



MIDDLE RIO GRANDE ENDANGERED SPECIES COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM

Newsletter— June 2019

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Photo: *City of Albuquerque Open Space sponsored Discovery Hike at the Candelaria Nature Preserve*
Photo credit: *WEST staff*



Photo: *Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge*
Photo credit: *WEST staff*

PROJECT UPDATES

Implementation of the Final Biological and Conference Opinion of Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Non-Federal Water Management and Maintenance Activities of the Middle Rio Grande (MRG), New Mexico

Update provided by Brian Hobbs, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (NMISC) are continuing to implement requirements under the 2016 Biological Opinion (BO). Following is a status update of some ongoing and completed projects.

Progress toward fish passage at San Acacia and Isleta diversion dams continues. Fish movement using PIT-tagged Rio Grande silvery minnow (RGSM) is currently being studied by NMISC for the pilot project at San Acacia Diversion Dam (SADD). Reclamation has PIT-tagged fish for a movement study in the Isleta and San Acacia reaches that has also begun. Initial tag returns for both projects have been very encouraging. For the long-term fish passage project at SADD, alternatives are being evaluated.

Reclamation completed construction of the Rhodes Property Bank Line Habitat Project (RM 94) in early March 2019. This project was a partnership between private, non-profit and federal partners, and helps meet habitat construction requirements in the San Acacia reach under the 2016 BO. The goal of the project is to provide shallow, low-velocity habitat for the RGSM during low flow conditions, and therefore the project begins to inundate at 300 cfs. Monitoring will begin this spring.

Vegetation removal at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) for the pilot realignment project is on hold as a result of the high water in the area. The next phase will be excavation, but compliance is still needed before that activity can begin. Excavation may begin in 2019.

Finally, a Lower Reach Project Programmatic Planning effort is underway. This effort is led by Reclamation and aims to take a holistic look at the Lower Reach Plan projects (Pueblo of Isleta's southern boundary to Elephant Butte Reservoir) that affect deliveries to Elephant Butte. A list of projects is currently being formed. There will be more to come on this in 2019.

LISTED SPECIES UPDATES

Rio Grande Silvery Minnow

Update provided by Jennifer Bachus, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

The RGSM Population Monitoring Program uses standardized seining techniques to catch RGSM along the MRG during seven months of each year. April sampling includes an additional 10 sites, for a total of 30 sites (10 per reach), in line with peer review recommendations. Preliminary data from the April 2019 Population Monitoring Program

monitoring reported detections of both Age-1 and Age-2+ fish, with an overall density of 0.10 RGSM per 100m² for the 20 standard sites, and 0.11 RGSM per 100m² for the 30 sites. RGSM were present at 9 of the 30 sampling sites. The prior density in October 2018 was 0.09 RGSM per 100m² (using mixture model estimates of density ($E_{(x)}$)).



Yellow-billed Cuckoo & Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

Update provided by Vicky Ryan, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The survey season started on May 15 for the Southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL) and June 15 for the yellow-billed cuckoo (YBCU). As such, there are no updated population numbers yet available. The area from Isleta to SADD, which has been historically surveyed, will not be included in the survey area of any agency in 2019. This will delay projects in that

area until fall 2019. Completing survey efforts on time is crucial, as one year must pass from the survey date prior to any kind of action that may impact the species and/or the habitat occupied by the species.



SWFL; Photo credit: NPS

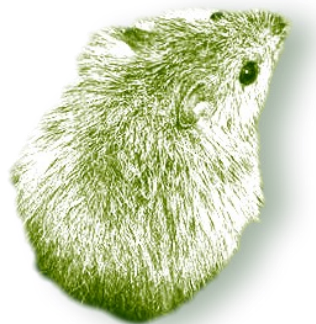
(Listed Species Updates continued on page 4)

LISTED SPECIES UPDATE

(Listed Species Updates continued from page 3)

New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse

Update provided by
Jeff Sanchez, U.S.
Fish & Wildlife
Service



Bosque del Apache NWR has drafted a 5-year New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse (mouse) Plan, which should be finalized this year. Over

the winter, Bosque del Apache placed three new water control structures adjacent to occupied mouse habitat to increase available feeding opportunities. These sites, along with currently occupied mouse habitats, are currently receiving water flows to establish the appropriate plant community prior to the mouse's emergence from hibernation. Annual monitoring efforts will continue throughout the mouse's active period.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Administrative Updates

Update provide by Julie Dickey, Western
EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

MRGESCP FY19 Non-Federal Cost Share Reporting

A FY19 Cost Share template will be emailed to non-Federal signatories on Tuesday, June 30th. As year-end budgets conclude, please fill out the FY19 Cost Share template with your final expenditures, and send it to jdickey@west-inc.com. For those non-Federal signatories contributing through in-kind match, the template will be updated with all FY19 (October 1, 2018—September 30, 2019) meeting dates and time, and emailed

out on Tuesday, October 1st. FY19 cost share reporting is due by **Tuesday, October 22, 2019**.

