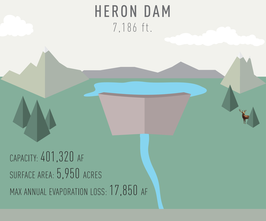
SAVE OUR DAM WATER

Elephant Butte, the largest and most-used reservoir in New Mexico, currently sits in the middle of a desert. With rising climate temperatures and a greater need for water than ever before, it is both inefficient and irresponsible to continue storing water here and in other lower-elevation reservoirs.

HIGH-ALTITUDE RESERVOIRS

HERON DAM
7,186 ft.

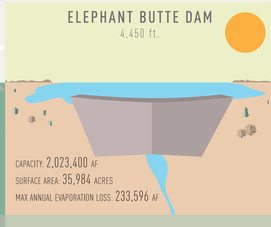


CAPACITY: 401,320 AF
SURFACE AREA: 5,950 ACRES
MAX ANNUAL EVAPORATION LOSS: 17,850 AF

EL VADO 6,879 ft | ABIQUIU 6,358 ft | COCHITI 5,481 ft | JEMEZ CANYON 5,232 ft

LOW-ALTITUDE RESERVOIRS

ELEPHANT BUTTE DAM
4,450 ft.



CAPACITY: 2,023,400 AF
SURFACE AREA: 35,984 ACRES
MAX ANNUAL EVAPORATION LOSS: 233,596 AF

CABALLO 4,182 ft.

2,470,065 AF

WHILE BOTH HIGH- AND LOW-ELEVATION RESERVOIRS CURRENTLY HOLD ABOUT THE SAME VOLUME OF WATER...

2,350,070 AF

32%

...THE DISTRIBUTION OF EVAPORATION LOSS IS FAR FROM EVEN

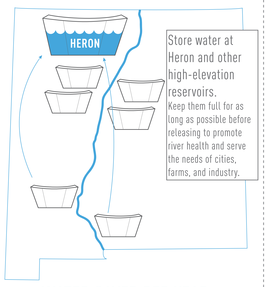
68%

DID YOU KNOW?
One acre foot (AF) of water is equivalent to a football field covered in one foot of water. It's also enough to supply water to a family of four for one year.

BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

WHAT IF?

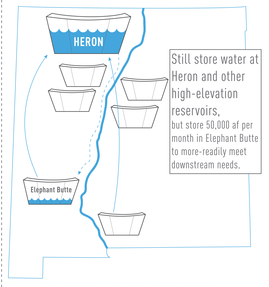
SCENARIO A



Store water at Heron and other high-elevation reservoirs.
Keep them full for as long as possible before releasing to promote river health and serve the needs of cities, farms, and industry.

WATER SAVED PER YEAR:
55,619* AF

SCENARIO B



Still store water at Heron and other high-elevation reservoirs, but store 50,000 af per month in Elephant Butte to more-readily meet downstream needs.

WATER SAVED PER YEAR:
38,401* AF

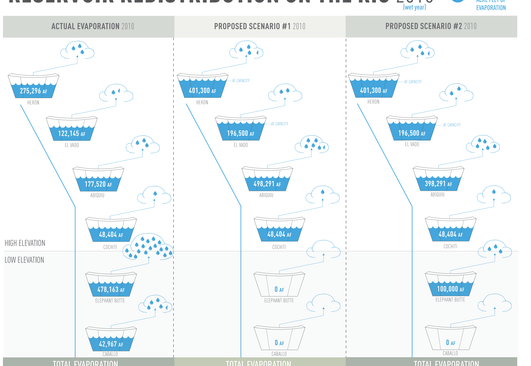
*Based on 2013 data

HOW DO WE DO IT?

Here are several scenarios based on 2010 and 2013 data to give an idea of how this is all achievable.

RESERVOIR REDISTRIBUTION ON THE RIO 2010 (wet year)

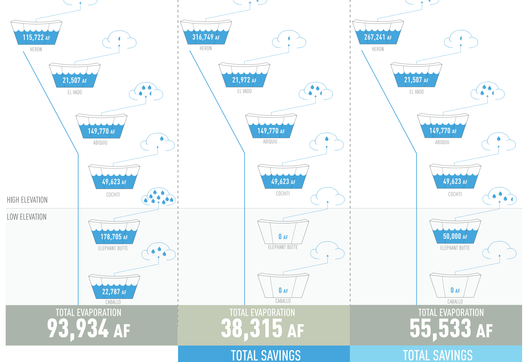
= 5,000 ACRE FEET OF EVAPORATION



ACTUAL EVAPORATION 2010	PROPOSED SCENARIO #1 2010	PROPOSED SCENARIO #2 2010
TOTAL EVAPORATION 157,406 AF	TOTAL EVAPORATION 61,242 AF	TOTAL EVAPORATION 72,933 AF
	TOTAL SAVINGS 96,164 AF	TOTAL SAVINGS 84,473 AF

RESERVOIR REDISTRIBUTION ON THE RIO 2013 (dry year)

= 5,000 ACRE FEET OF EVAPORATION



ACTUAL EVAPORATION 2013	PROPOSED SCENARIO #1 2013	PROPOSED SCENARIO #2 2013
TOTAL EVAPORATION 93,934 AF	TOTAL EVAPORATION 38,315 AF	TOTAL EVAPORATION 55,533 AF
	TOTAL SAVINGS 55,619 AF	TOTAL SAVINGS 38,401 AF

IT'S POSSIBLE

THESE SCENARIOS ARE A GOOD FIRST STEP, BUT MUCH MORE IS NEEDED FOR THIS TO BECOME A REALITY. CONGRESSIONAL REAUTHORIZATION AND RIO GRANDE COMPACT COMMISSION APPROVAL ARE JUST SOME OF THE REQUIRED MEASURES THAT WOULD NEED TO TAKE PLACE. A REFUSAL TO CHANGE WILL NOT ONLY WASTE MORE WATER, BUT WILL JEOPARDIZE THE FUTURE OF THE RIO GRANDE AND ALL WHO RELY ON IT.