



New Mexico Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Programs and Resources

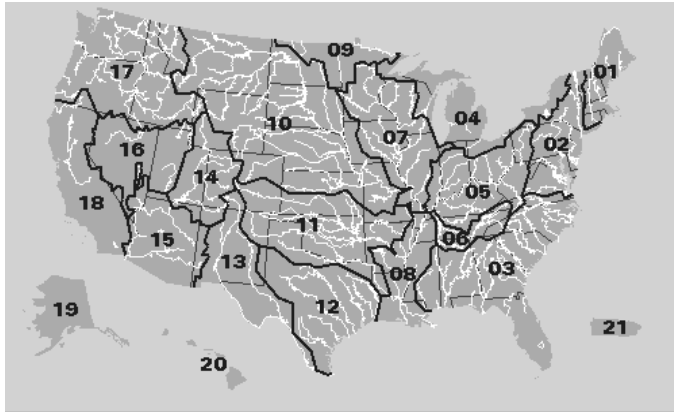
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Watersheds in New Mexico

A watershed is a land area from which precipitation runs off or infiltrates to a stream, river, lake, or underground aquifer. Any land area, whether forested wilderness or an urban parking lot, is part of a watershed. Just as small streams flow into larger rivers, many small watersheds make up a large watershed, such as a river basin. The quantity and quality of water will be affected by the characteristics of the watershed, including geology, soils, plants, animals, land use practices, and pollutants present in the watershed.



The United States Geological Survey has designated twenty-one major regions (river basins) for the nation (see Figure 1). Regions are further divided into subregions, accounting units, and cataloging units. Each level of classification adds two digits to the number used to identify a drainage area. Cataloging units, therefore, are identified with an eight-digit number, and are often referred to as “8-digit watersheds.”

Figure 1: Hydrologic Regions in the U.S.

New Mexico contains portions of five regions: Arkansas-White-Red, Texas Gulf, Upper Colorado, Lower Colorado, and the Rio Grande. Within New Mexico the Rio Grande region is divided into two subregions, the Pecos and the Rio Grande (see figure 2).

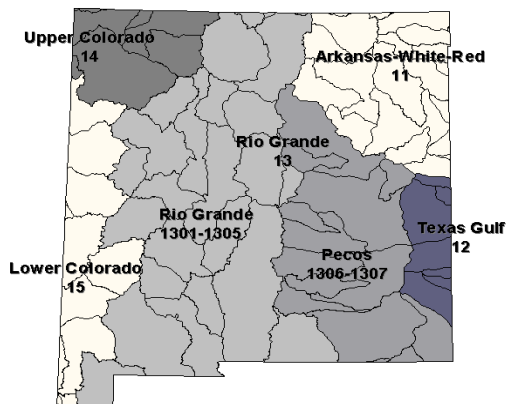


Figure 2: Hydrologic Regions and subregions in New Mexico

There are eighty-three 8-digit watersheds in New Mexico. Each represents part of a surface drainage basin, a combination of drainage basins, or a distinct hydrologic feature. Federal and state agencies often use 8-digit watershed boundaries in programs that address water quality and non-point source pollution. The attached map shows the watersheds (outlined and labeled in red) in relation to political boundaries and watercourses.

Soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) conduct programs and projects that affect watersheds and watershed health. This information on watersheds is useful to identify which SWCD(s) would be potential partners on a watershed project, and which local or county government(s) might need

to be involved in activities on a particular watershed. It may also be useful in assessing the impact of federal or state government rules and regulations that are implemented by watershed. The attached pages will allow you to locate a watershed by its name or 8-digit number, and also identify SWCDs that contain, or are contained within, each watershed.

Below are the watershed districts in New Mexico and the associated SWCD(s):

Caballo/Sierra SWCDs

Underwood Watershed District
McClead Watershed District

Carlsbad SWCD

Hackberry Watershed District

Central Valley/Peñasco SWCDs

Cottonwood Walnut Watershed District

Grant SWCD

Upper Gila Valley Arroyos Watershed District

East Rio Arriba SWCD

Upper Rio Grande Watershed District
Española Rio Chama Watershed District