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Meeting Date: November 20, 2024  
Staff Contact: Mark S. Sanchez, Executive Director

**TITLE: C-24-35 – 2025 State Legislative Priorities**

**ACTION: Recommend Approval**

**SUMMARY:**

The Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (Water Authority) has seven recommended State of New Mexico Legislative Priorities for the 2025 Session.

**1. Bosque Water Reclamation Facility Project – \$15 Million**

Consistent with Water 2120, this project optimizes the Water Authority's available water resources through conservation, non-potable reuse, and possible future direct and indirect potable reuse. The Bosque Water Reclamation Facility (Bosque WRF) project would treat wastewater on Albuquerque's rapidly-growing westside, and provide non-potable water for industrial purposes and irrigation needs to westside-area parks, schools, and golf courses. The Water Authority has secured land for the construction and operation of the new Bosque WRF and has also completed the feasibility study required by the Bureau of Reclamation under the Title XVI requirements. The feasibility study, approved by the Bureau of Reclamation, is eligible to move forward towards the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) with this authorization. Phase 1 of the project involves design and construction of the overall 10 million gallon per day (MGD) backbone infrastructure of the Bosque WRF including a diversion structure, fully enclosed screening/grit removal and membrane bioreactor basins/blowers/modules, and a Rio Grande/Bosque outfall structure; future phases would expand the plant capacity and construct the necessary reuse piping and related infrastructure (reuse reservoirs & pump stations). The Phase 1 Bosque WRF will be equipped to initially treat 5 MGD of wastewater, with future expansion to the full 10 MGD design capacity. This project will provide 3 to 5 million gallons per day (3,000 – 7,000 acre-feet per year) of non-potable reuse water for the westside of Albuquerque including parks, golf courses and potentially for industrial users. This planned facility is part of Water 2120, the Water Authority's 100-year water resources management strategy. While treated effluent from the Phase 1 Bosque WRF will initially discharge to the Rio Grande, future phases will build out the reuse infrastructure to deliver reuse water for irrigation/industrial users. The new Bosque WRF will be located on Water Authority property just north of the Bosque High School and education will be a central part of the facility.

## **2. Aquifer Storage and Recovery – \$2.0 Million**

The Water Authority intends to seek Federal and State funding for the completion of two new aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) projects, as part of its implementation of Water 2120, the Water Authority's long-term resource management plan. The ASR projects will increase the Water Authority's ability to store San Juan-Chama surface water locally, in the aquifer, for use to meet customer demand during drought and reduced surface water supply. By storing San Juan-Chama surface water in the aquifer, the resource is readily available to meet demand. Additionally, storing the water in the aquifer instead of Abiquiu Reservoir will result in a smaller quantity of San Juan-Chama water lost to evaporation. The Water Authority has completed a feasibility study identifying the two projects for the Water Authority to pursue, including expansion of the existing direct-injection ASR project (DWTP Large-Scale ASR) with two new ASR wells to inject treated San Juan-Chama surface water. The Water Authority has received capital outlay funding along with Water Trust Board and Congressional funding to complete project permitting and design. The Water Authority is therefore requesting \$15M for the construction of the DWTP Large-Scale ASR project expansion, including the two new ASR wells and associated infrastructure. The feasibility study also identified the addition of a direct injection ASR well in the vicinity of the existing Bear Canyon Recharge project at the Arroyo del Oso Golf Course. This project will recharge San Juan-Chama surface water and maximize recharge potential in this portion of the service area.

## **3. Thomas/Santa Barbara/Miles Arsenic Treatment Facilities - \$4.3 Million**

The Water Authority has evaluated treatment options for existing groundwater wells in our Thomas, Santa Barbara, and Yale wellfields due to these wells producing water above the arsenic drinking water maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 10 parts-per billion. Based on an engineering evaluation, the Water Authority has prioritized design and construction of Arsenic Treatment Facilities (ATFs) at our Santa Barbara Reservoir site and our Miles Reservoir site. The proposed Santa Barbara ATF project and the Miles ATF project will place the existing Santa Barbara and Yale wells back into full production, which represents approximately 15 million gallons per day (MGD) of additional water supply capacity for the Albuquerque water system. These two proposed ATFs are located within a high-density part of the distribution system and will optimize the use of these valuable existing well assets, and significantly improve water system resiliency and drought preparedness.

## **4. Carnuel Water Improvements Project - \$2 Million**

The Water Authority has been assisting Carnuel for more than a decade to address the community's need for a safe and reliable drinking water supply. The initial construction phase linked Carnuel to the Water Authority's drinking water system, but several additional phases are required to complete the extension of water service community wide. Funding for planning, design, and construction is needed to provide safe drinking water to this community.

## **5. Carnuel Wastewater Improvements Project - \$2.5 Million**

This project will provide centralized wastewater collection service and will assist in improving water quality in the Carnuel community and the Tijeras watershed. This project will also help residents comply with Bernalillo County's Wastewater Systems Ordinance. Funding is needed for the next phase, which is south of I-40 around Coyote Springs.

#### **6. Tijeras Reuse Reservoir & Pump Station Project – \$1.5 Million**

Consistent with Water 2120, this project extends the utility's water resources through non-potable reuse. The Water Authority is designing the Tijeras Reuse Reservoir and Pump Station (Tijeras RRPS) facility to supply up to 9 million-gallons per day (MGD) of treated reuse water from our Southside Water Reclamation Facility to the Mesa del Sol area in southeast Albuquerque, where significant residential, commercial, and industrial expansion is taking place. When Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Tijeras RRPS facility are completed, the project will provide pressurized reuse water for irrigation of public spaces (parks, medians, County Sports Complex fields, etc.), private development landscaping, and potential future industrial uses, thus saving precious potable water for other critical community water supply needs.

Phase 1 of the Tijeras RRPS project will install a new 4 MG reuse reservoir, inlet/outlet reuse piping, and flow control vaults at two locations. The future Tijeras RRPS Phase 2 Project will install a pump station facility to pressurize the reuse water for subsequent use by irrigation customers (Bernalillo County Sports Complex, other Mesa Del Sol parks and landscape spaces), and potential industrial customers as well. The Tijeras RRPS project is a necessity for reuse water supply within the Mesa Del Sol development and surrounding Hubbell Springs Trunk area.

#### **7. Oppose Legislation Negatively Impacting Water Authority Resiliency**

The Water Authority opposes any legislation that: a) adversely affects funding or imposes additional fees; b) proposes any mandatory rate revenue reduction measures; c) diminishes the Water Authority's regulatory authority or its ability to plan for future generations; d) adversely affects the sustainability of the Water Authority organization; and e) adversely affects Water Authority's ratepayers.