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**COMPARATIVE WATER ETHICS ALONG NEW MEXICO'S RIO GRANDE
AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RIVER GOVERNANCE**

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ABSTRACT: The Rio Grande in central and northern New Mexico is viewed very differently by the diverse cultures and subcultures who collectively use and manage the river. The values underpinning the customary and legal norms of water behavior among these stakeholders vie for dominance in a silent competition. This paper considers the values of seven categories of Rio Grande stakeholders: (1) Native American tribes, (2) Acequia groups, (3) federal water agencies (USACE and USBR), (4) environmental groups, (5) agriculture and ranching interests, (6) cities (Santa Fe and Albuquerque) and (7) state water agencies. Based on statements from public meetings and documents, secondary sources, and personal interviews, distinctive value qualities will be identified as a way of characterizing a particular water ethic for each stakeholder category. By comparing the water ethics principles of each stakeholder category against the actual water management practices along the Rio Grande, an assessment will be offered regarding whose ethics are being implemented and whose are not. Given that the task of governance is to represent the values of multiple stakeholders, implications for governance reforms are considered which might more fully incorporate a broader set of values.