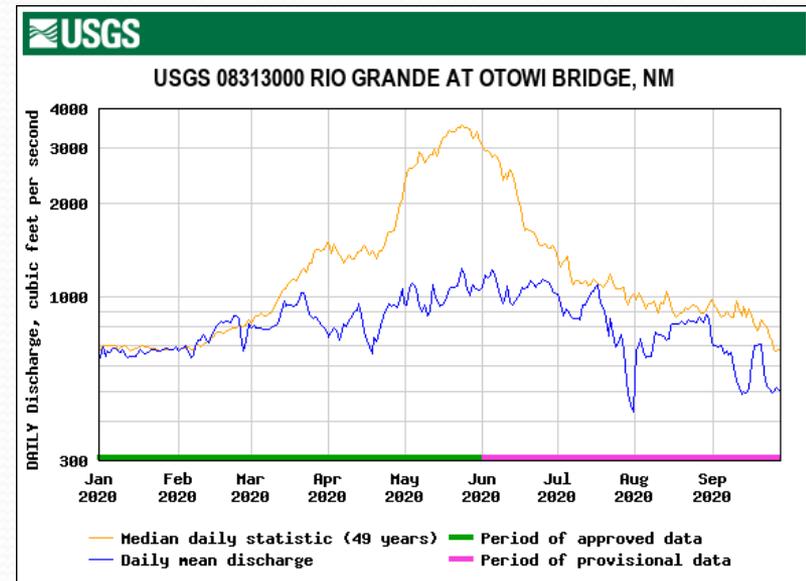
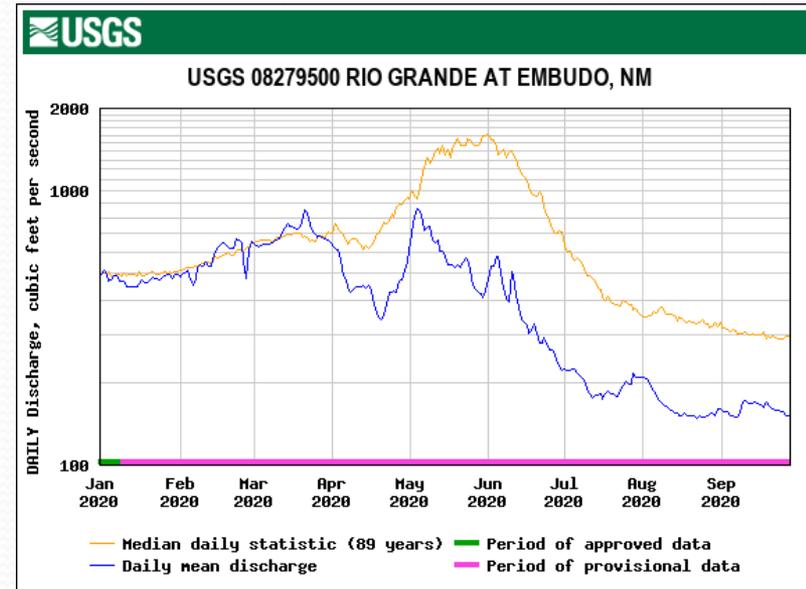
2003 Pecos Settlement Agreement

- Pumping at state-owned wellfields to augment water supply for the Carlsbad Irrigation District is expected this winter and next Spring if things remain dry.
- Target CID supply on March 1, is 50,000 af.



Rio Grande Basin

- Flows on the Rio Grande have been much below normal.
- ISC and OSE participate in water operations conference calls with all water management agencies in the Rio Grande basin twice a week.
- ISC coordinates with OSE on alternative administration on the Rio Chama in order to protect RG Compact accounting.



Rio Grande Compact Debit Water Operation

New Mexico has a calculated Accrued Debit in deliveries to Elephant Butte Reservoir for 2020 of 38,800 acre feet.

New Mexico's compliance point is an Accrued Debit of greater than 200,000 acre-feet and we are well above that point.

However, under Article VI

- New Mexico must retain water in storage to the extent of its accrued debit...El Vado and Nichols and McClure.
- The Compact Commission by unanimous action may authorize the release from storage of any amount of water which is then being held by reason of accrued debit of Colorado or New Mexico.

