

# Get A GRIP

PROMOTING HEALTHY  
COMMUNITIES  
BY PROTECTING OUR  
ENVIRONMENT

►Responsible Mining   ►Healthy Rivers   ►Community Planning   ►Aquifer Protection

## Reclamation Happens!

By Sally Smith, GRIP Board President

After years of advocating for comprehensive bonding and reclamation at local mines, GRIP is pleased to report that on-the-ground reclamation work at the Tyrone mine is in full swing. With the purchase of many millions of dollars of new equipment and several shifts a day employing over 75 workers, PD has been reclaiming tailings and stockpiles for over a year to meet NM Mining Act and New Mexico Environment Department's Closure/Closeout requirements.

In fall 2003, the NM Environment Department, PD and GRIP settled several disputes related to discharge permit and closure requirements that resulted in reclamation of the Tyrone tailing ponds and stockpiles within 10 years. Much of the work is a year ahead of schedule thanks in great part to the soaring price of copper.



**Recently-erected kiosk on HWY 90 provides reclamation information to visitors**

PD's agreement to complete three million dollars worth of reclamation a year for the next ten years at Tyrone has been far exceeded with recent work. The corporation has been spending \$700,000 to \$1 million a

month for reclamation at local mines. Along with the 1C Stockpile, the 1A 1B Stockpiles, the two thousand plus acres of the Mangas Valley Tailings, the No. 3X and the No. 3 Burro Mountain Tailings have also been re-graded and

**see Reclamation, p5**

## Study Shows Sufficient Groundwater to Meet Silver City's Future Demand

### No Need for Gila River Diversion Project

By Allyson Siwik, GRIP Executive Director

The recently released supplement to Silver City's 40-year water plan demonstrates that the Gila Group Aquifer has sufficient water to meet the town's estimated future needs without addition of 10,000 acre-feet of Gila River water promised to the state under the Arizona Water Settlements Act. Conducted by Balleau Groundwater Inc., the groundwater modeling assessment shows that the regional aquifer known as the Mimbres-Mangas Trench has approximately 15.2 million acre-feet of groundwater, with 15,900 acre-feet per year of recharge, enough to sustain the area for hundreds of years.

The report's author, Dave

Romero, stated at a recent public meeting on the report that the town's permitted use could be exceeded within the next 16 - 38 years depending upon population growth rate (1.2 vs. 2.9 percent per year). The town currently uses about 2,800 acre-feet per year of water and has water rights (permitted use) of 4,567 acre-feet per year. Romero recommends that the town should start to acquire additional water rights now to make sure that its diversion does not exceed its permitted use. The modeling also predicts that the yield from Silver City's well fields could start to decline in 30 years at the high population growth projection thus requiring drilling replacement wells or deepening

existing ones.

Despite what the state and town boosters would have us believe, Romero admits that it's highly unlikely that our area will experience a 2.9 percent annual growth rate. He rationalized using such a large number as a planning exercise.

**see Gila Diversion, p5**

**ACTION ALERT:**  
**EPA Proposes  
Less Stringent  
Particulate Matter Air  
Quality Standards**  
*see insert for  
more details*