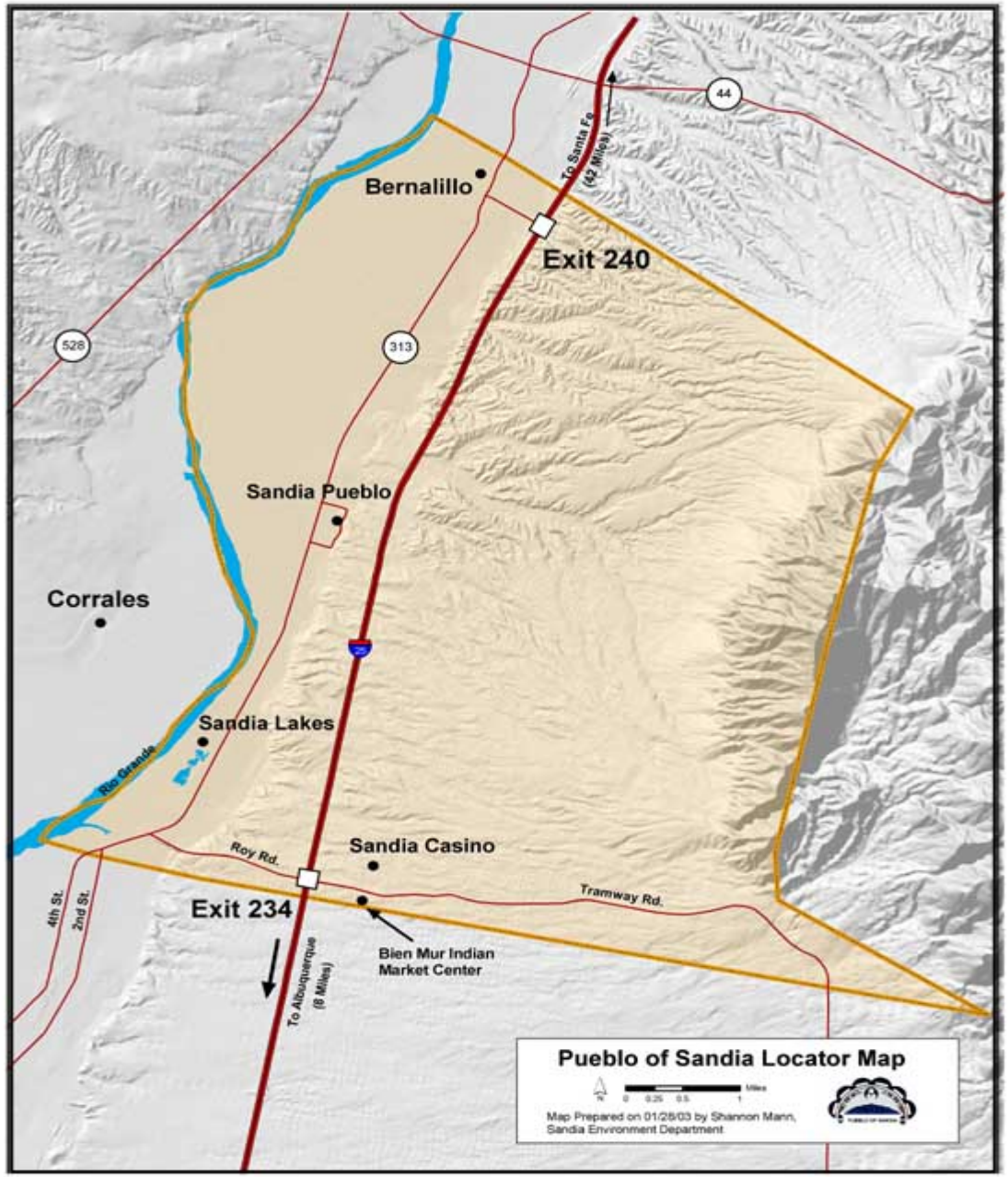
A Tribal Perspective: The Pueblo of Sandia's Water Quality Program

Scott Bulgrin, Water Quality Officer
Pueblo of Sandia Environment Department


Bernalillo
Exit 240
To Santa Fe
(42 Miles)
44
528
313
Sandia Pueblo
Corrales
Sandia Lakes
Rio Grande
Roy Rd.
Sandia Casino
Tramway Rd.
Exit 234
4th St.
2nd St.
To Albuquerque
(8 Miles)
Bien Mur Indian
Market Center
Pueblo of Sandia Locator Map
Miles
0 0.25 0.5 1
Map Prepared on 01/28/03 by Shannon Mann,
Sandia Environment Department

History

- Water Quality Act of 1987 amended CWA to include Indian Tribes.
- CWA, Section 518-EPA is required to promulgate regulations that specify how the Agency will treat a tribe in a manner similar to that in which it treats a State for certain CWA programs.

History

- On December 12, 1991, EPA issued final amendments to the Water Quality Standards Regulation in response to the CWA. Defines State, Indian Reservation, and Indian Tribe.

WQS Program Administration

- To Administer the WQS program an Indian Tribe must meet certain criteria:
  1. Recognized by the Department of Interior
  2. Have a Governing Body
  3. Specified Waters,
  4. Management Capability

Pueblo of Sandia Water Quality Standards (WQS)

- The Pueblo of Sandia was first Tribe in Nation to apply for Water Quality Standards with the specific intention of protecting ceremonial use of surface waters and the environment.
- WQS Approved by EPA on August 10, 1993.

Pueblo of Sandia WQS

- Purpose:
  1. Designate existing uses for all surface waters at Sandia Pueblo.
  2. Prescribe Water Quality Standards (narrative and numeric) for existing uses for all surface waters at Sandia Pueblo to protect the uses.
  3. Impose the highest “statutory and regulatory requirements” for point sources and “best management practices” for non-point sources.

Pueblo of Sandia WQS

- Purpose Cont.:
  4. Assure that degradation of existing water quality does not occur.
  5. Promote the social welfare, economic, and environmental well being of the Pueblo.

Water Quality Program Objectives

- Design and implement a water quality monitoring program.
- Administer controls and regulating activities that will not adversely impact ground and surface water quality.
- Write and implement water quality codes and regulations.

Water Quality Program Objectives

- Create community awareness and involvement in water quality issues.
- Develop a water quality environmental education program for the community, including student internships in the environment department.

Monitoring Data

- Compilation of monitoring locations and data collection into surface water database.
- Interpretation of collected data.
- Examination of existing and historical data.
- Preparation of a 305 (b) report.

Pueblo of Sandia Water Quality Monitoring

- Rio Grande (19 Sites)
- Sandia Lakes (5 Sites)
- Sandia Mountain Springs (2 Sites)
- Ditches and Drains (12 Sites)
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfalls (3 Sites)
- North Diversion Channel (2 Sites)
- Storm Water (Throughout the Pueblo)

Designated Uses for the Rio Grande

- Primary Contact Ceremonial Use
- Primary Contact Recreational Use
- Secondary Contact Recreational Use
- Warm Water Aquatic Life/Fishery
- Agricultural Water Supply Use
- Industrial Water Supply Use
- Domestic Water Supply Use
- Wildlife Habitat Use