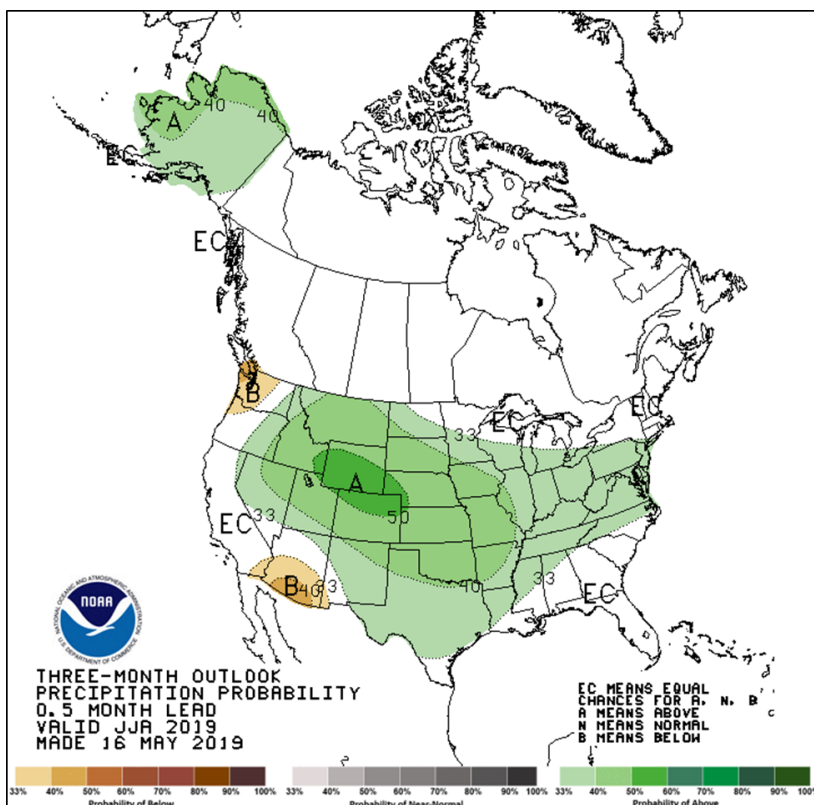
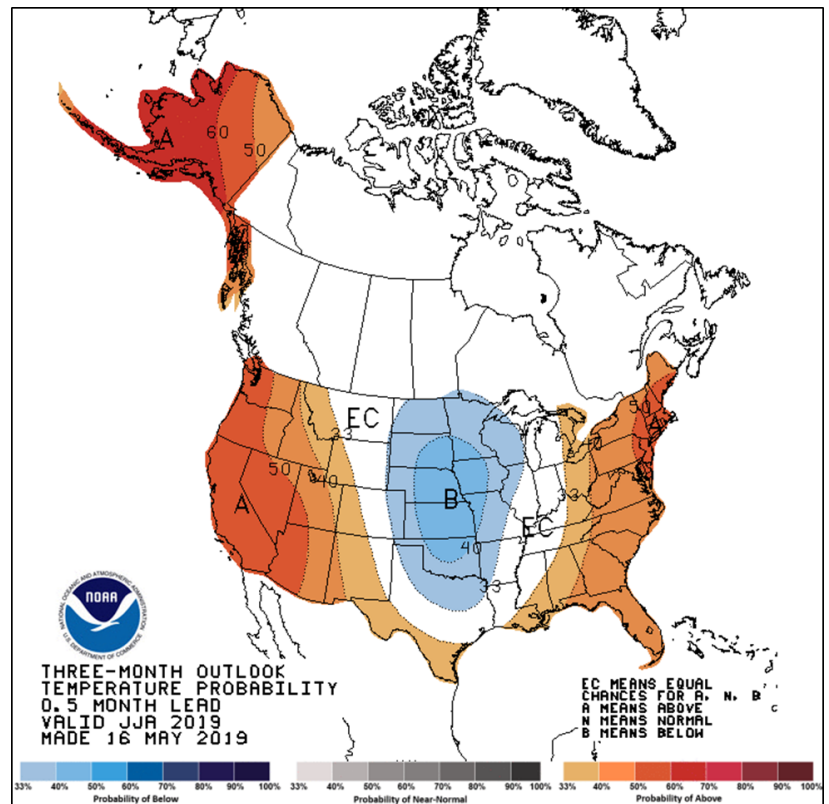
MRGESCP FY18 Annual Report

The FY18 Annual Report is out for Program review, and all comments and suggested edits are due to WEST by **Wednesday, July 17th**. Please return the comment form to jdickey@west-inc.com.