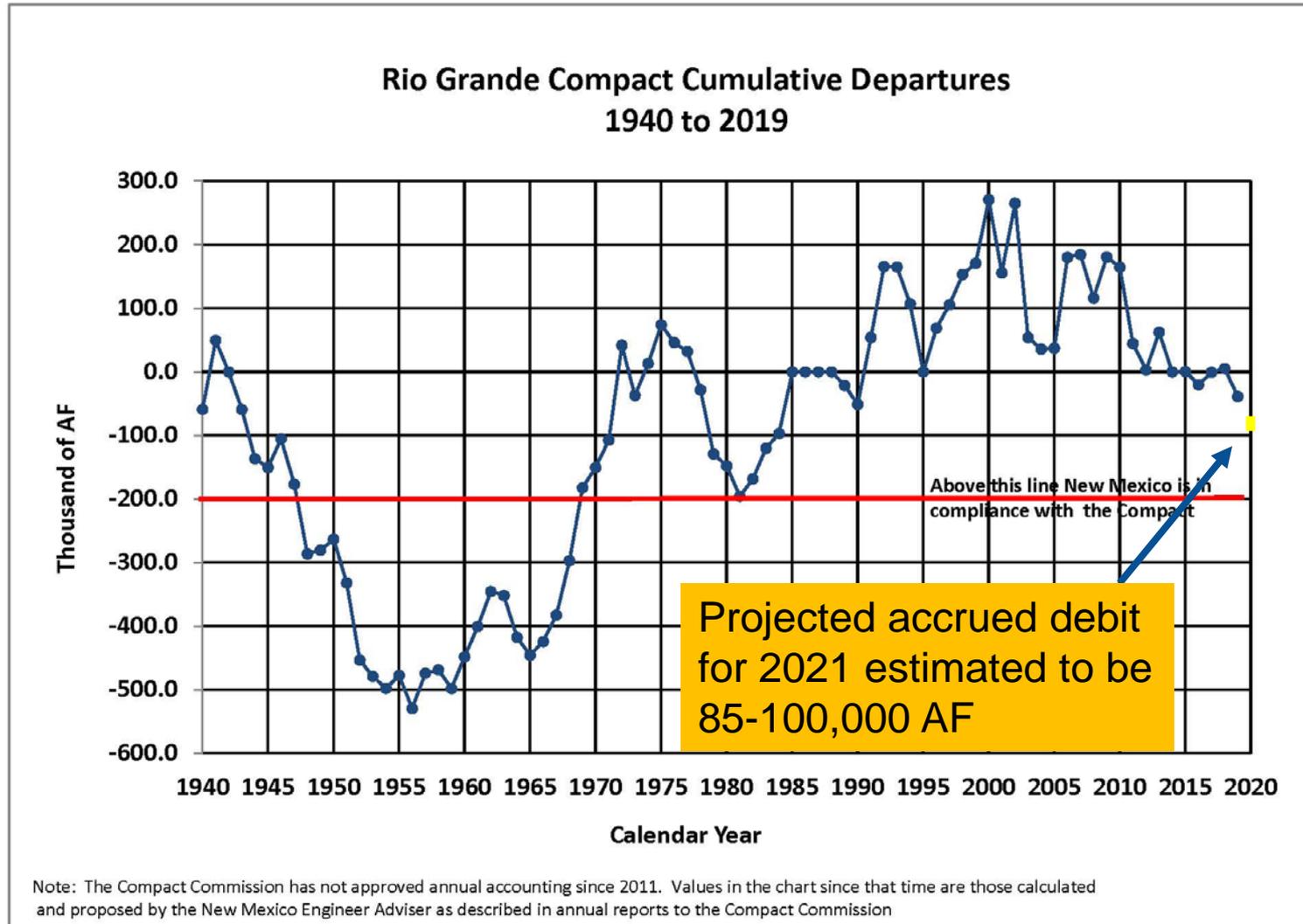
Rio Grande Compact Debit Water Operation

- In July MRGCD requested, thru the NM Compact Commissioner, an emergency release of debit water in El Vado due to extreme drought conditions to prevent economic harm to MRG farmers and to sustain habitat for endangered species.
- The Commissioners of New Mexico, Colorado and Texas agreed to the release.
- The State Engineer issued Order No. 189 directing how the debit water could be used.

Rio Grande Compact Debit Operations

- Approximately 35,000 AF of the debit water was released over about 50 days and was used to:
 - Provide a minimum amount of irrigation water to MRGCD farmers to reduce economic harm to them;
 - Sustain wet habitat for the endangered Rio Grande silvery minnow;
 - Preserve the recreational and aesthetic benefits of the Rio Grande for citizens;
 - Assist water users upstream of the middle valley on the Rio Chama and on the Rio Grande downstream of Ohkay Owingeh.
- Without substantial rain south of the Otowi Gage, near Los Alamos, New Mexico will go further into debit for next year

Rio Grande Compact (Article VI)



