

**MINUTES OF THE
2,189th REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

JULY 11, 2022 - 3:00 PM

Directors having been duly notified; Madam Chair Russo Baca called the regular meeting to order at 3:05 pm. The following Directors and Staff were present:

DIRECTORS

Stephanie Russo Baca, Chair
Karen Dunning, Vice Chair
Barbara Baca, Director
John P. Kelly, Director
Joaquin Baca, Director
Glen Duggins, Director
Michael T. Sandoval, Director

Present
Absent
Present
Present
Absent
Present
Present

Jason Casuga
Chuck T. DuMars
Lorna Wiggins
Eric Zamora
Pamela Fanelli
Anne Marken
Matt Martinez

STAFF

Chief Engineer/CEO
Chief Water Counsel
General Counsel
Chief Operating Officer
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
Water Operations Division Mgr.
Water Distribution Division Mgr.

The following names of individuals were interested viewers, callers and/or participants:

Neil Hise
Daymon Ely
Andrew Hautzinger, VSWCD
Stuart Murray
Larissa Gordon
Anders Lundahl, NMISC
Rachel Zweig
Julian Avalos, MRGCD
Theresa Davis, ABQ Journal
Michael Chavez
Ashley Veihl, MRGCD
Adam Lauer
Mary Chappelle
Neal Hurley
Sam Thompson
Russell Trujillo
Annalise Porter
Mel & Al Knight
Tyler Ashton
Daniel Alguirre, Wilson & Co.
Sloan Washburn, MRGCD
Jared Jojola, MRGCD
Josh Hind, MRGCD

Isleta 2nd Lt. Governor Sanchez
Judith McSweeney, MRGCD
Jennifer Faler, USBR
Casey Ish, MRGCD
Caroline Ogg
Alicia Lopez, MRGCD
Chelsea Benjamin
Jessica Lindsey, MRGCD
John Thompson, Lobbyist
Craig Hoover, BHI
Susie Morrow
Anthony Wagner
Gabrielle Coughlin, MRGCD
Jessica Lindsey, MRGCD
Yasmeen Najmi, MRGCD
Kathleen M. Cates
LeeAnn Corwin, MRGCD
John Fleck
Steve Levine
Eugene Pickett
Caroline Ogg, BHI
Estella Gamboa, MRGCD

Bill Woldman
Rep. Jane Powdrell-Culbert
Joan Hashimoto
Deborah VanDevelde
Greg Bacon
Fred Hashimoto
Christine Nardi, MRGCD
Tyler Ashton
Rick Miera
Mel Knight
Zachary Burkett
Jessica Regensberg, MRGCD
Lawrence Gallegos
Tony Tafoya
Debbie Tafoya
Steven Chavez. MRGCD
Alana McGrattan
Brennan Davis
Rudy Perea
Greg Bacon
Mark R. Sanchez
Francesca Shirley, MRGCD

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Representative Jane Powdrell-Culbert led the Pledge of Allegiance at today's meeting.

Madam Chair Russo Baca declared a quorum, and the meeting was publicly noticed. This meeting was a hybrid meeting. Rollcall votes will no longer be necessary for regular motions.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2 – APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

No changes or additions were made.

Director Barbara Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA**. Director Kelly seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 - CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Consideration/Approval of Payment Ratification - July 11, 2022
- b. Consideration/Approval of June 2022 Invoice for Wiggins, Williams & Wiggins
- c. Consideration/Approval of June 2022 Invoice for Law and Resource Planning Assoc.
- d. Consideration/Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting - June 9, 2022
- e. Notification of the Reclassification of Land to the MRGCD Official Plan and Appraisal Record - Doug Strech, Systems & Data Integration Manager
- f. Memo on MRGCD Approved Licenses for June 2022 (For Informational Purposes Only)

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA**. Seconded by Director Barbara Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 - REPORT(S) FROM HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

- a. Introduction of MRGCD New Hires - Christine L. Nardi, MBA

Ms. Nardi announced new hires and promotions. However, she guessed the vacancy rate was still sitting at about 15%. She said she was working closely with the new COO on identifying strategies.



Memorandum

To: MRGCD Chair Dunning and Board of Directors
 Through: Jason M. Casuga, Chief Engineer/CEO
 From: Human Resources
 Date: July 11, 2022
 Re: Introduction of New Hires

Equipment Repair & Transportation

JOSHUA TALAMANTE FACILITIES SUPPORT TECHNICIAN 7/11/2022

General Office

JARED JOJOLA HYDROLOGY TECHNICIAN I 7/11/2022

Socorro Division

ALLEN GONZALES MEDIUM EQUIPMENT OPERATOR 6/27/2022 Promotion

- b. Employee Award Presentation - Christine L. Nardi, MBA, Jason Casuga, CE/CEO, and Chair Russo Baca

Ms. Nardi introduced the first ever performance award program that recognized employees for exceptional performance. She first presented to the first group in District history to receive such awards, such as, the Allstar Award given to three Belen Division

employees that helped with the Big Hole Fire, Cole Benjamin, John Carrillo and Louie Archuleta.

She then presented the awards to the TruePoint Solutions Project Team, which was created to review, identify and provide the conversion data from Triadic in a format that could be loaded and used in the new assessment software to meet the District's current and future needs.

The Allstar Award was given to Estella Gamboa and the Key Contributor Awards were presented to Cristian Jimenez Marin, Doug Strech and Danielle Feygin. Ms. Nardi stated each member performed above and beyond to hit their target date which resulted in cost reduction, increased efficiency, and improved customer satisfaction.



Present at the meeting from L to R: Madam Chair Stephanie Russo Baca, Director Glen Duggins, John Carrillo, Estella Gamboa, Cole Benjamin, Jason M. Casuga, Directors Barbara Baca, John Kelly & Michael T. Sandoval

Director Duggins added that one of the proudest reasons he enjoyed being there was because when duty called, the Conservancy people came together to get things done. He thanked everyone and stated their doings affected everyone and he appreciated it.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 - CORRALES SIPHON - Jason Casuga, CE/CEO

a. Update on the Alternative Analysis, Eric Zamora, COO and Tyler Ashton, Wilson & Company

Mr. Zamora gave an update on the Corrales Siphon Project. He stated they received a draft comprehensive report and were scheduled to review it with Wilson & Company that week. He stated they were about halfway through the fourth irrigation cycle. He talked about the different issues they've had with the mechanical systems, including temperature sensors, debris getting caught in pumps, cottonwoods plugging up the radiators, etc. Mr. Zamora stated they would be taking the lessons they've learned with the current situation to make improvements in the 2023 irrigation season. He commended ISO Bobby Wagner for doing his job and keeping up with minor repairs and

maintenance issues. Mr. Zamora stated they had been working with SSCAFCA, City of Rio Rancho, and PNM on the development of an easement for an electrical line.