HYDROLOGY UPDATES

The 3-month temperature and precipitation outlooks are available at <https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>.

Other time intervals are available as well, including weekly and monthly.



(Hydrology Update continued on page 6)

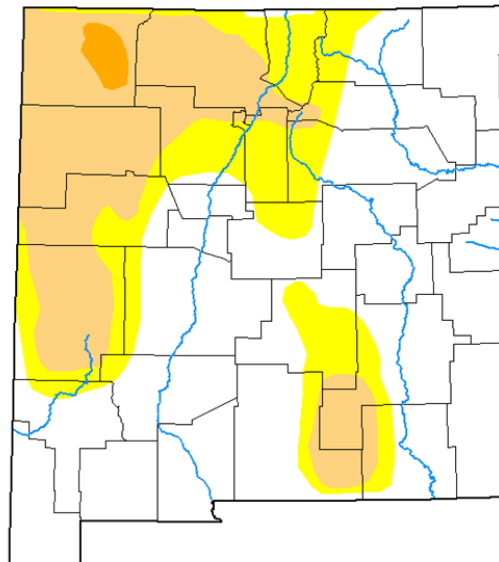
HYDROLOGY UPDATE CONTINUED

(Hydrology Update continued from page 5)

U.S. Drought Monitor New Mexico

May 14, 2019
(Released Thursday, May. 16, 2019)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

U.S. Drought Monitor
information is available at:
[https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/
CurrentMap/
StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?NM](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?NM)



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

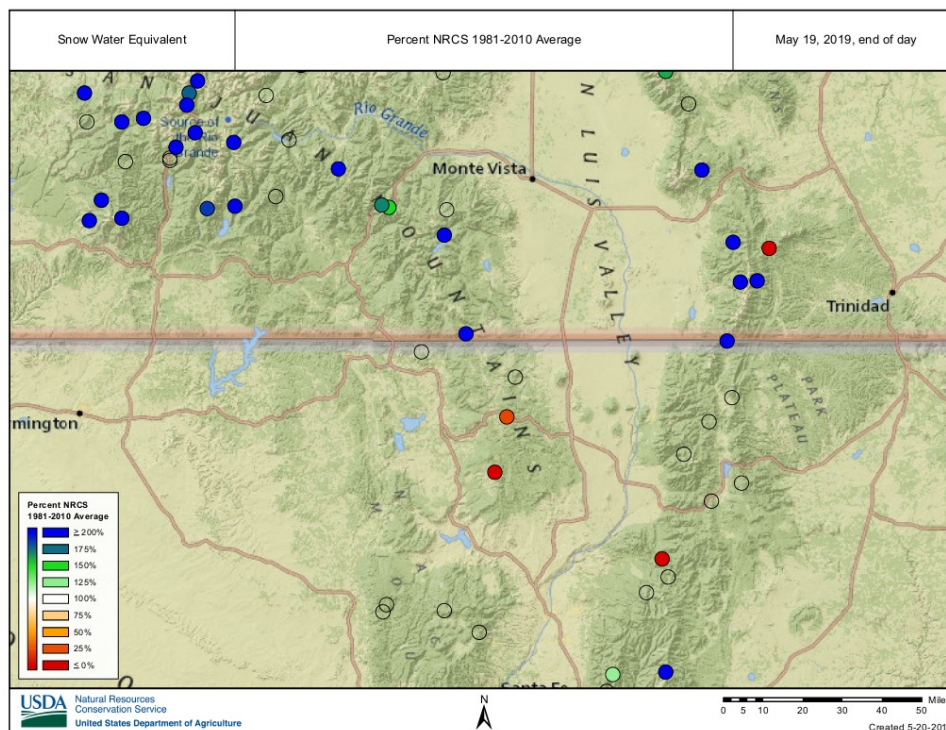
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:

Curtis Riganti
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu



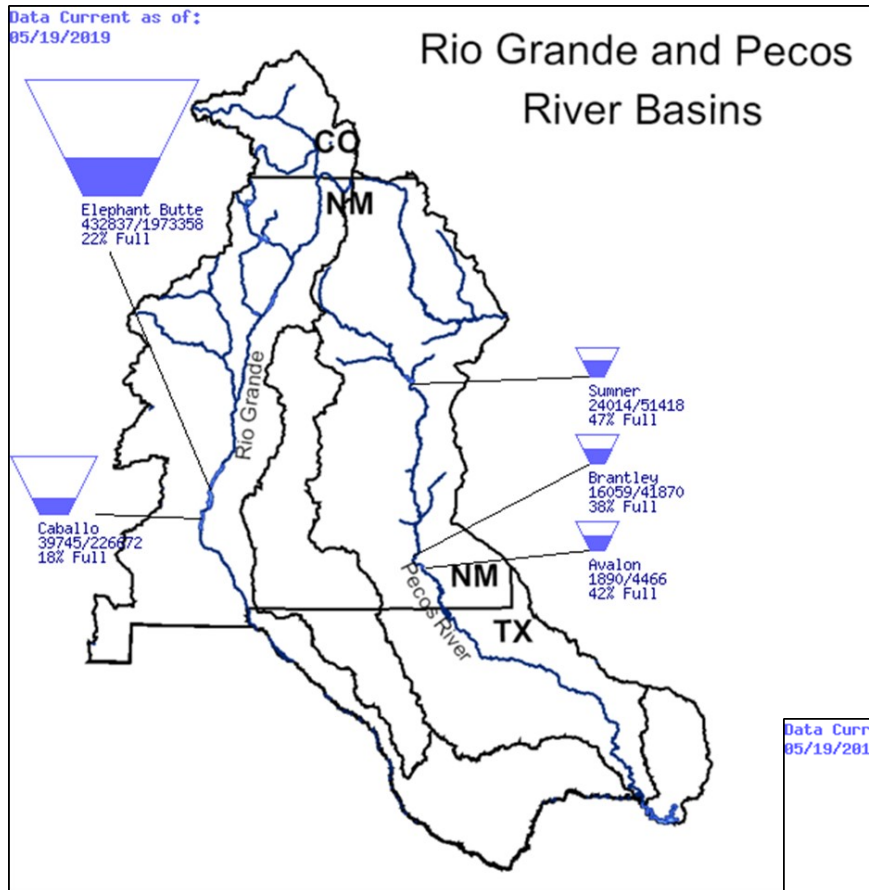
Snow Telemetry (SNOTEL) data, including Snow Water Equivalent data, are available at: [https://
www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/
snow/snow_map.html](https://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/snow_map.html).

This figure shows snow water equivalent data for May 19, 2019 as a percentage of the 1981-2010 average of snow water equivalent data. Many locations are well above average, with 2-3 feet of snow remaining at several locations near the headwaters of the Rio Grande.

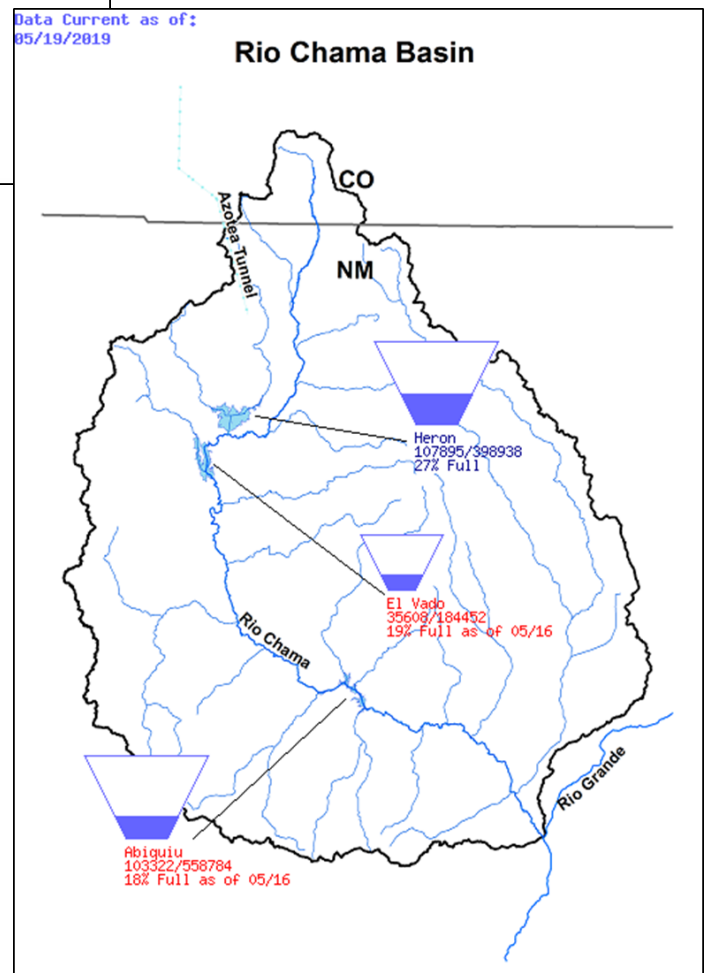
(Hydrology Update continued on page 7)

