



Water rights adjudication begins in May

LORDSBURG — The state will begin mailing packets to individuals who may claim water rights in the Animas Underground Water Basin in Hidalgo County in May, the State Engineer's office has announced.

The packets are part of a court case, known as adjudication, to resolve the rights to use water in the basin. It will contain a proposed judgment describing the individual's water right and other information about the adjudication process. All claimants to water rights in the AUB will eventually receive a packet.

"Individuals who receive a packet should carefully review the proposed judgment, and respond to the state by the deadline," said court Special Master Stephen Snyder, who has been designated by District Judge J. C. Robinson to preside over the adjudication proceedings.

Although individual water rights have not yet been determined in the AUB adjudication, the case has been open since 2005. Last summer, the court entered an order setting the "consumptive irrigation requirement," or quantity of water consumed by plants, at 2.1 acre-feet per acre.

The state's recent announcement signals a new phase in the adjudication where individual water rights will be determined.

— *Hidalgo County Herald*