



New Mexico Environment Department

Water Quality Monitoring Overview

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Water Leaders Workshop
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Photo credit Rhett Zyla #lamNMED



Federal Clean Water Act



- Restore and maintain the **chemical, physical, and biological integrity** of our waters
- Reach a level of water quality that meets **fishable and swimmable goals**



SWQB's mission is to preserve, protect and improve surface water quality for present and future generations.



SWQB Monitoring Team

- ❑ The SWQB Monitoring Team is responsible for the collection of **water quality data** for all surface waters of the state (e.g., lakes, streams, and rivers).
- ❑ SWQB **monitors watersheds** over a 2-year period and collects chemical, physical, and biological data.
- ❑ SWQB uses the data to **identify** water quality problems, create **planning** documents to improve water quality, implement projects to **maintain** and **restore** water quality, and **measure progress** towards meeting water quality goals.



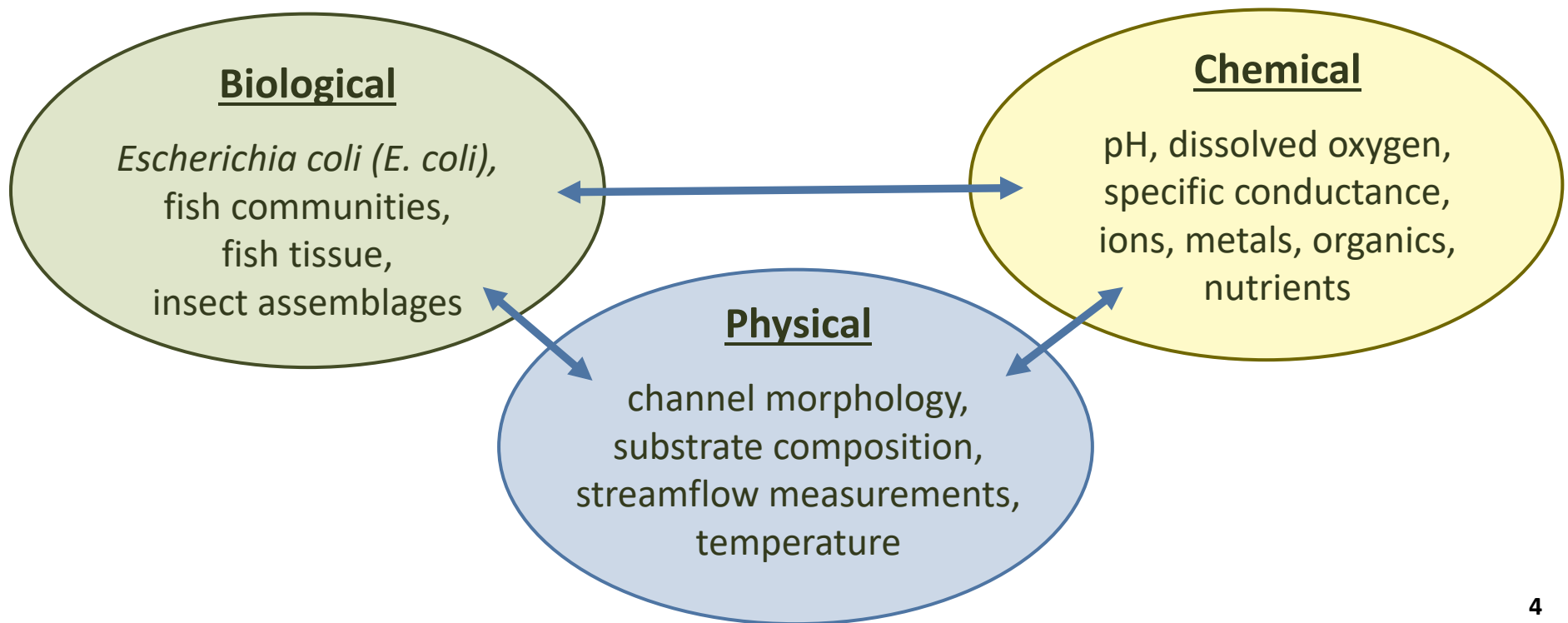


Monitoring Surface Water Quality

- Sample 4-8 times over 2 years
- Total # of samples determined thru priority ranking
- Monitoring based on core/supplemental indicators
- Types of monitoring at each location are summarized in each Field Sampling Plan, *which can be found at:*



<https://www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/water-quality-monitoring/>





Rio Chama Survey



- SWQB submits data to EPA's Water Quality Portal (WQP or WQX).
- You can download data (SWQB, USGS, EPA, tribes, etc.) from the WQP.

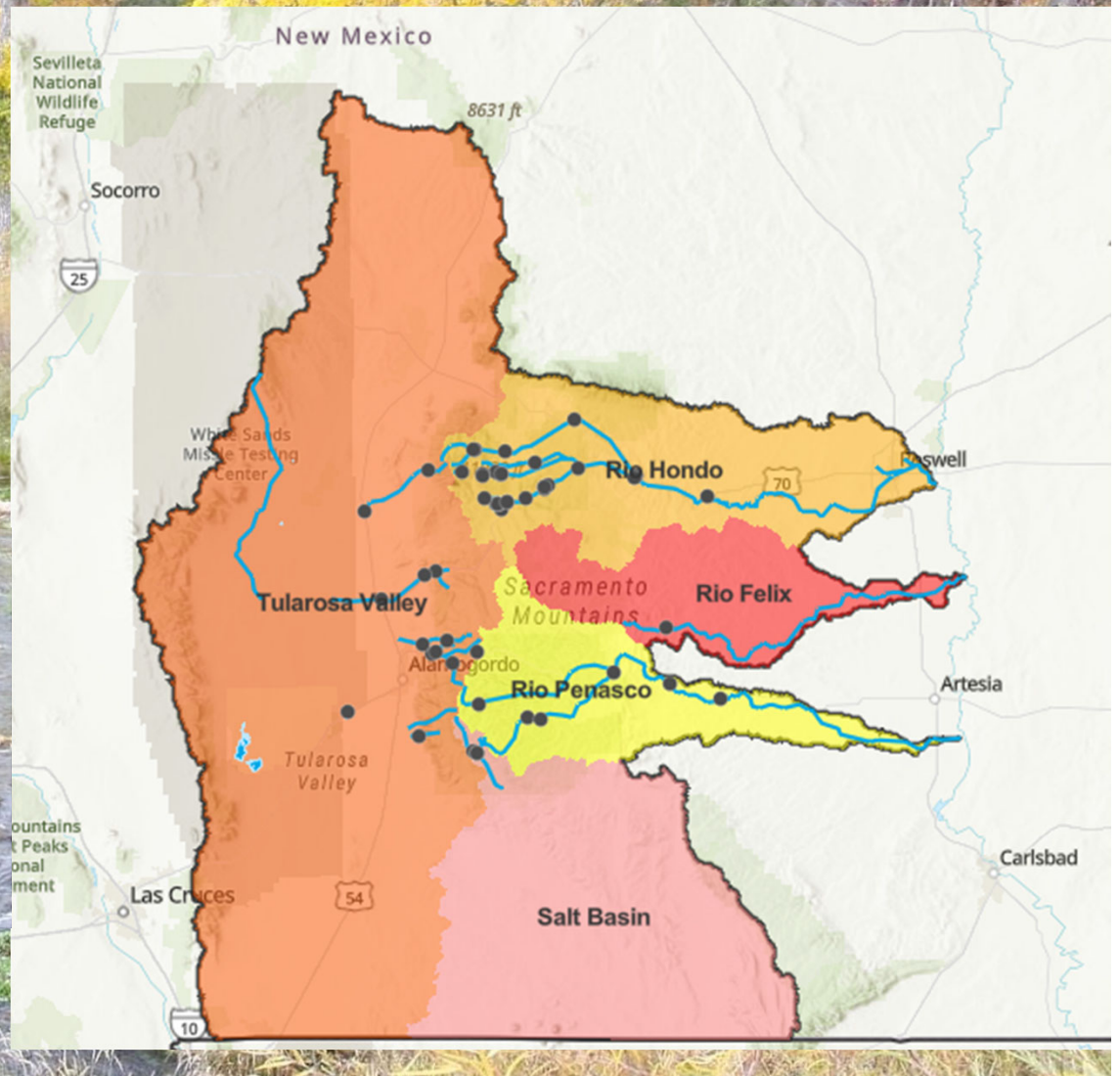




Sacramento Mountains Survey

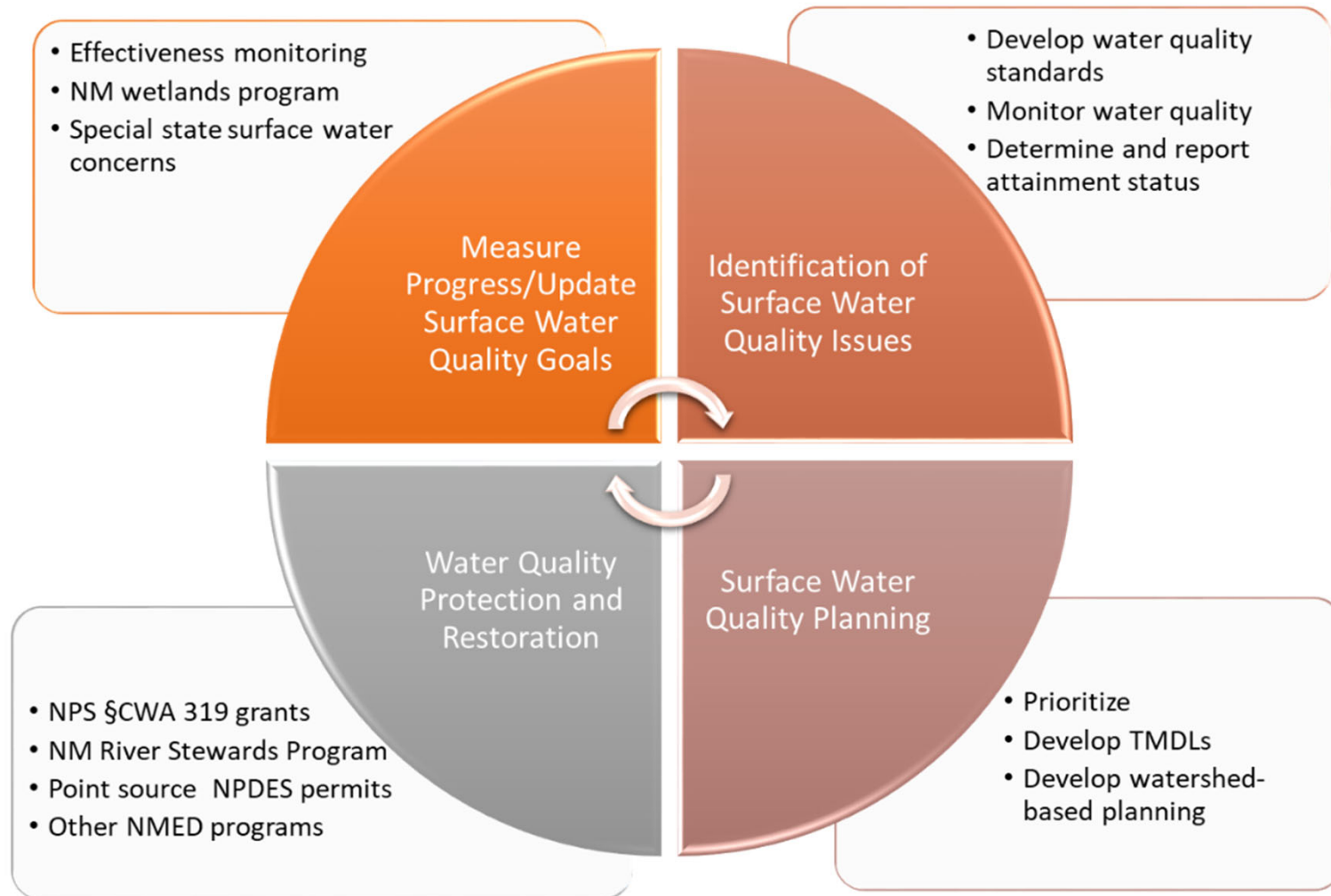


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Framework for Restoring Polluted Waters





Surface Water Quality at a Glance

- ✓ 47 FTE (technical, financial, admin) in SWQB
 - 5 FTE on Monitoring Team
- ✓ 197,000 stream and river miles in NM
- ✓ 173 significant lakes and reservoirs in NM
- ✓ 1,000,000 acres of water resources
- ✓ 622 assessed river and stream reaches (perennial)
- ✓ 50% *assessed* waters have impaired water quality
- ✓ **Top 3 impairments for streams** = temperature, E. coli bacteria, and nutrients
- ✓ **Top 3 impairments for lakes** = mercury and PCBs in fish tissue, and temperature

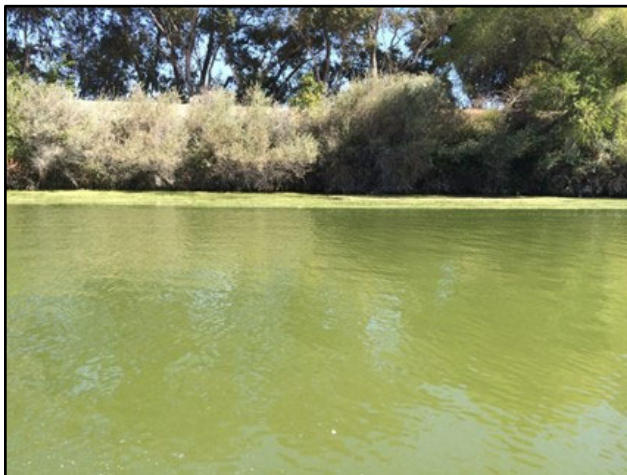
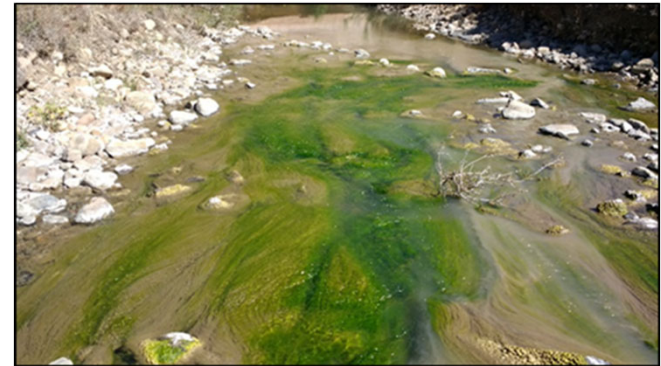




Harmful Algal Blooms



- Overgrowths of algae in water that pose a health risk to people and animals.
- Generally grow in lakes, ponds, and slow-moving streams when water is warm and stagnant.



- SWQBB is collaborating with other state agencies on a HABs workgroup to help identify HABs and notify the public and land managers when they occur.