HYDROLOGY UPDATE CONTINUED

(Hydrology Update continued from page 6)



Basin “Bucket” diagrams are available at:
<https://www.usbr.gov/uc/water/basin/>



PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT



Alex Levine

Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program (BEMP)

I grew up in south Florida, constantly on the lookout for new herps to catch and new birds to observe. Though the venues changed over the intervening years, my passions did not. After spending several years in California's Bay Area as a working musician, I relocated to Asheville, North Carolina and reconnected with my enduring love of nature. I returned to college and received a BS in environmental science while researching the elusive Eastern Hellbender, aka the lasagna lizard aka the

snot otter. Sadly, I did not personally coin those nicknames. Once I had determined that my academic brain was still functional, I decided to further my education at Florida International University in Miami where I studied the shifting ranges of overwintering avifauna in south Florida using community science data. While pursuing my Master's degree in biology, I worked as a fellow at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's education department. There I discovered a passion for environmental education and curriculum design, creating and implementing programs focused on south Florida ecology that reached thousands of K-12 students in the state.

I discovered the Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program (BEMP) shortly before graduating and as soon as I visited Albuquerque and met their amazing team, I knew I had found my new home. As BEMP's Education Coordinator, I manage our inspiring scientist-educators, create classroom and place-based educational curriculum, and try to find new ways to facilitate BEMP's mission to inspire, educate, foster stewardship, and inform management decisions through environmental monitoring, outreach, and community science. I also construct UNM's

(Program Participant Spotlight continued on page 8)

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

(Program Participant Spotlight continued from page 7)

BEMP course and joined the MRGESCP because of my enduring passions for ecology, conservation, and the fascinating wildlife of the Southwest.

When I am not busy BEMPing, I am usually out herping, birding, and exploring with my husband and two dogs. I would consider myself a “foodie” if that term wasn’t already

used by far too many terrible television hosts, and I am slowly developing an appreciation for New Mexican green chile.



PROJECT UPDATE

Habitat Restoration Project Compilation Effort Update

Update provided by Chad McKenna, GeoSystems Analysis.

GeoSystems Analysis (GSA) is currently updating, refining, and expanding a habitat restoration site geo-database under contract with the NMISC. This tool strives to represent all (as feasible) habitat restoration sites constructed by the federal and state agencies, municipalities, tribes, non-profits, and others since endangered species focused restoration efforts began in about 2000. During March and April, GSA staff met with several Program signatory representatives to obtain new data, revise existing data, and

discuss the goals for the geo-database utility to ensure the database can answer specific questions that are important for various agencies, streamline database queries, and create potential geographical information system (GIS) displays. Through this process, GSA, in partnership with the agencies, has developed a comprehensive set of key database fields that will be included in the database. A workshop is planned prior to the June 30 contract deadline to review the geo-database and discuss final improvement ideas. Once complete, the geo-database will be served in a GIS utility integrated with the new Program Portal.

UPCOMING DATES

Program Meetings:

Executive Committee

June 5, 2019
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Program Deadlines:

MRGESCP Review of FY18 Annual Report

July 17, 2019

Non-Federal Cost-Share Reporting Due

October 22, 2019

Signatory-Sponsored Events:

National Trails Day

June 1, 2019, 8:30 AM -1:00 PM
Elena Gallegos Picnic Area
See <https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space/events/national-trails-day-2> for more information.
Registration is required.

Habitat Restoration Field Trip


June 11, 2019
Coordinated by Grace Haggerty & Chad McKenna.
Please contact Chad (chad@gsanalysis.com) for more information and details.

Burque Bee City Pollination Celebration

June 15, 2019, 4:00 PM-8:00 PM
Open Space Visitor Center

City of Albuquerque Open Space 35th Anniversary Celebration

November 2, 2019 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Open Space Visitor Center



THE INFORMATION IN THIS NEWSLETTER
SHOULD NOT BE ATTRIBUTED
TO THE MRGESCP OR ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
BUT TO THE ORGANIZATION FROM WHICH
IT WAS SUBMITTED

FOR COMMENTS AND INQUIRIES CONTACT:
WEST, Inc. | (505) 362-1251 | jdickey@west-inc.com

Photo: Scenic view of the Middle Rio Grande; Photo credit: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation