

Protecting New Mexico's Water Resources in the Rio Grande Basin

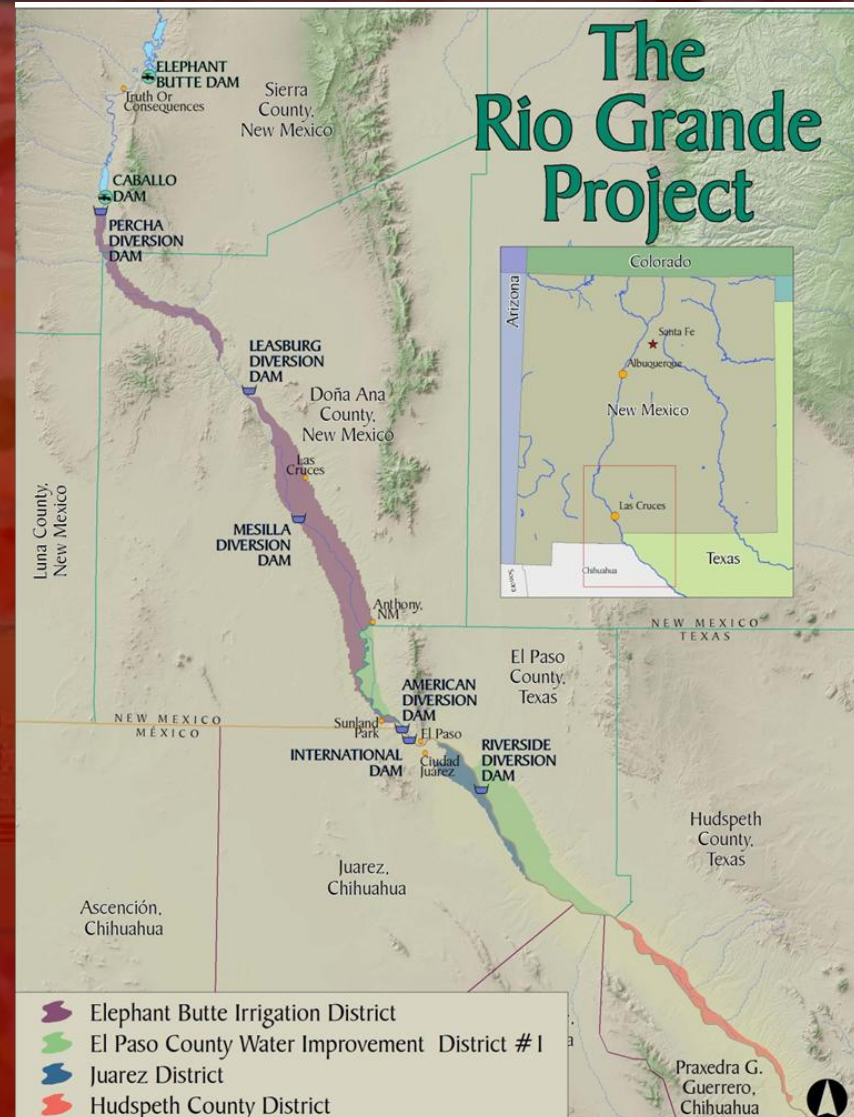


Rio Grande Project

The Rio Grande Project stores water in Elephant Butte and Caballo Reservoirs for delivery to about 170,000 acres in New Mexico and Texas

According to the Rio Grande Compact and contracts for the project, historic allocations were always based on irrigated acres:

- Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) in New Mexico – 57%
- El Paso County Water Improvement Districts (EPCWID) in Texas - 43%
- by Treaty, Up to 60,000 acre feet/year to Mexico

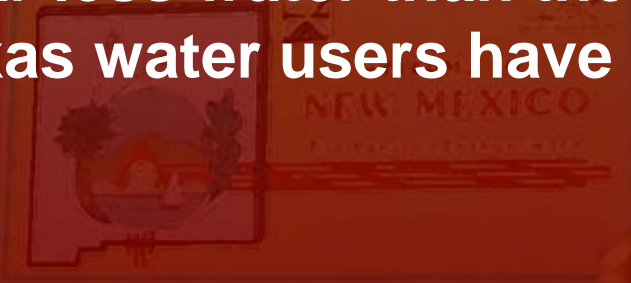


2008 Operating Agreement Adverse Impacts in New Mexico

Developed in negotiations among the Bureau of Reclamation and the EBID and EPCWID

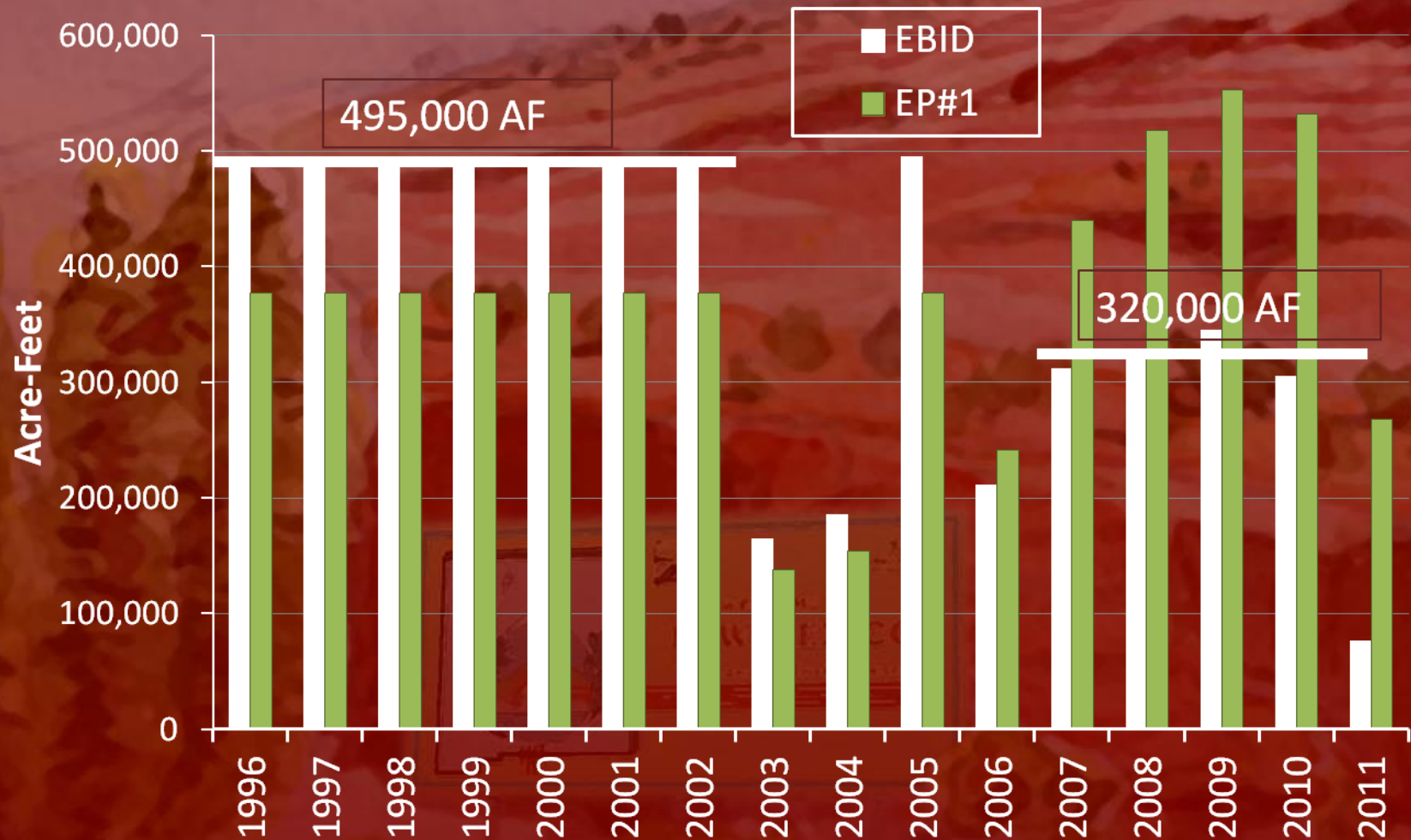
It is a complex series of changes. The Bureau always said it would not cause big changes in project water distribution.