Tyler Ashton, a professional engineer with Wilson & Company, went over the alternatives for the siphon, which included a no build, siphon rehab/repair, or new siphon. He explained that if they chose the rehab/repair alternative, they would possibly be looking at a slip lining of the existing siphon, but the siphon would need to be cleaned. However, he said when they tried to get a camera down there, there was too much sediment to see the actual condition inside the siphon. He said a plus to that alternative would be not having to go through NEPA, which would save time.

Mr. Ashton discussed that there were three options if they chose new siphon. He said one was an open cut, but that would require NEPA because they would be touching the river canal.

Mr. Casuga added that the \$4 to 6 million cost would not anticipate NEPA mitigation, because they could not quantify NEPA until they were farther along on the design and more understanding of the footprint. Therefore, he said any mitigation associated with an open cut would equal or exceed the price of the project itself.

Mr. Ashton discussed the second new siphon option would be horizontal directional drilling. He stated it would be done parallel to the existing siphon and would have to come off the alignment some to get the drilling head through to put in a lining that would not allow any liquid or anything to come in. He said a con to the drilling would be the possibility of liquid leaking which could cause problems. However, he stated they would not have to go through NEPA.

Mr. Ashton said the third alternative would be the Microtunnel Boring Machine, which would allow them to follow the existing horizontal alignments and be placed under scour depth. However, it is the most expensive alternative.

Mr. Ashton said another alternative would be a permanent triplex pumping system with two pipes running and a backup, and also would run on alternating starts which worked better for the pumping. However, he said they would have to have a wet well and some kind of intake underneath to pull water into the wet well. He said it could provide fire protection in the bosque and they could look at adding additional pumps to provide fire protection. He said they would have to go through NEPA and would probably have to put in a river structure to help divert the water from the river, and electrical service to run the pumps. He noted the biggest issue would be water supply during drought.

Mr. Ashton said the last alternative would be river diversion, where they would put in a diversion on the Corrales Main. However, he said it would require river infrastructure, side weirs, and more NEPA than any other alternative and if the river dried up, you would be out of water.

Corrales Siphon Analysis

**WILSON
& COMPANY**

discipline | intensity | collaboration | shared ownership | solutions

Corrales Siphon Analysis

Current Status

- Alternatives Draft submitted(7-7-2022)
- Currently Evaluating Alternatives
 - MRGCD Engineering Input
- Final Report end of July 2022

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

Alternatives

- No Build
- Siphon Rehab/Repair
- New Siphon(3 Options)
- Pump Station
- New River Diversion

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

Siphon Rehab/Repair Alternative

- Slipline (\$4-\$6 Million)
 - Loose fit
 - Continuous
 - Segmented
 - Existing Siphon needs to be cleaned
 - Continued Long Term Protection
 - No NEPA
 - Shorter design timeline
- Pros
 - No NEPA
 - Gravity System
- Cons
 - May not be possible due to current Siphon damage
 - Continued Long Term Protection

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

New Siphon Alternative

- Open Cut(\$4-\$6 Million)
 - Excavate, remove and replace existing siphon
 - NEPA required
- Pros
 - More typical construction methods
- Cons
 - NEPA
 - River diversion during construction

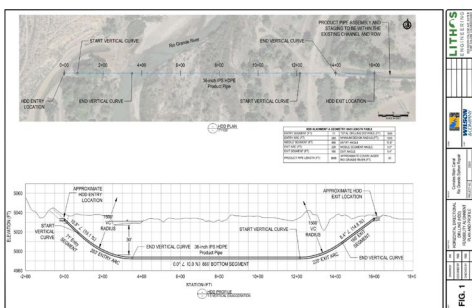
Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

New Siphon Alternative

- Horizontal Directional Drilling(HDD) (\$5-\$7 Million)
 - Offset alignment
 - Geology dependent
 - No NEPA
- Pros
 - No NEPA
 - Gravity System
 - Work outside of the River
- Cons
 - Existing Geology could increase Construction Costs
 - Offset Alignment
 - "Drilling Mud"

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects



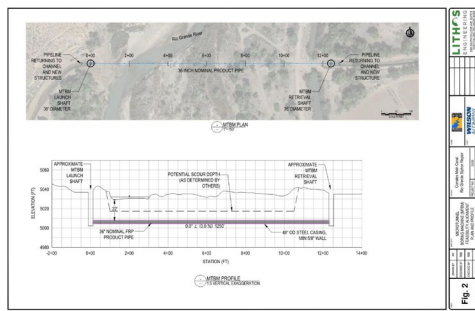
Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

New Siphon Alternative

- Microtunnel Boring Machine(MTBM) (\$7-\$9 Million)
 - Follow existing horizontal alignment
 - Placed below scour depth
 - Highly specialized
 - No NEPA
- Pros
 - No NEPA
 - Gravity System
 - Work outside of the River
- Cons
 - Cost

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects



Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

Pump Station Alternative

- Pump Station (\$6-\$8 million)
 - 40 cfs
 - Triplex Pump system
 - Wet well
 - Weir intake system
 - Possible fire protection water
- Pros
 - Fire Protection
- Cons
 - NEPA
 - Sediment/Debris
 - Electric Service
 - Long Term Pump Maintenance
 - Water supply during Drought

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

River Diversion Alternative

- River Diversion (\$4-\$6 Million*)
 - River infrastructure
 - Side weirs
 - NEPA Required
 - Pros
 - Gravity System
 - Cons
 - NEPA
 - Sediment/Debris
 - Water supply during Drought
 - Work in the River
- * Cost does not include unknown possible remediation costs.

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Corrales Siphon Analysis

Evaluation of Alternatives

- Project Cost
- Design Duration
- Construction Duration
- Constructable during Irrigation season
- NEPA Permitting
- Irrigation Flexibility

Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects

Director Kelly said the slip line seemed like a viable option with the exception of debris and sediment in the pipe. He asked if they had a plan to pull a pig through the siphon to gauge what they could get through there.

Mr. Ashton stated that was definitely on the table but had not gotten that far yet into the process and would hate to have it grab something to cause more damage to the siphon.

Mr. Casuga updated that they did see signs that the water surface elevation in the hole above the siphon was dropping. He said the silver lining to the river did drying up, would be that it would give them time to explore it more.

Director Kelly asked if they had looked at Water Utility Authority Use with radial collector wells under the riverbed like they did for their nonportable system. Mr. Zamora said they had talked about that system but had not investigated how much they would have to put in, but that it was a bigger NEPA issue than some of the other options.

Jason Casuga stated the supply chain to get materials to implement an alternative like that would probably be 12-14 months to even start construction. He said any action they took to push into the river may not be covered under the 2016 Biological Opinion, so they would have to do Compliance for that action all by itself.

Madam Chair Russo Baca stated she would like an analysis of what was the best long-term solution no matter the time or cost. She said she would rather pay for it once and be done the right way the first time even if it cost more or takes more time.

