



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER
AZTEC

Elizabeth K. Anderson, P.E.
State Engineer

100 Gossett Drive, Suite A
Aztec, New Mexico 87410

July 8, 2026

Ditch and City Pump Officials,

RE: Monitoring Animas River Flows and Preparing for Potential Rotations

To Whom It May Concern:

Flows on the Animas River have continued to decline and are currently measuring approximately 200 cfs at the USGS gage near Cedar Hill and approximately 25 cfs at the USGS gage at Farmington. While these flows remain above the thresholds identified in the attached *Animas River Ditch Rotation Schedule 2026*, current conditions warrant close monitoring. Although current flows remain above the rotation thresholds, runoff this year has behaved differently than in many previous years due to extreme drought conditions, depleted snowpack, and atypical temperature patterns. As a result, river conditions could change rapidly, and preparations for potential rotations are prudent at this time.

During past shortages, the Animas River water users have collectively and voluntarily chosen to implement a cooperative rotation schedule as a preferred alternative to a priority call on the Animas River. The schedule consists of four groups of ditches, each taking three days OFF and nine days ON. This cooperative approach has successfully allowed water users to share shortages and, to date, has avoided the need for formal priority administration on the Animas River.

Prior to 2025, the rotation generally became less effective by the third rotation cycle. The Interstate Stream Commission used RiverWare modeling to evaluate and revise the ditch groupings, resulting in a schedule estimated to reduce modeled shortages by approximately 20.1 percent compared to the previous schedule. It was successfully implemented in 2025 and is recommended for continued use.

At this time, no rotations are being implemented, and OSE is not administering a priority call on the Animas River. However, should river conditions continue to decline and approach the rotation thresholds, OSE intends to contact the participants in Group 1 to discuss an appropriate start date and assist in coordinating the rotation.

As in previous years, OSE is prepared to assist by:

- Facilitating communication among participating water users;
- Maintaining OSE's diversion measurement stations and ensuring that they continue to report to the OSE Real Time Measurement website (<https://meas.ose.state.nm.us/district5.jsp>); and

- Monitoring river conditions, streamflow trends, weather forecasts, and flow projections to determine whether rotations should be paused, resumed, or discontinued.

Should rotations become necessary, the following conditions have historically allowed the rotation program to function effectively and avoid the need for formal priority administration. Once implemented, the success of this collective effort depends upon all water users adhering to the measures outlined below:

- Municipalities should implement their Drought Management Plans (Stage 1), as appropriate.
- The City of Farmington should limit diversions to the Penny Lane River Pump only (Group 2).
- Farmers Irrigation District should not divert water for the City of Farmington.
- The City of Aztec should limit diversions to its ditch pumps only.
- Farmers Mutual Ditch should be limited to its San Juan River diversion plus any remaining water available in the Animas River at its headgate.
- All diversion dams should be maintained in good working order and not be set excessively high.
- All entities shall not exceed their adjudicated maximum diversion rates.
- Once a rotation cycle begins, a full cycle should be completed unless river conditions improve sufficiently to warrant pausing or discontinuing the rotation.
- During OFF days, ditches may divert from the river; however, all water shall be sluiced back to the river before passing the OSE measurement flume.

Current forecasts and river trends suggest that monsoonal precipitation could provide some relief; however, shortages otherwise appear imminent. We encourage all Animas River water users to review the attached rotation schedule and make any preparations needed to implement the rotation should it become necessary.

If sufficient participation is not achieved, or if the rotation no longer effectively mitigates shortages, OSE may have no alternative but to implement formal priority administration, as conditions warrant. The rotation approach has repeatedly demonstrated that cooperative management among the Animas River water users can successfully share shortages and avoid the need for formal priority administration. The effectiveness of this collective effort depends upon the good-faith participation of all water users.

OSE appreciates your cooperation and will continue to provide updates as conditions evolve. Please contact our office at (505) 334-4571 with any questions.

Best regards,



Miles Juett, PG

Water Rights Division – District V-Aztec

2026 Animas Rotation Schedule Enclosed

Animas River Ditch Rotation Schedule 2026

Rotations may begin when the Animas River USGS Gage Near Cedar Hill reaches a critical threshold of approximately 150 cfs OR the Animas @ Farmington gauge reaches approx. 20 cfs

Animas River Rotation Schedule 2026

| | Participants | Days 1-3 | Days 4-6 | Days 7-9 | Days 10-12 |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Group 1 | Lower Animas | OFF | ON | ON | ON |
| | Eledge | OFF | ON | ON | ON |
| | Ranchmans Terrel | OFF | ON | ON | ON |
| Group 2 | Twin Rocks | ON | OFF | ON | ON |
| | Cedar Hill | ON | OFF | ON | ON |
| | Farmers Irrigation | ON | OFF | ON | ON |
| | Kello Blancett | ON | OFF | ON | ON |
| | City of Farmington Pump 2 | ON | OFF | ON | ON |
| Group 3 | Ralston | ON | ON | OFF | ON |
| | Graves Atteberry | ON | ON | OFF | ON |
| | Stacey | ON | ON | OFF | ON |
| | Sargent | ON | ON | OFF | ON |
| | Farmington Echo | ON | ON | OFF | ON |
| Group 4 | Aztec | ON | ON | ON | OFF |
| | Halford Independent | ON | ON | ON | OFF |
| | North Farmington | ON | ON | ON | OFF |

Note: City of Farmington Pump 2 is the Penny Lane River Pump.

| | <u>Turns off (8 pm)</u> | <u>2nd rotation (Turn off 8pm)</u> | <u>3rd rotation (Turn off 8pm)</u> | <u>4th rotation (Turn off 8pm)</u> |
|----------------|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| Group 1 | TBD on or after 7/13/2026 | | | |
| Group 2 | | | | |
| Group 3 | | | | |
| Group 4 | | | | |

All entities shall not exceed their adjudicated maximum diversion rate.

Groups turn off for 3 days (72 hrs) then turn on for 9 days. If the river is still short, we continue another round of rotations.