



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER
AZTEC

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State Engineer

100 Gossett Drive, Suite A
Aztec, New Mexico 87410

April 19, 2018

Ditch Official

RE: Potential for Shortages on the Animas River this Irrigation Season

Dear Ditch Officials

As we are all aware, the current dry conditions and abysmal snowpack in the Animas watershed mean we may face historical low flows on the Animas River this summer. Rather than having a priority call on the Animas, the ditches, in the past, have agreed to rotate diversions in 4 groups, with a schedule of 3 days OFF and 9 days ON, by group number. I have attached a spreadsheet with both the 2002/2003 groupings and a modified grouping I have developed and am proposing for your consideration.

The flow at the stage line has been below 200 cfs for an extended period and the lowest Animas ditches are already being seriously shorted of water. We hope at least some spring runoff may begin soon, however we will likely be back to these same conditions during the summer.

I am also asking for a volunteer from the Animas Ditch group to take a lead in implementing the rotation when/if the time comes. We will also help in managing the diversion measurements and keeping the diversion website available and accurate.

Some key parameters to help facilitate a fair rotation include:

- Upon beginning of rotation, all municipalities should implement their Drought Management Plan (Stage 1).
- The City of Farmington should be limited to the Penny Lane river pump only.
- The City of Aztec will be limited to their river pump only.
- The Farmers Mutual Ditch should be limited to their San Juan River diversion plus remaining water available in the Animas River at their headgate.
- The Farmers Irrigation District should not divert water for the City of Farmington.
- The Lower Animas Ditch and the Aztec Ditch should not divert water for the City of Aztec.

- All ditches should have their diversion dams in good working order (not too tall) after the spring runoff has peaked.
- All ditches will keep their diversion at or below their adjudicated/permitted diversion rate.
- Once started, a full rotation should be completed unless officially called off, and the rotation schedule will roll-over repeatedly until officially called off.
- When turned off, ditches may divert from the river but all water must be sluiced back to the river prior to passing the OSE measurement flume.

The ditch rotation is a gentle-persons agreement that is non-binding, but should be a much-preferred arrangement to deal with the uncommon issue of low water on the Animas River. The official method would be a priority call, where ditches are shut off completely based on their respective priority dates until water is available to satisfy that priority.

Depending on how the implementation of the rotation proceeds, it may be possible to “tweak” the rotation schedules, to pause between rollovers, or to devise some other option. For now, this office would support the proposed schedules. In the meantime, we will continue to keep an eye on the snowpack forecasts.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at (505) 334-4571.

Sincerely,



Shawn Williams
Watermaster Manager
Water Rights Division – District V-Aztec

Enclosures

Cc: Aztec Reading File

Animas River Ditch Rotation Schedule

2002

	Ditch Name	Flow Rate (cfs)
Group 1	Twin Rocks	9
	Stacy/Sargent	16.5
	Farmers Irr District	33
	Ranchmans	9
		67.5

Group 2	Ralston	10
	Aztec	38
	Eledge	26
	City of Farmington Pump	15
		89

Group 3	Cedar	9
	Lower Animas	57
	Kello-Blancett	13
	Farmington Echo	56
		135

Group 4	Graves-Atteberry	18
	Halford-Independent	40
	North Farmington/Wright	
	Leggett	10
		68

3 days off/ 9 days on

<u>Off</u>	<u>demand on river (cfs)</u>
Group 1	292
Group 2	270.5
Group 3	224.5
Group 4	291.5

**PROPOSED
2018 ?**

	Ditch Name	Flow Rate (cfs)
Group 1	Twin Rocks	9
	Stacy/Sargent	16.5
	Farmers Irr District	33
	Ranchmans	9
	Halford-Independent	40
		107.5

Group 2	Ralston	10
	Aztec	38
	Eledge	26
	City of Farmington Pump	15
		89

Group 3	Cedar	9
	Lower Animas	57
	Kello-Blancett	13
	Graves-Atteberry	18
		97

Group 4	North Farmington/Wright	
	Leggett	10
	Farmington Echo	56
		66

3 days off/ 9 days on

<u>Off</u>	<u>demand on river (cfs)</u>
Group 1	252
Group 2	270.5
Group 3	262.5
Group 4	293.5

