

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**COMPLETE STATEMENT**

**OF**

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ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT**

**BEFORE THE**

**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

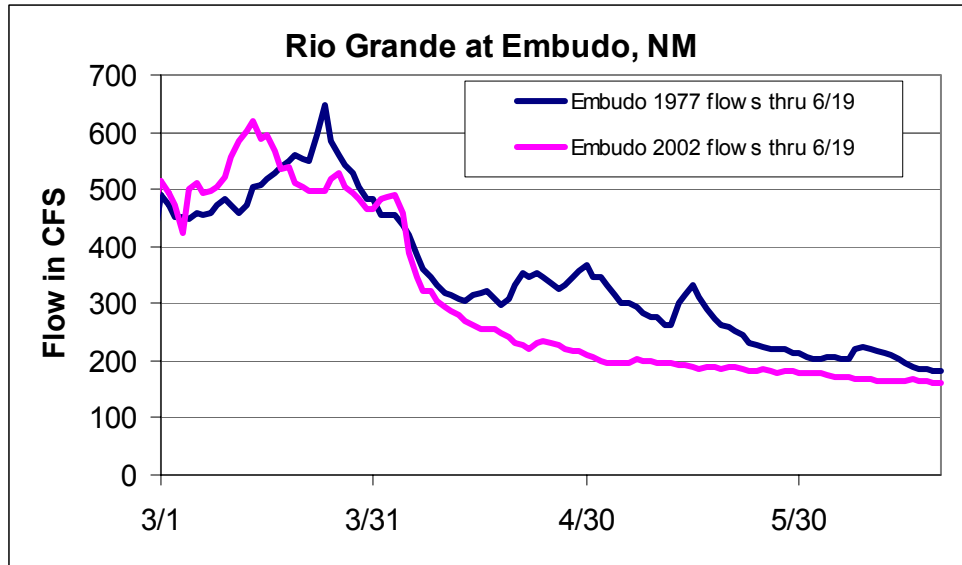
**UNITED STATES SENATE**

**IMPACTS OF DROUGHT ON RECLAMATION PROJECTS IN NEW MEXICO**

**JULY 2, 2002  
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am Lieutenant Colonel Raymond Midkiff, the District Engineer for the Albuquerque District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the impacts of drought on Corps projects in New Mexico.

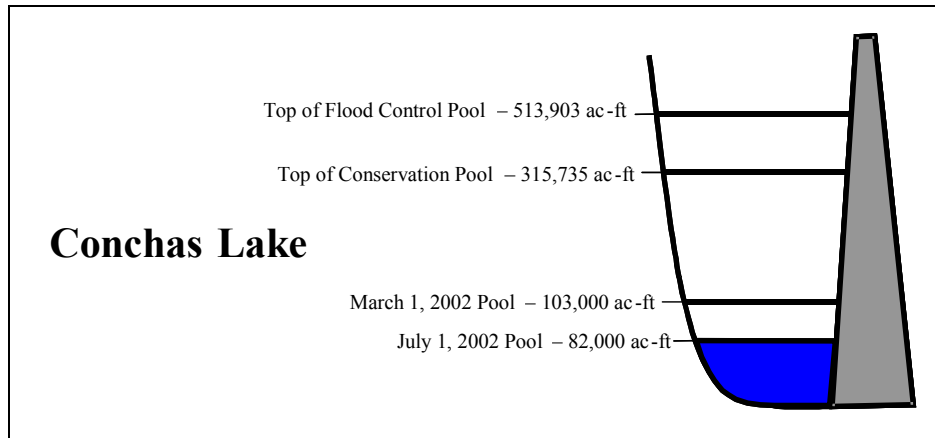
The current drought in New Mexico is having a dramatic impact on the water resources available to meet the diverse needs within the state. To give you a historic perspective on how severe the drought situation is, the following graph compares this years flow with that of 1977 for the Rio Grande at Embudo river gage located in north-central New Mexico.



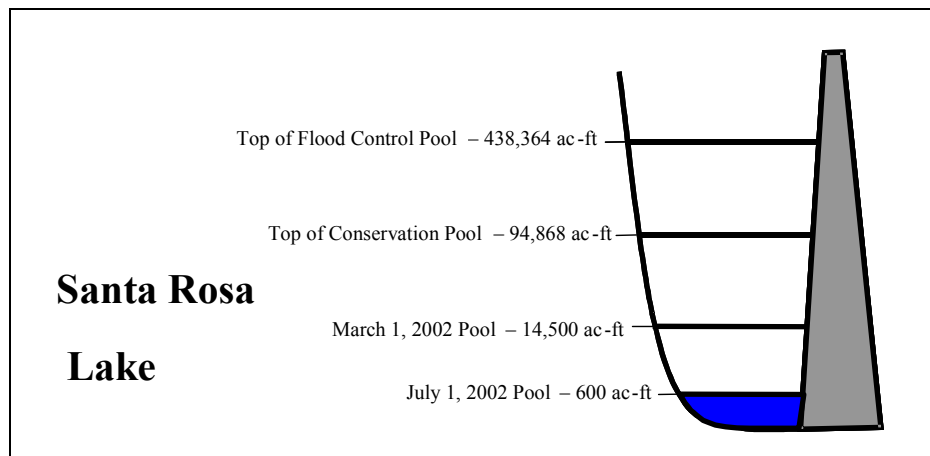
The Embudo gage was the first river gage install by the Geological Survey with a continuous record dating back to 1889. The driest year on record was 1977 and as you can see, the snowmelt runoff period of 2002 is drier than that of 1977. Clearly, this reduction in water supply creates many challenges.