However, in every year since 2008, New Mexico water users have received far less water than they are entitled to receive, and Texas water users have been allocated far more.



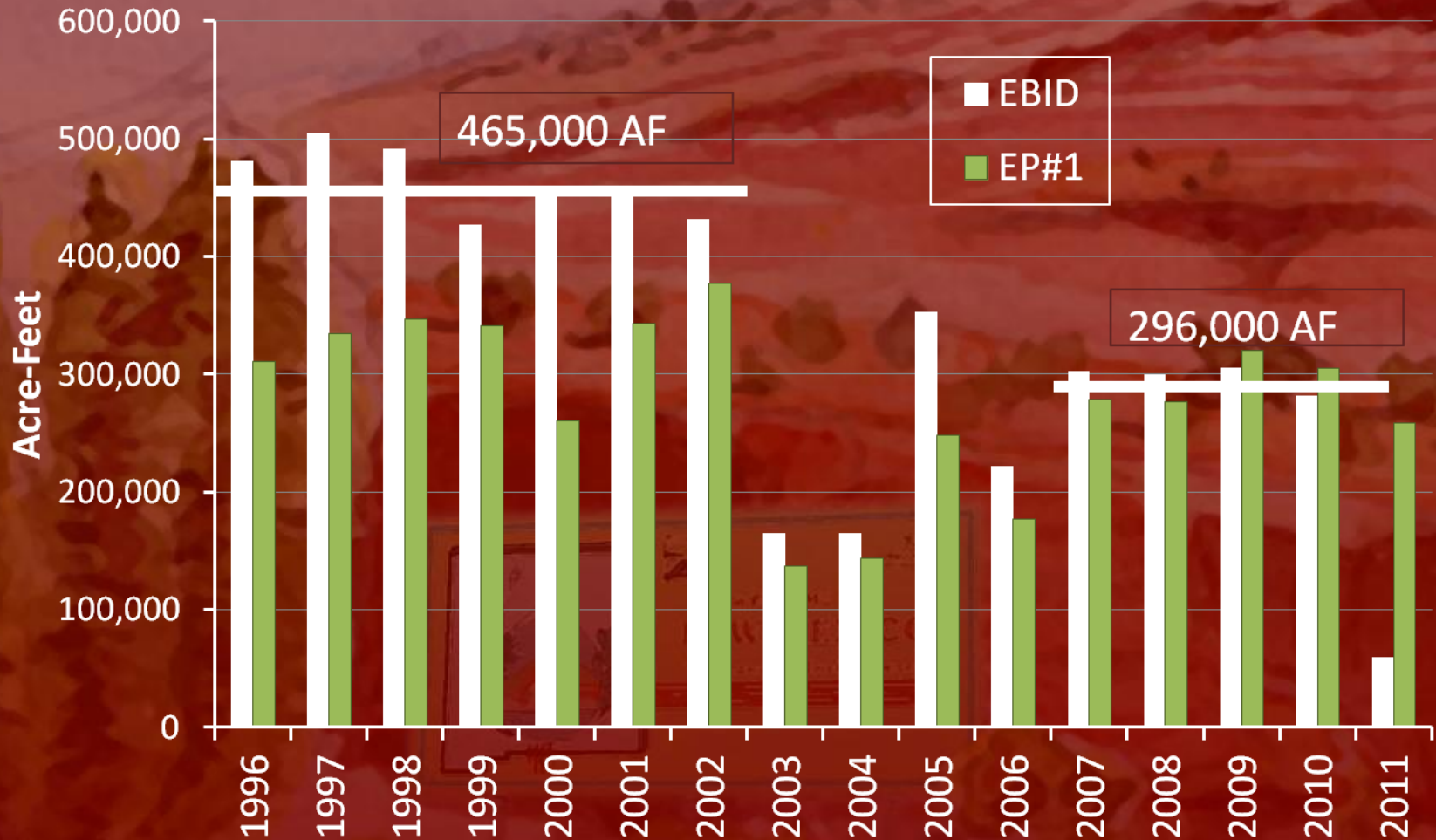
Allocation of Project Water

EBID's Allocation Reduced by 175,000 AF in Full Supply Years



Water Delivered

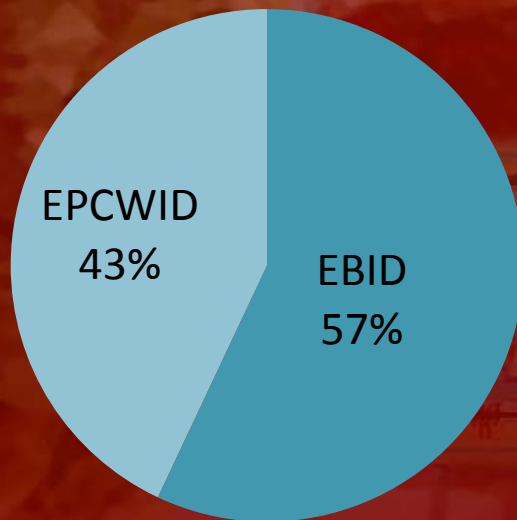
EBID's Delivery Reduced by 169,000 AF in Full Supply Years



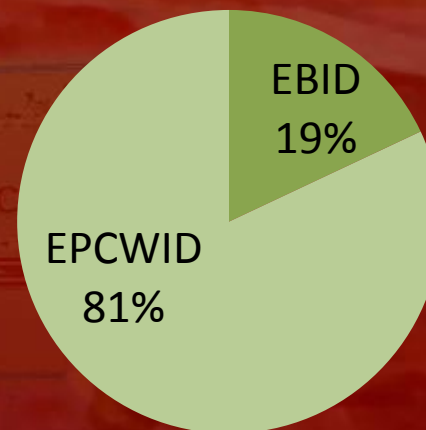
2008 Operating Agreement Adverse Impacts in New Mexico

In 2011, Carryover accounting made the allocation and delivery of water even more lopsided

According to the Project contracts and historic operations before the 2008 Operating Agreement



2011



2008 Operating Agreement

Adverse Impacts in New Mexico

- Decrease of between 150,000 and 175,000 acre-feet of surface water per year to New Mexico farmers
- Increased ground water pumping to attempt to make up for surface water losses, creating an *unsustainable* demand on the aquifer, failure of recharge and increasing salinity
- Loss of river waters that are critical to water planning & management actions that serve families, businesses, churches, schools, municipalities such as Las Cruces and local rural communities



