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May 11, 2022

New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission  
1190 Saint Francis Drive  
Suite # South 2102  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505  
ATT: Pamela.Jones@state.nm.us

Re: WQCC 21-62(R) – Outstanding Waters Designations for  
Rio Hondo, Lake Fork of the Rio  
Hondo, Upper Rio Grande, and Jemez River Headwaters  
(Rio San Antonio, East Fork Jemez  
River, and Redondo Creek)

Dear Water Quality Control Commissioners,

The New Mexico Wildlife Federation strongly supports the pending outstanding waters designations for the Upper Rio Grande, the Lake Fork of the Rio Hondo and the headwaters of the Jemez River.

Founded in 1914 by pioneering conservationist Aldo Leopold, the NMWF is the state's oldest conservation

organization representing the interests of hunters, anglers, fish and wildlife.

The NMWF supports pending efforts by the New Mexico's Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD), within the Economic Development Department to protect the waters that drive our state's multi-billion dollar outdoor recreation economy.

The staff and membership of the NMWF know and cherish the waters covered by this pending ONRW application. We recognize that increased protection for these waters is integral to supporting our state's growing outdoor recreation economy and local communities.

If successful, this pending application would protect the water quality of these rivers in perpetuity for surrounding landowners and community members, acequias, hunters, anglers and birders. This protection will pay real dividends for surrounding communities and New Mexico as a whole, including increased job creation and increased tourism for generations to come.

The NMWF views it as critical for New Mexico to invest in environmental protection to preserve the waters' ecological, recreational, cultural, and economic value. This ONRW designation represents a public commitment to the future of these waters and to the communities that rely on them.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please contact me with any questions and please keep me informed of action on this application.

Best Regards,

Jesse Deubel,  
Executive Director, NMWF