Dr. DuMars pointed out that in scoping out the alternatives, it was important to be meticulous in looking at every single one.

b. New Mexico Legislators Remarks

State Representative Jane Powdrell-Culbert stated that when redistricting occurred, she went from one area of Corrales to having all of Corrales. She said she was working closely with Representative Daymon Ely. She said one of the great things about that area was that the legislators all like each other and work well together. She stated that she also represented the Town of Bernalillo and more than half of Rio Rancho. State Representative Powdrell-Culbert said they had talked about coming up with a piece of emergency legislation to get the District 44 issues taken care of. She said she grew up in Corrales and remembered fighting an organization about the quality of water in their area and felt very strongly about it. She said she felt just as strongly about what was going on in Corrales now and that it was very important to her and others in the community. She stated that they would put in legislation and push it very hard to get it finished and corrected.

Representative Daymon Ely stated he wanted to work in partnership with the MRGCD. He said he would be happy to start writing a PNM if someone would send him the information. He reiterated he wanted to work with MRGCD and to get it done with a long term and short-term solution. Representative Ely stated to try to get a solution to them in August and they could start working right away.

Mr. Casuga added they learned a lot from the solution they put in and water was still being delivered. He stated the only defense in the pumping operation was the diesel nature of it and that they would still be bound whether or not the river had water in it or not. Mr. Casuga said that as of right then, there was water in the river, and he did not believe there was any evidence that the number of irrigations within the same division were not correct.

Madam Chair Russo Baca reminded that they would continue making deliveries as water was available, but if there was no water available and the MRGCD could not make water, then the MRGCD could not divert.

Rick Miera, Corrales Councilor, first thanked Jason for coming to speak to the Corrales Village Council. He said one of the issues was they needed to know, even if it was a guess, exactly how much money they would need. He stated they needed things that would last a long time and would be willing to invest in them. Mr. Miera stated another issue was that it should become a statewide issue. He said it was important for them to stay high upon the list and continue to put pressure to say it was a statewide problem. Director Kelly reassured Mr. Miera that he would not support the bill unless it had a 50-year service life.

Mel Knight, Corrales Councilor, stressed that people in Corrales had been farming there for hundreds of years and rely on acequias to get water. Ms. Knight stated that while she was appreciative that things were moving, they were in dire need of water and to be told that they would not have as much water as Albuquerque, Socorro, or Belen was like a slap in the face. She said she was glad Representative Ely was going to write letter, and reiterated it needed to be put in motion quickly so it could be fixed in the winter.

Zachary Burkett, Corrales Councilor, stated it was far more important than just produce this year and next, but really affected the fabric of their village. He stated that people visit Corrales to go to their grower market and to see their farms. Mr. Burkett

said it would be unacceptable to not have water next year and that they needed a great long-term solution and good short term solution.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 - ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR (Comments are limited to six (6) minutes)

Andrew Hautzinger

Mr. Hautzinger stated that Big Hole Fire burned over 900 acres in the bosque, which was the biggest fire in the history of the bosque. He said they were really trying to get their arms around different options for establishing monitoring and thinning systems that were environmentally friendly and compliant. He said that Valencia Soil was very appreciative of MRGCD trying to figure out the different options. Mr. Hautzinger expressed that he wanted to see if fire fuel breaks would be a feasible tool.

Neil Hise

Mr. Hise stated there needed to be more farmers on the Board and that there had to be more input from farmers to understand the real need for water. Mr. Hise stated that his farm in Lemitar that he had for 27 years had not gotten water on half of its side. Mr. Hise stated the state was giving away money to communities that had money to spend when it could have been spent on the siphon or on an exit for trucks to get to the industrial bank. He reiterated that he was disappointed there was only one farmer on the Board.

Mary Chappelle

Ms. Chappelle agreed with Mr. Miera that it was not just a Corrales issue but a state issue. She said the lands and farms in Corrales were historical to the state. She stated she was concerned with amount of time the decision was taking. She requested timelines on how much time each alternative would take. She said a temporary solution would be unacceptable. Ms. Chappelle also mentioned they had many orchards in Corrales that would not be able to go a season without watering. Ms. Chappelle also stated she supported Representative Ely's statement of needing community backing. She said now was the time to submit it into the long-term budget.

Stuart Murray

Corrales Councilor, Stuart Murray, asked if there was a way to fast track the application to speed up the process with NEPA. He stated one issue was the river scouring the western bank that may require work along the channel because it was not flowing evenly across the river. He also asked how they should reassure their farmers that the water will continue to flow next year.

Jason Casuga pointed out the MRGCD was committed to delivering water to Corrales in '22 and '23. He said at the very least, there would be an electrical pumping operation that could pump more around the clock and still be temporary for '23. Mr. Casuga stated that MRGCD did not control the NEPA process and had to go through specific steps. He said they were hopeful the design drawings would come through and believed they were on track to have electrical service with electrical pumps on the ground before the '23 season. He stated the greater danger for Corrales was not the siphon but the drought. Mr. Casuga assured the water would be running at the pumps into Corrales until the river ran dry.

Madam Chair Russo Baca stated she did not want there to be a fight between Districts of who got more irrigation. She said maybe there was something they could work on with their agronomists to ensure efficient irrigation and delivery of water occurred.

Dr. DuMars reminded everyone that they were all in a drought. He said the Colorado River was normally about 15 million acre feet a year and would only be 9 million this year. He said that put all of the states in that basin in a terrible situation. He did say, however, that it was important to realize that if they get a good snowpack there would be water in the river so the pumps could function. Dr. DuMars said it would be a tremendous opportunity to operate the pumps electronically and not on diesel if they had PNM electricity. He was hopeful that snowpack and monsoons would be enough water in the river to keep the pumps operating.

Rudy Perea

Mr. Perea stated that he lived in Corrales and had a farm and orchard. He said he was frustrated because they did not want to replace the pipe. He said it had been having problems for more than this past year and said he had never heard them say the reason it needed to be replaced or why they were looking at alternatives for it.

Ms. Casuga stated the specific reason for alternative analysis was to gain whether it was state or federal funds. He said they go through a process where they are forced to evaluate alternatives. He said he did not want to limit any type of funds they could bring to solve the problem and said if they did not do the right technical work, it could close doors to funding available to them.

Joan Hashimoto

Ms. Hashimoto, long time Corrales resident, asked that they do not remove the native New Mexico olives and cottonwoods when they resume their clearing of native trees and invasive trees from the levee toe. She stated it was some of the most important land in their bosque and would be destroyed just when species were having a hard time of making in drought and climate change. She said cottonwoods were also important. Ms. Hashimoto also added that levee maintenance had been done from the road at the top since the levee was built.