State Permitting Program Update

www.env.nm.gov/surface-water-quality/spp/

1. Enact Legislation - 2025 Session

2025 legislative session

2. Develop Regulations - Spring 2025

Summer 2024 (Aug) – Advisory Committee

Spring 2025 – Draft Rule for public comment

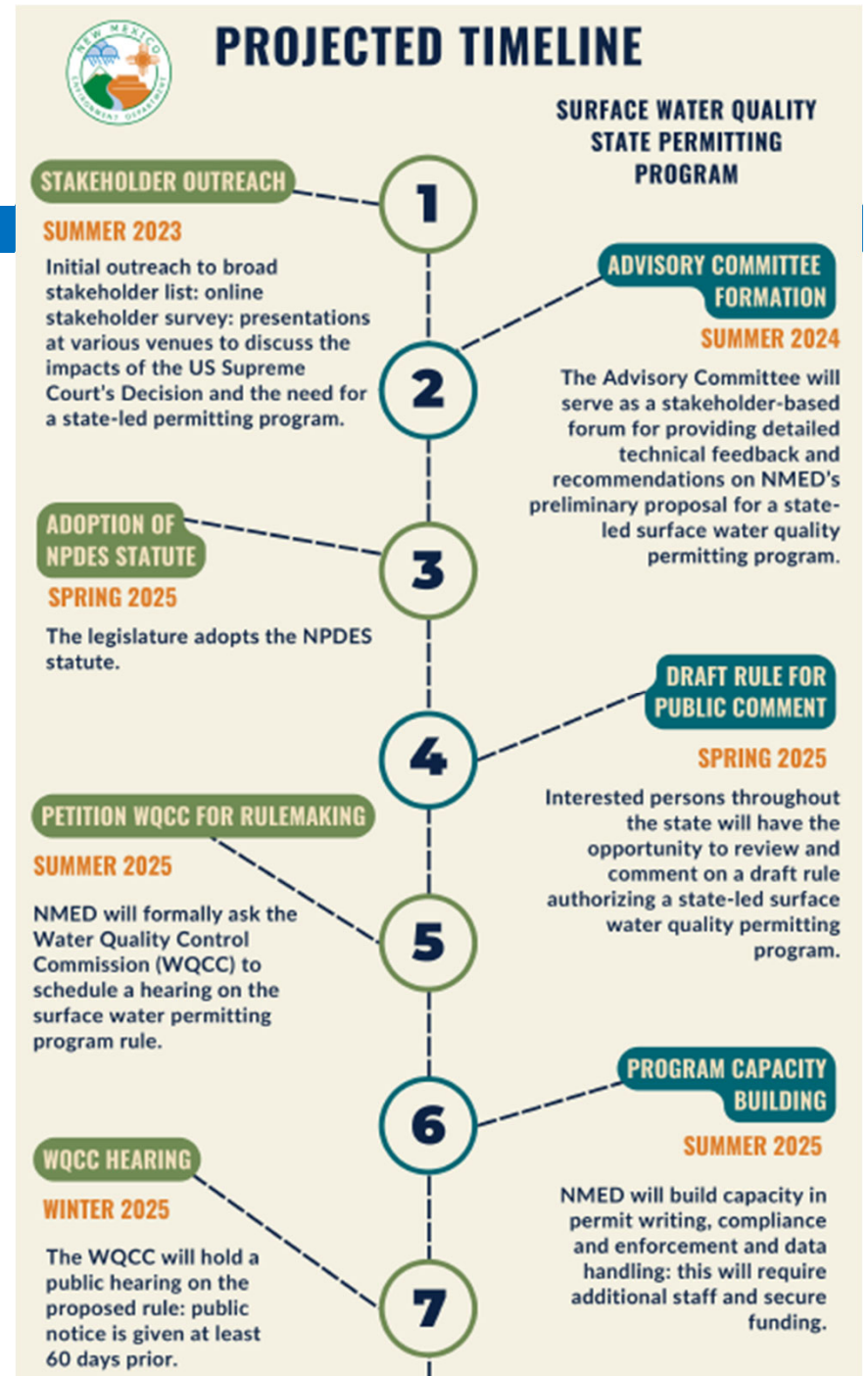
3. NMED's 4-Year Plan

2025: Adopt State Statute & Rulemaking

2026: Rule Takes Effect

2027: Initial Program Rollout

2025-2028: Capacity Building





Questions?

