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**WATCHING THE RIVER FLOW: IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
STRATEGY UNDER ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS AND
OTHER INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO**

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ABSTRACT: The Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (Water Authority) is a municipal water utility that serves over 600,000 residents in the City of Albuquerque and surrounding areas. Historically, the City of Albuquerque and the Water Authority relied solely on ground water. Research in the 1980s and 1990s led to the discovery that the aquifer beneath Albuquerque was not nearly as vast a water source as previously believed. In the next few decades following this realization, the City and the Water Authority developed and adopted a Water Resources Management Strategy (WRMS) designed to preserve finite groundwater sources by incorporating renewable imported surface water into the system for both potable and non-potable purposes. The WRMS strives to conjunctively use surface and ground water sources by transitioning to surface water as the primary supply source and limiting ground water use to peak summer demand periods and droughts. A key component of the WRMS is the San Juan-Chama Drinking Water Project (DWP), which currently provides about 50 percent of the total water delivered to Water Authority customers. Implementation of the WRMS requires the Water Authority to meet its water demand under a complex system of environmental regulations and other institutional constraints.

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