Fred Hashimoto

Mr. Hashimoto, long time Corrales resident and former village councilor, agreed with quickly addressing the broken siphon. He stated water in their ditches in agriculture was a defining feature. He said the Audubon Society certified the Corrales Bosque an important bird area in 2013, so villagers were alarmed six years ago when MRGD said they wanted to extensively clear vegetation there to make a path along the toe for levee maintenance and level inspection compliance. He stated there were many cottonwoods in that path that would have to be removed and cottonwoods and native New Mexico olive were there before the levee was constructed and had remained untouched since. He asked them to please not cut down cottonwoods or New Mexico olive, as doing so would be destruction without benefits.

Deborah VanDevelde

Ms. VanDevelde stated they had farmed for over 20 years and was well aware of the drought situation and was disturbed by a comment made at the Corrales meeting which was an analogy between the drought and the siphon to cancer and a broken arm. She said downplaying the situation with that analogy was upsetting.

Anthony Wagner

Mr. Wagner, represented Wagner's Farm, stated they had been farming in Corrales for over 100 years growing fruits and vegetables. He said their crown jewel was the apple orchard. He said he also would hate to lose green chile and corn, but if they lost the apple orchards, it would take

another 10 years to have a crop again. Mr. Wagner stated it was hard on apples to only water them every three or four weeks. He added that it seemed like there was an issue every several days with the pumps.

Lawrence Gallegos

Mr. Gallegos said he represented the National Latino Farmers and Ranchers and was working with Wagner Farms to look into different alternatives that would work for New Mexico farmers for more efficient farming to make water go a lot further. He encouraged farmers in Corrales to work together with MRGCD to find the best alternative that would work for them. He said he also thought they should go ahead and file for federal funds and not just state. Mr. Gallegos said New Mexico was not taking advantage of the federal funding as much as surrounding states.

Tony Tafoya

Mr. Tafoya, Corrales farmer, stated he had been farming mostly chile and other produce for about 65 years. He stated if the only option for the next year was to continue the pumping operation, he hoped they would consider adding a pump at the Romero Road entrance to the Corrales Bosque, stating the pump would be diesel and would only pump water into the Sandoval Lateral and only needed to operate for one week at a time, which would shorten the time between irrigations. Mr. Tafoya said three weeks between watering was too long to grow crops.

Greg Bacon

Mr. Bacon from Valencia County gave a shoutout to all the ditch riders, especially the ones in his area, Mike Apodaca and Jerry Sanchez, the new ISO (Irrigation Systems Operator). He felt they were all doing a good job.

Alana McGrattan

Ms. McGrattan stated her family has had a farm in Corrales since 1952. She said they made a significant commitment to keep it a farm and have put 7 acres into farmland preservation. She stated the drought was a big challenge. She thanked her ditch rider, Bobby Wagner, Jr. She said they had applied for a NCRS grant to make watering more efficient but needed more water than every few weeks for them to grow. Ms. McGrattan felt it would be useful to have input from different agencies at MRGCD as to what to do with continuing cycles they need in their farm.

Eugene Pickett.

Mr. Pickett said he was encouraged because when good people are working on things, good things can happen. He said there were a lot of good people here with good expertise that he had seen over the years. He said partnering, innovation, and creativity was going into a lot of national movements to better the situations for small farmers and ranchers across the country. Mr. Pickett said it was key what Mr. Casuga said about not wanting funding doors to close because it was very technical. He said the demand on the food system was not going to go away. He mentioned that there was a demonstration site on the Corrales farm being recognized by NRCS. Mr. Pickett stated he was encouraged because he saw how they worked.

Jason Casuga read a letter from a Bernalillo County resident regarding a letter from MRGCD stating their investigation did not find any evidence of negligence by MRGCD and the overflow on April 27, 2022. They stated they respectfully appealed that decision and contended that MRGCD was negligent in not having policies and procedures in place to prevent the damage. They said their research of the wind that day revealed a wind gust 21 mph at about 2 p.m. and one of 30 mph around 5 p.m. the day before, suggesting an additional check might have

prevented the flood. They stated that they would like to hear that MRGCD would continue to enact procedures to mitigate damage from severe weather and potential flooding. They said they had lived in the North Valley for almost 40 years and did not want to have to leave for fear that they would wake up one day to find water in their house.

Dr. DuMars cautioned that there would be a lot of discussion on the forfeiture statute, but to be clear that no matter what it says, what happened in Corrales was not the cause for forfeiture of that water right.

Director Duggins thanked Mr. Pickett for his kind words. He said he was certain they would get a cure for the siphon and would get it fixed. He said that even though he has a bigger farm now, he once had a smaller one so he could relate. Director Duggins agreed that farmers need a bigger voice here, even though everybody on the Board was a good person. He said farmers had to be represented and were in the minority. Director Duggins stated that the siphon could have been tended to sooner but was sure MRGCD would do their best to tend to it as quickly as they could.

Director Kelly pointed out that while he was not a farmer, he was an engineer who spent his life on the flood control business. He also pointed out that they had a big farmer, small farmer, and pueblo farmer on the Board. He added that Director Barbara Baca was a former Parks and Rec director for Albuquerque and done rehab work her entire career. Director Kelly said he thought the District had been well served with the folks that were elected and hoped to have earned that trust in his 11 years there. He said he heard many people say to replace the siphon and not fix it, but slip lining the siphon would be an in-situ replacement of the siphon itself using the wood stave pipe as the hole to push the new plastic pipe through, so slip lining would not be a repair, but a replacement. Director Kelly said even though they got 80 years out of the siphon, it had not been pumped out and inspected until 10 years ago at his pushing as a board member. He agreed that they should take advantage of the federal money and said the siphon project was one of their most important infrastructure projects going on. He also mentioned they were working with BOR at the El Vado Dam on a rehab of the 80-year-old facility.

Director Kelly asked for a 5 minute recess at 5:07 pm. Director Sandoval had to leave the meeting due to the pueblo's curfew; Director Duggins also left.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 - Update on the 2022 Irrigation Season

a. Report on the Water Supply Conditions - Anne Marken, Water Ops Division Manager

Jason Casuga said the report would be clouded some by their discharge of raw sewage from an ABCWUA (Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority) break that changed some of the delivery patterns. He apologized for going in and out during public comment with updates from ABCWA. He also said they would be bypassing by Isleta and would not charge again until probably the next day.

Anne Marken stated that since the last Board meeting, the Rio Grande Valley received significant inflows from rainstorms, which increased water available for delivery and reconnected the river all the way to Elephant Butte. However, she said she still needed to prepare the Middle Valley for extensive river channel drying and limited irrigation deliveries if they do not receive more rain. Ms. Marken showed graphs of the different gauges, which showed them trending down quickly. She said that only 350 cubic feet per second were entering the Middle Valley, which was well below the 850 needed to meet irrigation demands this time of year. She said they would receive a small

allocation on the 15th. Ms. Marken did say the amount of watering entering the Middle Rio Grande was still above the amount of water needed to meet demands of prior and paramount lands of the Six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos. She told non-pueblo irrigators to expect limited irrigation deliveries for the rest of irrigation season unless they got rain.

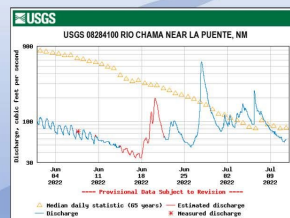
Anne Marken also stated that New Mexico ended 2021 irrigation season 127,000-acre feet in debt to Texas and undelivered for 2022. However, she said they did overdeliver to Texas in June by 5000-acre feet. Ms. Marken presented the 8-to-14-day temperature and precipitation outlook, which showed a higher than average temperature the next two weeks. She said river flows were dropping quickly and there would be extensive river channel drying and little to no P&P irrigation moving forward without rain.

Water Supply Update

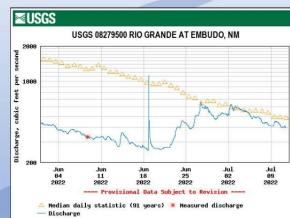
Anne Marken
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Board of Directors Meeting
July 11th, 2022



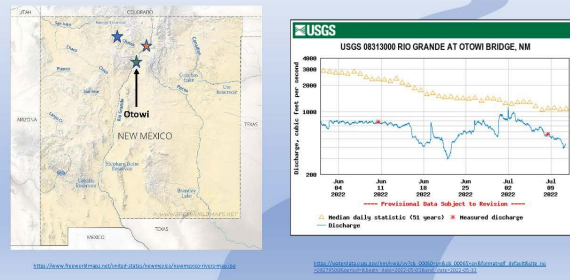
USGS La Puente Gage on the Chama



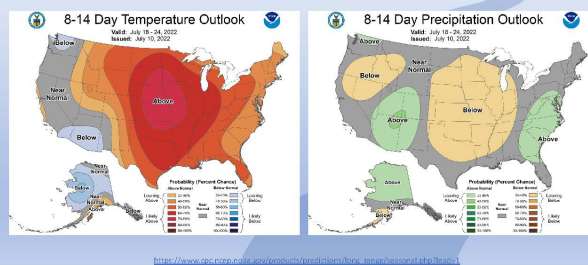
USGS Embudo Gage on the Rio Grande



USGS Otowi Gage on the Rio Grande



National Weather Service 8-14 Day Outlook



b. Status Report on Water Distribution - Matt Martinez, Water Distribution Division Manager

Mr. Martinez reported that on June 17th, they were on the cusp of prior and paramount only operations, and June 18th widespread rain began to fall which exceeded the irrigation demand over the past few weeks. He said some irrigators requested multiple rounds, but the water distribution policy prohibited supplying water too frequently. Mr. Martinez stated that while the irrigation demand was increasing, the supply was dropping, and river flows were worse than the June 17th conditions. He said the 10-day pueblo rotation was implemented the month prior and would continue to be shared as fairly as possible with non-P&P irrigators.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 - REPORT(S) FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

a. Bureau of Reclamation - Jennifer Faler, Area Manager

Ms. Faler said she thought she could get potential siphon funding opportunities from the federal government, but she could offer technical support and develop projects but can't be involved in the design and implementation construction if it is transferred works.

Mr. Casuga asked if it helped that the federal government still had title to everything north of Isleta, to which Jennifer Faler replied no.

Regarding Water Ops, Ms. Faler stated mother nature was in charge and even federal water was diminishing. She said the minnow to spawn for egg collection was not successful. She said it should be a 6 or 7 year fish and it was only living about 3 years from the stress conditions they're living in. She said to lose a year of genetics for a fish

that only had a three year cycle was pretty alarming. She said they were all on notice from the Fish & Wildlife Service that they'll expect a generation of eggs next year or there would be pretty dire consequences. She stressed that they would not always be able to rely on the federal water to save the day.

She stated that they had an examiner come out and look at the El Vado construction and stressed the importance of the acequia dam and fixing facilities like that and was well received. Ms. Faler invited the Board to come visit the project in August. She said Reclamation was shifting resources and making sure the deficit to Texas doesn't grow. She said she let her employees know the 200,000 acre feet allowable line under the Compact was a line they did not want to cross. She said they were now focusing their efforts on water conveyance in the lower valley. She said there was a lot of work to be done, but that Reclamation was focused on getting it done.

No buckets were provided for this meeting, but the notes are below:

MRGCD BOARD MEETING (07-11-22)

1. Heron Summary
 - Content = 76,434 ac-ft (7/6)
 - Azotea tunnel: 100-200 cfs
 - Total SJC inflow year-to-date: 56,950 a.f
 - Currently releasing 46 cfs
 - Current MRGCD storage: 0 ac-ft
2. El Vado Summary
 - A. Total storage (all contractors and natural) in El Vado as of 7/6:
2,160 ac-ft.
 - B. Native in El Vado
230 ac-ft.
 - C. MRGCD's SJ-C storage in El Vado
0 ac-ft.
 - D. P & P: 1,208 ac-ft
 - E. EDWA: 0 ac-ft
 - F. All other SJ-C contractors: 722 ac-ft

Current release is 100 cfs RG Inflow is 100-200 cfs
3. Storage in Abiquiu
 - Content = 91,491 ac-ft (7/6)
 - MRGCD's SJ-C storage= 0 ac-ft
 - P & P: 19,506 ac-ft

Total water released for minnow to date in 2022: 4,264 ac-ft

b. Bureau of Indian Affairs - Sandra Lucero, BIA/SWRO/Water Resources

Ms. Lucero was not present for today's meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 - REPORT(S) FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER/CFO - Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM

a. Review of End of FY22 and Fourth Quarter Financials

Ms. Fanelli stated the District had historically used the budgetary method of budgeting in the system. This method would record encumbrances to expense in the current fiscal year. Unfortunately, this was not compliant with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the auditors would need to back out the encumbered expenditures. The

result was that our financial statements never matched the audited financial statements. The District decided that at the end of FY2022 we would switch to the GAAP/budgetary method of budgeting.

The District liquidated all purchase orders in the system and re-entered PO's in FY2023. We added \$1,875,092 as a carryforward to our FY2023 budget for the prior year PO's that is recorded as a reserve in fund balance in the financial statements.

The FY2022 financials do not include the \$1,875,092 of budget that was added to FY2023 to cover FY2022 encumbrances. A budget adjustment resolution is not needed for the carryforward budget because the appropriations were approved in the prior year.

Ms. Fanelli reported the Finance Committee met before this meeting to review the draft financial statement for fiscal year 2022. She said total revenues were \$25,636,080, total expenditure were \$25,381,662, net change and fund balance was \$1,367,016, and the estimated deficit for fiscal year 2022 was \$508,076. The budgeted deficit estimated to be around \$2,089,000.

