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19 October 2023

Shelly Lemon, SWQB Bureau Chief
New Mexico Environment Department (NMED)
Surface Water Quality Bureau (SWQB)
P.O. Box 5469
Santa Fe, NM 87502-5469

RE: Letter of Support for the NMED SWQB's EPA Wetlands Program Development Grant Proposal Entitled "Springs Mapping Phase 1 and Technical Guide for Arid-Land Spring Wetlands". NMERT Project No. NMERT-2957

Dear Ms. Lemon,

Please consider this letter of support for the EPA Wetlands Program Development Grant Proposal entitled "Springs Mapping Phase 1 and Technical Guide for Arid-Land Spring Wetlands".

This proposal, submitted by NMED's SWQB Wetlands Program, serves to benefit the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) in many ways. NMDGF is committed to the goal of conserving, regulating, propagating, and protecting the wildlife and fish in New Mexico. Habitat mapping projects produce useful tools for locating areas of conservation need and are used by NMDGF to inform technical guidance project development reviews, that are intended to protect fish and wildlife in New Mexico.

NMED proposes to locate and map springs in northern New Mexico, which will include gathering information about spring locations and types, geologic context, photographs, spring flow rate, and water samples to be analyzed for hydrogen and oxygen isotopes. Isotope analyses can provide useful information about spring recharge source (e.g., via winter snowmelt vs. summer monsoons) and age. The project will produce an Arid Land Springs Restoration Technical Guide that will outline successful methods for protecting, monitoring, and restoring spring-fed wetland locations. This Guide will provide invaluable information to restoration practitioners and to NMDGF staff, including our Aquatic/Riparian Habitat Specialist, that will further efforts to enhance and sustain these dynamic ecosystems across the state.

The NMDGF warmly supports this grant proposal for springs mapping and a technical guide.

Sincerely,

Matt Wunder, Ph.D.
Chief, Ecological and Environmental Planning Division