A map of New Mexico showing the different river basins is provided as an attachment for your reference.

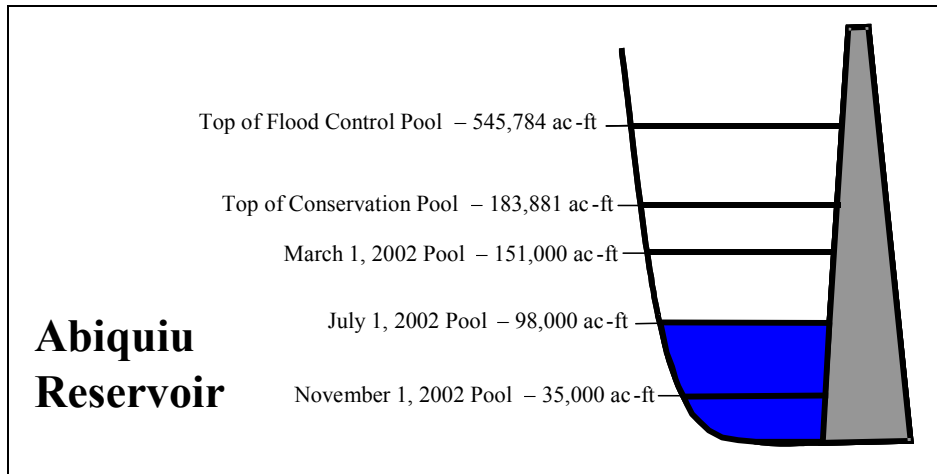
Focusing on Corps of Engineer projects, I would like to start in the Canadian River Basin with Conchas Lake. On March 1, 2002 the storage in Conchas Lake was 103,000 acre-feet. On July 1, 2002 the storage is 82,000 acre-feet. Although this is a fair amount of storage remaining in the project, the reservoir elevation is not sufficient to enable the delivery of water into the Arch-Hurley Conservancy District's irrigation canal.



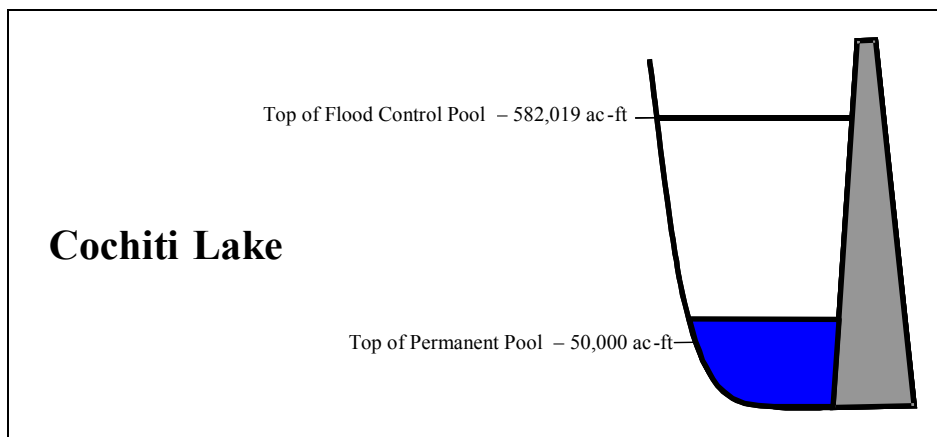
Moving over to the Pecos River Basin, Santa Rosa Lake on March 1, 2002 had a storage of 14,500 acre-feet. On July 1, 2002 this project has 600 acre-feet in storage. There was only one delivery of irrigation water to Brantley Reservoir for the Carlsbad Irrigation District this year. With an average inflow this summer, the storage in Santa Rosa Lake could reach 15,000 acre-feet by November 1, 2002. If the drought conditions persist, the November 1 storage could be much less.



Moving over to the Rio Grande Basin, there are three Corps projects that normally would have storage. One of these, Jemez Canyon Reservoir on the Jemez River, was completely evacuated in 2001 and is currently operated as a dry flood control facility. Abiquiu Reservoir, on the Rio Chama, had a storage of 151,000 acre-feet on March 1, 2002. The storage on July 1, 2002 is 98,000 acre-feet. Of the water released from Abiquiu so far this year, 27,000 acre-feet was Conservation Agreement Water that was stored in 2001. We anticipate that the storage in Abiquiu Reservoir would be 35,000 acre-feet on November 1, 2002 due to a recent agreement between the city of Albuquerque and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.



The third major Corps reservoir project in the Rio Grande Basin is Cochiti Lake. Cochiti is operated for flood control, sediment control, and also to maintain a permanent pool with a surface area of 1,200 acres (approximately 50,000 acre-feet).



I would like to note that the Corps does have limited authorities under PL 84-99 to provide drought assistance. This assistance would most likely be in the area of emergency well drilling or in the transport of water. The Corps can drill a well for an applicant if the Secretary of the Army determines an area to be “drought stressed”, the applicant cannot obtain the water from the private sector within a reasonable time, and if the applicant agrees to pay for the drilling. The Corps can also transport water by vehicle or pipeline in cases where local, state, and other federal agencies capabilities have been exhausted and the applicant meets other requirements.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions you or the other Subcommittee members may have.