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Budget to Actual - General Fund Fiscal Year 2022, June 30, 2022 (Unaudited)					
Line	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Actual	Encumbrances	(Under)/Over
REVENUES					
1a Ad Valorem Taxes - Sandoval County	1,974,848	1,974,848	1,892,151	-	(82,697)
1b Ad Valorem Taxes - Bernalillo County	13,746,102	13,746,102	13,646,961	-	(99,141)
1c Ad Valorem Taxes -Valencia County	4,341,227	4,341,227	4,084,035	-	(257,192)
1d Ad Valorem Taxes -Socorro County	531,665	531,665	516,329	-	(15,336)
2a Ad Valorem Interest - Sandoval County	63,000	63,000	-	-	(63,000)
2b Ad Valorem Interest - Bernalillo County	120,000	120,000	96,100	-	(23,900)
2c Ad Valorem Interest -Valencia County	35,000	35,000	21,936	-	(13,064)
2d Ad Valorem Interest -Socorro County	30,000	30,000	19,044	-	(10,956)
3 Water Service Charges	2,317,500	2,317,500	2,279,994	-	(37,506)
4 Water Bank Fees	33,000	33,000	41,262	-	8,262
5 Licensing Fees	69,000	69,000	91,658	-	22,658
6 Interest on investments	45,000	45,000	41,444	-	(3,556)
7 Project Contract Revenue - Federal	748,948	748,948	757,984	-	9,036
8 Project Contract Revenue - Local	307,064	307,064	318,752	-	11,688
9 Operating and Capital Grants	2,195,812	2,195,812	1,606,746	-	(589,066)
7 Soils Lab Revenue	-	-	1,749	-	1,749
10 Other	97,600	97,600	219,935	-	122,335
11 Total revenues	26,655,766	26,655,766	25,636,080	-	(1,019,686)
EXPENDITURES					
12 Salaries	10,306,072	9,753,032	9,337,597	-	(415,435)
13 Employee Benefits	4,412,544	4,148,403	3,636,422	-	(511,981)
14 Employee & Board Related Costs	526,153	447,197	393,198	-	(53,999)
15 General & Administrative Expenses	303,079	577,412	540,589	-	(36,823)
16 Professional Services	407,600	523,703	276,292	-	(247,411)
17 Insurance & Legal Services	1,395,200	1,353,897	1,302,611	-	(51,286)
18 Technology & Communication	544,322	518,588	495,385	-	(23,203)
19a Ad Valorem Collection Fees	435,680	437,180	422,436	-	(14,744)
20 Utilities	175,060	137,870	133,072	-	(4,798)
21 Facility Maintenance	38,380	143,062	141,942	-	(1,120)
22 Division Maintenance, Const, Rehab	1,203,650	1,027,136	819,727	-	(207,409)
23 Vehicle & Equipment O&M	1,582,100	1,817,906	1,670,077	-	(147,829)
25 Soils Lab Expense	-	8,491	7,577	-	(914)
26 Conservation Program	-	58	57	-	(1)
27 Safety Program	-	-	-	-	-
24 Federal O&M Services	885,232	885,232	885,232	-	-
26 Governmental/Association Agreements, Community Outreach	420,678	285,114	219,755	-	(65,359)
27 Projects	1,225,000	2,228,235	1,875,608	-	(352,627)
28 Endangered Species Act Projects	150,000	111,459	74,951	-	(36,508)
29 Grants Wages & Fringes	155,000	207,742	171,643	-	(36,099)
31 Grants Other Expenditures	2,087,528	2,034,828	1,314,047	-	(720,781)
32 District Match for Grant Expenditures	30,000	433,996	413,119	-	(20,877)
33 Debt Service Principal retirement	817,431	473,566	473,284	-	(282)
34 Debt Service Interest	96,833	39,561	39,519	-	(42)
35 Capital expenditures	4,822,600	4,426,474	737,522	-	(3,688,952)
36 Total expenditures	32,020,142	32,020,142	25,381,662	-	(6,638,480)
37 Excess (deficiency) of revenues less Expenditures	(5,364,376)	(5,364,376)	254,418	-	5,618,794
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)					
38 Loan Proceeds	3,000,000	3,000,000	998,889	-	(2,001,111)
39 Lease Financing	-	-	32,239	-	32,239
40 Equipment disposition proceeds	25,000	25,000	81,470	-	56,470
41 Transfers in	250,000	250,000	117,534	-	(132,466)
42 Transfers out	-	-	-	-	-
43 Transfers out-Grants	-	-	(117,534)	-	(117,534)
44 Total other financing sources and (uses)	3,275,000	3,275,000	1,112,598	-	(2,162,402)
45 Net change in fund balance	(2,089,376)	(2,089,376)	1,367,016	-	3,456,392
			Current Surplus		
			FY 22 Encumbrances		
			Total		
			1,367,016		
			(1,875,092)		
			(508,076)		

b. Approval of Resolution BA-07-11-22-87 Adopting FY22 Fourth Quarter Financials

Ms. Fanelli said the Finance Committee received a cashable forward. She asked that the Board approve a fourth quarter resolution.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
FISCAL YEAR 2022 FOURTH QUARTER UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT AND
UNAUDITED CASH BALANCE REVIEW AS OF JULY 1, 2022

BA-07-11-22-87

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 6-6-2 NMSA 1978, the State of New Mexico Department of Finance - Local Government Division (NMDFA-LGD) has examined the proposed (Interim) Fiscal Year 2023 budget of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 6-6-2 NMSA 1978, the NMDFA-LGD granted the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District approval and certification for use of the Fiscal Year 2023 budget pending its Board of Governance review and approval of the fourth quarter Fiscal Year 2022 unaudited financial report including unaudited cash balances as of July 1, 2022; and,

WHEREAS, on July 11, 2022, at the regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, the fourth quarter Fiscal Year 2022 unaudited financial report including unaudited cash balances as of July 1, 2022, were presented to the Board of Directors; and,

WHEREAS, the Secretary/Treasurer of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District hereby certifies that the content of the fourth quarter Fiscal Year 2022 unaudited financial report, including unaudited cash balances as of July 1, 2022, to be true and correct to the best of her knowledge.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District's Board of Governance hereby approves the Fiscal Year 2022 fourth quarter unaudited financial report including unaudited cash balances as of July 1, 2022, and respectfully requests final approval and certification from the State of New Mexico Department of Finance - Local Government Division of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District Fiscal Year 2023 budget in accordance with Section 6-6-2 NMSA 1978.

RESOLVED in session this 11th day of July 2022.