Conceptual Water Budget

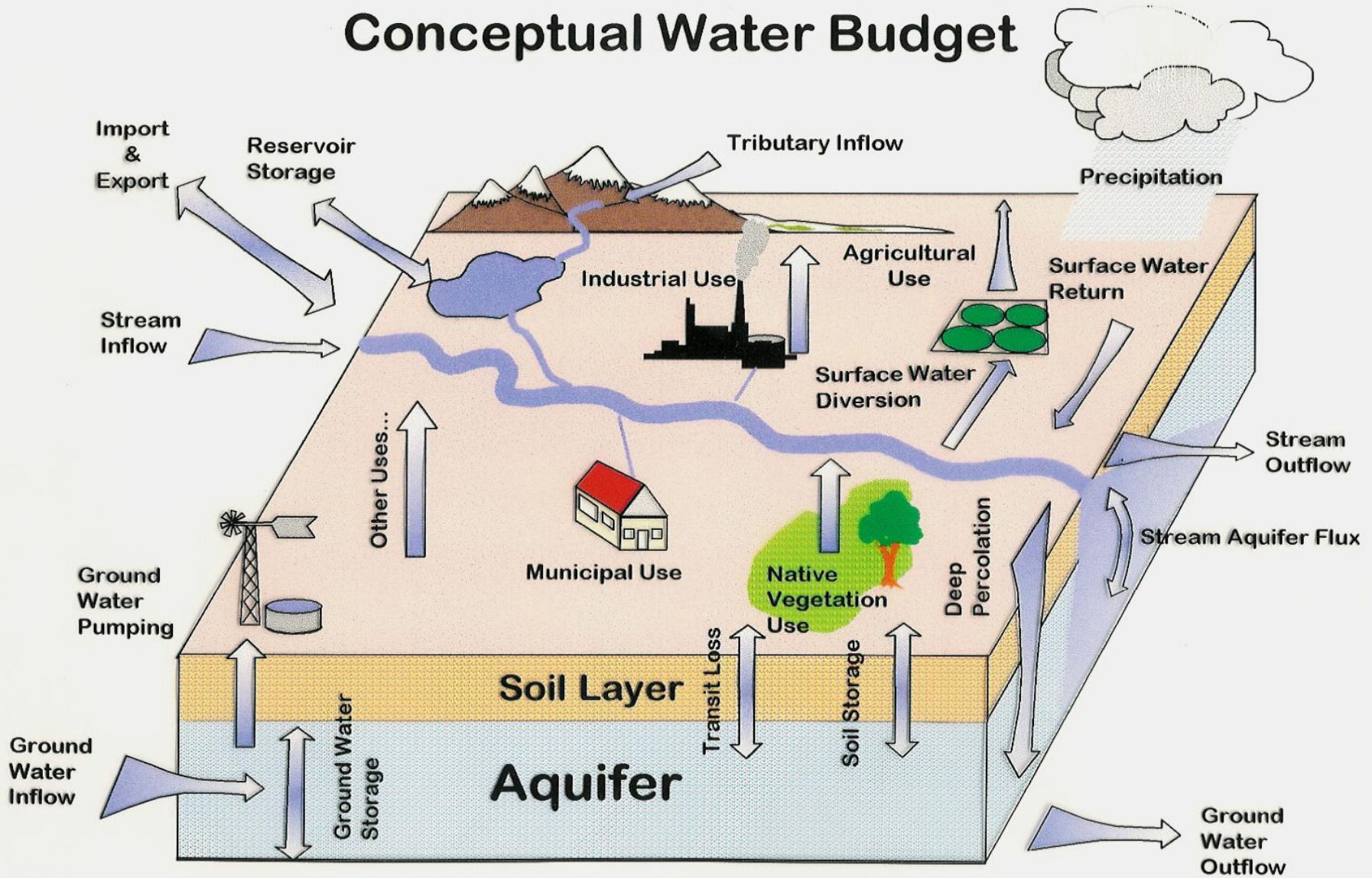
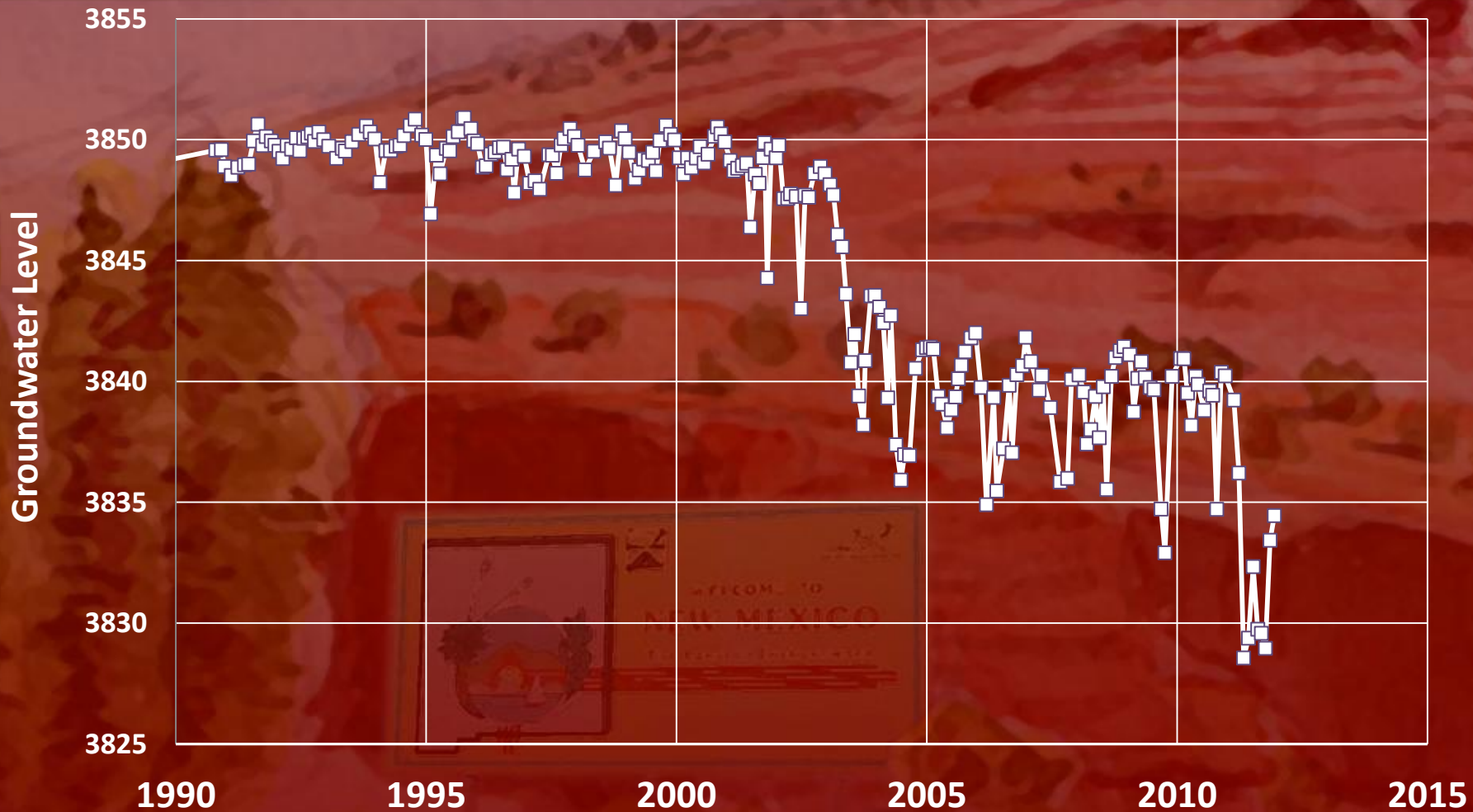


Figure 3.1




Increased Pumping/Decreased Recharge: Groundwater Levels are Dropping



ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- The value of the water lost alone is between \$300 million and \$2.25 billion
- The lost economic value of water cascades to impact purchases in the local community, tax revenues and the financial health of the entire state
- The lost water is enough to irrigate over 50,000 acres or provide enough water to support five communities the size of Las Cruces and New Mexico State University for a year

New Mexico's Goals

-  **Restore New Mexico's rightful share of Rio Grande water supply and future allocations**
-  **Take action to restore adequate recharge and protect our aquifer**
-  **Also continue to seek collaborative solutions where possible**



Thank You

Questions and Discussion

Contact Information

New Mexico Attorney General's Office
NMwater.gov or (505) 827-6629

