

Groundwater Challenges in east-central New Mexico

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Groundwater Decline in the Southern High Plains

A Featured Case Study in the NM 360 Groundwater Report

- Ogallala Aquifer = Sole, finite water source
- Irrigation = ~ **95%** of groundwater use
- **>20%** groundwater loss since 2018
- **Recharge is extremely limited**
- **Groundwater decline threatens:**
 - Community water security
 - Agricultural viability
 - Cannon AFB mission readiness



Community-Driven Groundwater Management

Locally led partnerships with agricultural producers

Phase 1

Immediate Demand Reduction (WRLAs)

Compensate participating
landowners annually

**Immediate cessation of
irrigation pumping**

Rapid groundwater demand
reduction



Phase 2

Long-Term Protection

Permanent or long-term
groundwater protection

80% of groundwater
conserved in place

20% retained for livestock,
domestic use, and/or
municipal resilience

Voluntary, incentive-based tools that reduce groundwater withdrawals at the source

Supporting Landowners Through Agricultural Transition

- Multi-benefit land repurposing
 - Dryland cropping
 - Grazing systems
 - Regenerative agricultural systems
 - Soil health practices
 - Playa and grassland restoration
- Technical assistance and producer training



Sustains agricultural viability while reducing groundwater demand

Measured Groundwater Impact & Recovery

36,981 acre-feet of groundwater conserved

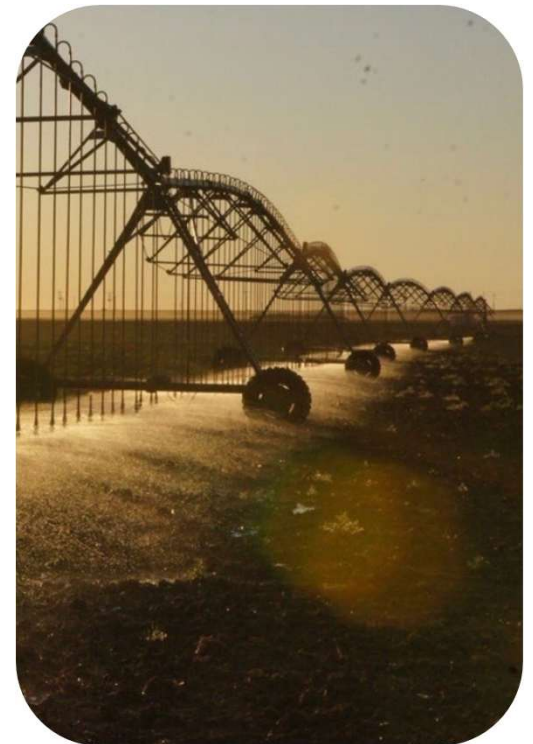
(not pumped over 4 years)

**≈ 12,859 acre-feet/year in potential
withdrawals avoided**

(4.19 billion gallons/year, based on metered capacity)

- Independent monitoring (NMBGMR, 2023-2025)
- Two consecutive years of measured water-level rise
- City of Clovis wells rising for first time in 3 years

Includes 11,120 irrigated acres transitioned and 56 wells retired



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