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Stephanie Russo Baca, Chair of the Board

Karen Dunning, Vice Chair of the Board

Barbara Baca, Director

Michael T. Sandoval, Director

John P. Kelly, Director

Glen Duggins, Director

Joaquin Baca, Director

ATTEST:

Pamela S. Fanelli, CMA, CGFM
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

c. Report on the Finance Committee Meeting, July 11, 2022 - Director Kelly, Director Baca, and Pamela Fanelli, CFO

Director Kelly stated he and Director Barbara Baca were in the meeting and everything checked out, and they needed to approve the resolution. He also said the State required formal communication of their approval of the final quarter financial report.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOURTH QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT**. Seconded by Director Barbara Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10 - REPORT(S) FROM THE CHIEF ENGINEER/CEO - Jason M. Casuga, PE

a. Discussion/Approval of MOU Between the City of Belen and the MRGCD for a collaborative effort to prevent West Mesa Arroyo Flows from breaching MRGCD Irrigation Facilities and Flooding the City of Belen - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO

Mr. Casuga said it was a memorandum of understanding that was a collaborative effort with the City of Belen. He said all eyes were focused on things in West Mesa, but they needed a much larger collaborative effort as they went through a comprehensive stormwater master plan analysis. He said at the end of the day, their infrastructure would need MRGCD's drains to move water to feeder three and back to the river. Mr. Casuga provided a document that was reviewed by counsel and Mr. Zamora with their comments added.

Madam Chair Russo Baca said she met with the City of Belen and discussed it. She said they were supportive and wanted to continue.

Mr. Casuga said City of Belen was moving forward with a comprehensive stormwater management plan and MRGCD put their foot in the door to say they would not develop that plan and facilities would not be used if they did not have a seat at the table to understand how it would be used and set limits to that use.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MOU REVIEWED BY COUNSEL**. Seconded by Madam Chair Russo Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

b. Consideration/Approval of Resolution 07-11-22-187 Authorizing Acceptance of Water Trust Board Project no. 5675-WPF Funding Offer; Water Storage, Conveyance and Deliver Project; Socorro Division Conveyance Project from the NM Finance Authority - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO

Jason Casuga stated the District was given notice that their Water Trust Board Project was selected. He said they had a September deadline and that the last items that would come with the resolution was one of the items that highlighted the District's financial commitments. He added that they also presented it to the Finance Committee.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION REGARDING THE SOCORRO DIVERSION CONVEYANCE PROJECT**. Seconded by Madam Chair Russo Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF WATER TRUST BOARD PROJECT NO. 5675-WPF
FUNDING OFFER; WATER STORAGE, CONVEYANCE AND DELIVERY PROJECT; SOCORRO
DIVISION CONVEYANCE PROJECT FROM THE NEW MEXICO FINANCE AUTHORITY

M-07-11-22-187

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District adopted Resolution No. M-10-11-21-173 authorizing and approving submission of a completed application for financial assistance and project approval to the New Mexico Finance Authority Water Trust Board for Planning, Design, and Construction Services for the Socorro Division Conveyance Project; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Finance Authority has recommended and approved the funding award; and

WHEREAS, the approved funding structure consists of a 10% loan in the amount of \$715,500 and a 90% grant in the amount of \$6,439,500 and;

WHEREAS, a match is required as part of the WTB Project No. 5675-WPF funding structure.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT hereby accepts the New Mexico Finance Authority WTB award of 10% loan in the amount of \$715,500 and 90% grant in the amount of \$6,439,500 and approves the required cash match in the amount of \$1,073,250; and approves that the CEO/Chief Engineer is hereby designated as the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy's representative on behalf of the New Mexico Finance Authority WTB Project No. 5675-WPF.

DATED AND RESOLVED this 11th day of July 2022.

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Stephanie Russo Baca, Board Chair

ATTEST:

Pamela Fanelli, Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

c. Consideration/Approval of Resolution 07-11-22-188 Abandonment of a Portion of the Jarales Interior Drain - Francesca Shirley, Licensing & Lance Sales Supervisor

Francesca Shirley presented a resolution to abandon a portion of the Jarales Interior Drain in Belen. She stated it was a private request from a landowner and was an easement property where MRGCD has 80 feet of width for the easement, but it went down center of several properties. She said the grant of easement was given in 1968. It was requested by the community to alleviate groundwater in the area but was later evaluated that it was not serving that function. Ms. Shirley said they had not been in to maintain the drain in several years because there were many private property, fences, and gates. She said within the formal grant of easement signed in 1968, the stipulation for it was to have a clause for returning properties to the landowners. She mentioned the Division Manager of Belen also signed off on it and agreed that it did not serve a large function for the district.

Director Barbara Baca expressed what a great job Francesca did. She said it was good to read the report and how thorough it was. Dr. DuMars seconded that.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION REGARDING THE RETURN OF EASEMENT LANDS ON THIS PORTION OF THE CORRALES INTERIOR DRAIN.** Seconded by Madam Chair Russo Baca. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Return of Easement Lands for a Portion of the Jarales Interior Drain Sta. 26+00± to 54+00±

Proposed Resolution 07-11-22-187
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District
July 11, 2022

Prepared by:
MRGCD Lands and Licensing Supervisor

Proposed Resolution Summary





- MRGCD staff recommends abandoning a portion of the Jarales Interior Drain stations 26+00 to 54+00 and returning the land to the underlying landowners.
- 7 properties will be impacted
- MRGCD currently does not maintain this portion of the drain and very little to no groundwater accumulates in the drain
- Easement is encumbered by conjoined private property

Jarales Interior Drain Background

- Property was donated to District through Grant of Easement in 1968 to lower water table in the area
- MRGCD holds a 80' wide easement. This portion of drain runs through middle of conjoined properties.
- 1970 the Drain was established.
- 1985 Board minutes reflect that groundwater issues were not improved by the Jarales Interior Drain
- Grant of Easement stipulation 4 allows for return of property if the District is not using easement for intended purposes of "irrigation laterals, roads, and any other structure or facilities"

Evaluation Process and Purpose for Abandonment

- All impacted easement residents were notified by certified mailed letters. Besides the requestor, MRGCD received no public comment.
- Drain is encumbered by private property which restrict access.
- Private fences and gates have prevented MRGCD from performing any maintenance in the area.
- Little to no water accumulates in drain
- Property was evaluated per Resolution RM-01-10-22-178 and does not have potential trail or recreation value

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
REGARDING THE RETURN OF EASEMENT LANDS TO THE ORIGINAL LANDOWNERS
WITHIN A PORTION OF THE JARALES INTERIOR DRAIN STATIONS 26+00± TO 56+00±**

M-07-11-22-188

WHEREAS, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (District) holds an easement interest for the Jarales Interior Drain right-of-way and which easement property was donated to the District and

WHEREAS, the District is not the underlying landowner and

WHEREAS, this portion of the Jarales Interior Drain (the "Facility") is encumbered with conjoined property on each side and such is the basis for termination of a portion of certain easements by reason of abandonment and

WHEREAS, the Facility does not function as a drain and does not alleviate groundwater in the surrounding area and

WHEREAS, the District is unable to maintain this portion of the Facility due to private property fences and gates which inhibit access, and the District no longer uses the easement as described in the easement agreement to "construct, operates, maintain, use and control irrigation laterals, roads, and any other structures or facilities in anywise necessary or appurtenant thereto, with the right of ingress and egress" and

WHEREAS, the easement property was donated to the District and thus does not require an appraisal for the value of the land and

WHEREAS, the easement agreement has a mechanism in place to return the easement to the underlying landowner as follows: "The easement herein granted shall terminate and revert to the vendor, his successors or assigns, in the event the District, its successors or assigns, shall permanently discontinue using the above-described premises for the purposes hereinabove set forth" and

WHEREAS, the District may relinquish any and all rights that it may have in said easement and

WHEREAS, the easement cannot serve any other purpose for the District areas due to its location within private property boundaries and was reviewed for protection and preservation of MRGCD Ditches and Facilities per Board Resolution #M-01-10-22-178

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Pursuant to the terms of the grant of easement and to the authorities cited therein, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District hereby abandons the portion of the Jarales Interior Drain easement from Station 26+00± to 56+00±.