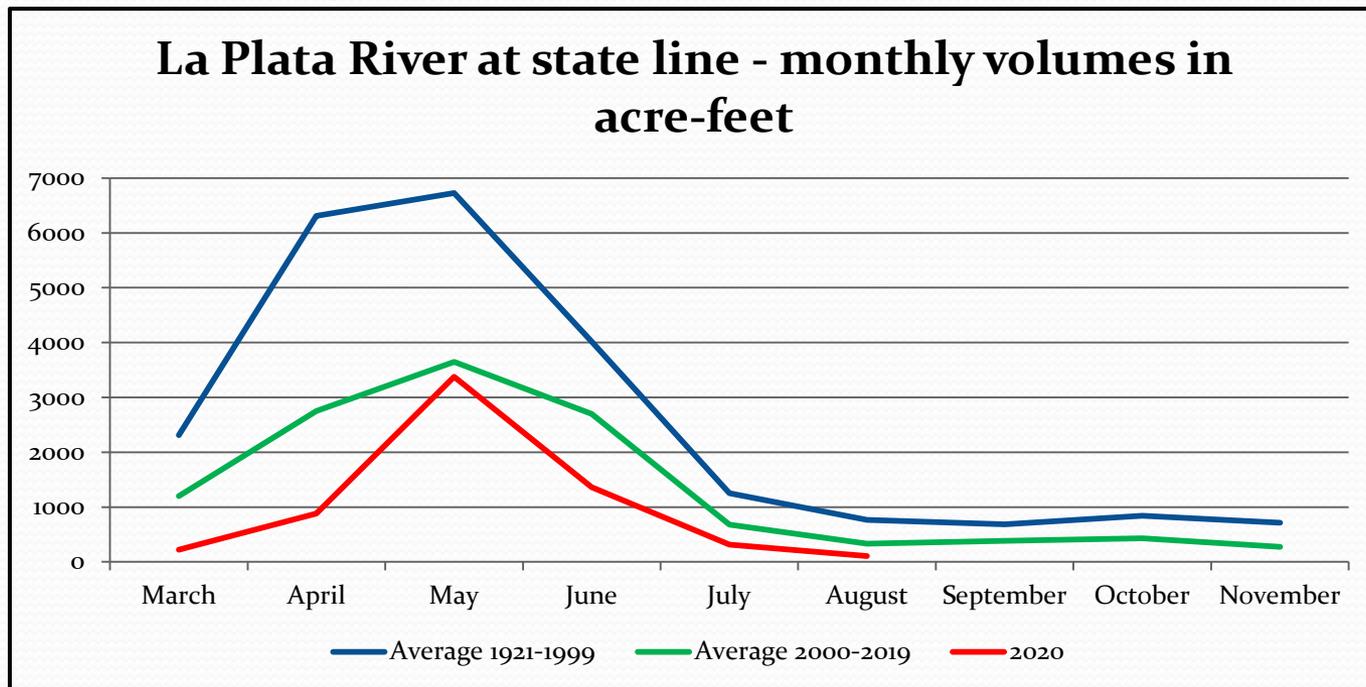
Canadian Basin

- Ute Reservoir storage levels have remained relatively stable this year even with the extreme drought conditions that the State is experiencing (currently at 76% capacity).
- Conchas Reservoir has dropped approximately 11' and is at 25% capacity.
- Eagle Nest Reservoir has dropped approximately 4.5' and is at 43% of capacity.
- The drought has impacted storage in reservoirs in the Canadian basins with greater impacts for next year if winter snowpack conditions are similar to last year's.
- Canadian River Compact Commission is discussing options for the upcoming year's compact meeting due to the current COVID-19 restrictions.

Colorado Basin

1922 La Plata River Compact

- The compact requires Colorado to deliver daily to the state line a quantity of water equivalent to one-half the flow at Hesperus, Colorado on the preceding day.
- In 2020, La Plata River flows have been low. Colorado frequently failed to make full deliveries after the middle of June. Colorado ended attempts to make deliveries on August 8.





Colorado Basin

1922 Colorado River Compact

- Today's common interpretation of Article III (d): At least 75 million acre-feet must flow past Lee Ferry (i.e. from the Upper Basin to the Lower Basin) every ten years.
- For 2010 through 2019, almost 93 million acre-feet flowed past Lee Ferry. This total will likely drop after 2021, when the high-water year of 2011 will no longer be included.
- Lake Powell is 47% full. Lake Mead is 39% full.

Acequias

- Acequias in all of the stream systems throughout the state were affected by little runoff and minimal flows.
- This led to more acequias constructing infrastructure improvements on their systems throughout the year when the ISC typically sees minimal construction activities during the irrigation season.
- It also led to a sustained period of alternative administration on the Rio Chama.