DATE AND RESOLVED in session this 11th day of July 2022.

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

d. Report on the WaterSMART Grant Application, June 20, 2022 - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO

Mr. Casuga stated they were going through their grant period and there were many different grants they have on a list to apply for. He said it was also important to their ICIP Plan. He added that they created a grant team to go through all of them. He said

the target of the grant would be filling in the holes they've learned about so they can measure water better with the goal of finding funding to increase the number of measurement locations by 10 under that particular grant, and then also other dollars they would be building measurement devices for as well. He said money wasn't the problem in some instances, its once you get it and can get it on the ground.

e. Report on the Summer Outreach & Soil Lab Updates - Gabrielle Coughlin, Agronomist

Ms. Coughlin gave an update on her first year. She said over the year she found that water was worth fighting for especially in the Middle Valley and was encouraged by the amount of support she had to really bring soil into the conversation to help address issues they were facing. She talked about what she had worked on over the past year, stating that she gained 27 new partners at different levels to assist with conservation initiatives and water delivery operations. She said they had plenty of opportunities to try out new conservation practices over the next couple years.

Ms. Coughlin said the Middle Rio Grande Community Soil Health Lab was still the state's first and only lab of its kind. She said they piloted a new financial assistance program using NMED funds for service water quality, and the District was awarded \$500,000 to pilot that money with the intention of irrigation and improvements. She said in the last 90 days, they reached 200 students and 50 naturalists through farm camps and workshops. Ms. Coughlin mentioned that last year they received \$15,000 for the lab budget, and this year they were at about \$190,000.

Ms. Coughlin added that they just received notice from the New Mexico Department of Ag that they received the health soils grant, which was the first time an entity like MRGCD had ever applied nor been awarded a grant. She said the grant would go towards a 10-acre cover crop project at Bernardo and Socorro County. She added that they had a \$500,000 preproposal sitting with the Soil and Water Commission, which was written with the Villages of Corrales and Los Ranchos in mind. She said the soils lab was going to take a much needed break from July 18th to August 22nd to catch up on purchasing new equipment with their budget and inventory partner donations. Ms. Coughlin stated they were donated equipment from the US Forest Service.

Dr. DuMars stated that the Unified World Colleges was one of their clients and was glad she developed a relationship with them because they did a lot of great water conservation things and have helped them on various projects.

Andrew Hautzinger congratulated Gabi for her Health Soils Grant and added that Valencia Soil & Water also had received news of their first eligible entity soils grant.





f. Report on the Six Pueblos Coalition Meeting, July 7, 2022 - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO

Mr. Casuga said the rain changed things, so the demand was low. He said with the rain, came a lot of weed growth on the right of ways. He said he reported to them that every piece of maintenance equipment related to vegetation removal operated five days a week and sometimes six or seven, so they were doing everything they could. He said everyone was happy and getting plenty of water.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11 - Announcements of Upcoming Events - Jason M. Casuga, PE

- a. NM Water Law Conference, Santa Fe, NM, September 29-30, 2022**
- b. 10th Annual Environmental Fair, Pueblo of Isleta Recreation Center, July 30, 2022**

Mr. Casuga said if anyone wanted to attend either event, to contact DeAnna about registering for them.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12 - REPORT(S) FROM THE MRGCD ATTORNEYS - Chief Water Counsel or General Counsel

AGENDA ITEM NO. 13 - REPORT(S) FROM THE BOARD

- a. NM Cattle Growers and Sheep Association Mid-year Meeting, June 12-13, 2022. Ruidoso Convention Center - Chair Russo Baca**

Madam Chair Russo Baca said she thought it was an interesting meeting even though she did have to leave early to get to the board meeting. She said she would see if she could access the meeting to send.

- b. Report on the Thornburg Foundation Meeting, June 17, 2022 - Chair Russo and Gabrielle Coughlin, Agronomist**

Gabrielle Coughlin stated they met with Thornburg to talk about their grants that supported technical assistance in terms of grant writing. She said Thornburg was a very willing and supportive partner of the initiatives. She said she thought were getting started in the infrastructure and would then be able to start collecting data.

Madam Chair Russo Baca added that there was potential for more funding for things like a processing facility in the valley for produce.

c. Report on NM Water Task Force Meeting, June 22, 2022 - Chair Russo Baca

Madam Chair Russo Baca said she included a presentation in the Board Packet on what the State Engineer's Office and the Water Task Force were doing in New Mexico.

d. Report on the Conservation Advisory Committee Meeting, June 23, 2022 - Chair Russo Baca

Madam Chair Russo Baca said she would make sure the report from the Advisory Committee was sent to everyone and stated it was mostly about the Following Program data and how many people were enrolled.

Director Barbara Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE ALL OF CHAIRMAN RUSSO BACA'S REPORTS IN TOTAL.** Seconded by Director Kelly. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

e. Report on the Mid-Region Council of Governments Metropolitan Transportation Board Meeting, June 24, 2022 - Director Barbara Baca

Director Barbara Baca announced she was elected by the Council of Governments to be the Executive Board Chair.

Madam Chair Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE REPORT ON THE MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEETING.** Seconded by Director Kelly. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Madam Chair Russo Baca requested a motion to move into Executive Session at 6:22 pm.

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Seconded by Director Barbara Baca. Roll call was administered, and the **MOTION CARRIED.**

Director Barbara Baca	Yes	Director Duggins	Absent
Director Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Dunning	Absent
Chair Russo Baca	Yes	Director Joaquin Baca	Absent
Director Sandoval	Absent		

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14 - EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. NMSA 1978 Open Meetings Act, Section 10-15-1(H)7
 1. Threatened or Pending Litigation

Director Kelly made the **MOTION TO BACK INTO REGULAR SESSION.** Director Barbara Baca seconded the motion. The **MOTION CARRIED.**

With no further comments, questions, or concerns, Madam Chair Russo Baca adjourned the meeting at 7:38 pm.

Approved to be the correct Minutes of the Board of Directors of July 11, 2022.

ATTESTED:

Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO

Stephanie Russo Baca, Madam Chair
MRGCD Board of Directors