

**MINUTES OF THE
2,225th REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

JULY 14, 2025 - 3:00 PM

Directors having been duly notified; Chairman Kelly called the regular meeting to order at 3:02 pm. The following Directors and Staff were present:

DIRECTORS

John P. Kelly, Chair	Present	Jason Casuga
Colin T. Baugh, Vice Chair	Present	Lorna Wiggins
Brian Jiron, Director	Absent	Jeff Wechsler
Stephanie Russo Baca, Director	Present	Pamela Fanelli
Glen Duggins, Director	Absent	Eric Zamora
Micheal T. Sandoval, Director	Present	Anne Marken
Karen Dunning, Director	Present	Matt Martinez

STAFF

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

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

Jennifer Faler, BOR	John Fleck, UNM	Christine Nardi, MRGCD
Tim Smith, AES	Ernie Marquez, AES	Jimmie Rogers, MRGCD
Annalise Porter	Margarita Sanchez, Belen	Julian Avalos, MRGCD
Patrick Taber, BIA	Tony Tafoya, Corrales	Steve Kinberger, MRGCD
Chris Perea, Wilson & Co	Vincent Sanchez	Derek Jarner, MRGCD
Rudy Perea, Corrales	Marcus de Cruz	Tarah Jaramillo, MRGCD
Amelia Barrow, MRGCD	Joanna Strange, MRGCD	Tim Bradley, MRGCD
Marta Moerch, MRGCD	Estella Gamboa, MRGCD	Joseph Halvey
Ray Hartwell	Rebecca Thompson, MRGCD	Amanda Molina, MRGCD
Amy Erickson	Casey Ish, MRGCD	Josh Hind, MRGCD
Anthony Wagner	Elaine Hebard	Mike Padilla, MRGCD

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Annalise Porter led the Pledge of Allegiance at today's meeting.

Chairman Kelly declared a quorum, and the meeting was publicly noticed. This meeting was a hybrid meeting with Vice Chairman Baugh attending virtually; Directors Jiron and Duggins were not present at today's meeting.

Chairman Kelly expressed that the board's thoughts were with all of the victims of the floods on the Guadalupe River and Texas and in Ruidoso, and they hope recovery and rehab efforts go well.

AGENDA ITEM NO.2 - APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Kelly shared that the La Joya Acequia Association requested removal of Item 10(b), Consideration/Approval of Resolution Adoption of the Special Water Service Charge for the 2026 Irrigation Season, as they have a newly created subcommittee to negotiate with MRGCD on the fee and will visit once the meeting has occurred.

Mr. Casuga asked to swap Item 9(a) and 9(c) in order of discussion.

Director Russo Baca added Item 13(m) for her report on the Interstate Stream Commission (ISC) meeting.

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA WITH THE ABOVE CHANGES**. Seconded by Director Russo Baca. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes		

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 - CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Consideration/Approval of Payment Ratification – July 14, 2025**
- b. **Consideration/Approval of June 2025 Invoice for Wiggins, Williams & Wiggins**
- c. **Consideration/Approval of June 2025 Invoices for Spencer Fane LLP**
- d. **Consideration/Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting – June 9, 2025**
- e. **Memo on MRGCD Approved Licenses for June 2025 (For Informational Purposes Only)**

Director Sandoval made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA**. Seconded by Director Russo Baca. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes		

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 - CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF 2025 MRGCD ELECTION ITEMS

- a. **Report from the Election Committee Meeting, July 14, 2025 - Chairman Kelly and Directors Russo Baca**

Chairman Kelly voiced that they had an Election Committee Meeting where they approved early voting and the day of election voting locations. He said they approved Sandoval County, Bernalillo County, and Socorro County. He stated that they struck the Harrison Middle School location due to poor turnout and troubling schedules during school session. He shared that early voting locations in Bernalillo County will be held at the Los Ranchos Villa and the District Office. For Sandoval County, they have Cochiti Pueblo and the Village of Bernalillo Public Library, and at the Electric Co-op in Socorro County.

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO APPROVE THE POLLING SITES**. Seconded by Director Sandoval. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Sandoval	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes		

Director Kelly expressed that the Election Committee also looked at signage on MRGCD rights-of-way after being asked by a board member. He explained that they passed a resolution two years ago regarding election signage, which stated that yard sized signs are okay, it has to be removed within 10 days, and they do not want them hanging on MRGCD property and facilities for operation and maintenance activities, and they found no reason to modify that.

b. Discussion/Approval of Polling Locations - Tim Smith, Election Director

Tim Smith, Election Director at AES, gave a quick update on the election calendar. He stated that candidate packets were available for pickup, with the deadline to turn in the required signatures is August 8th, and absentee voting begins on August 15th.

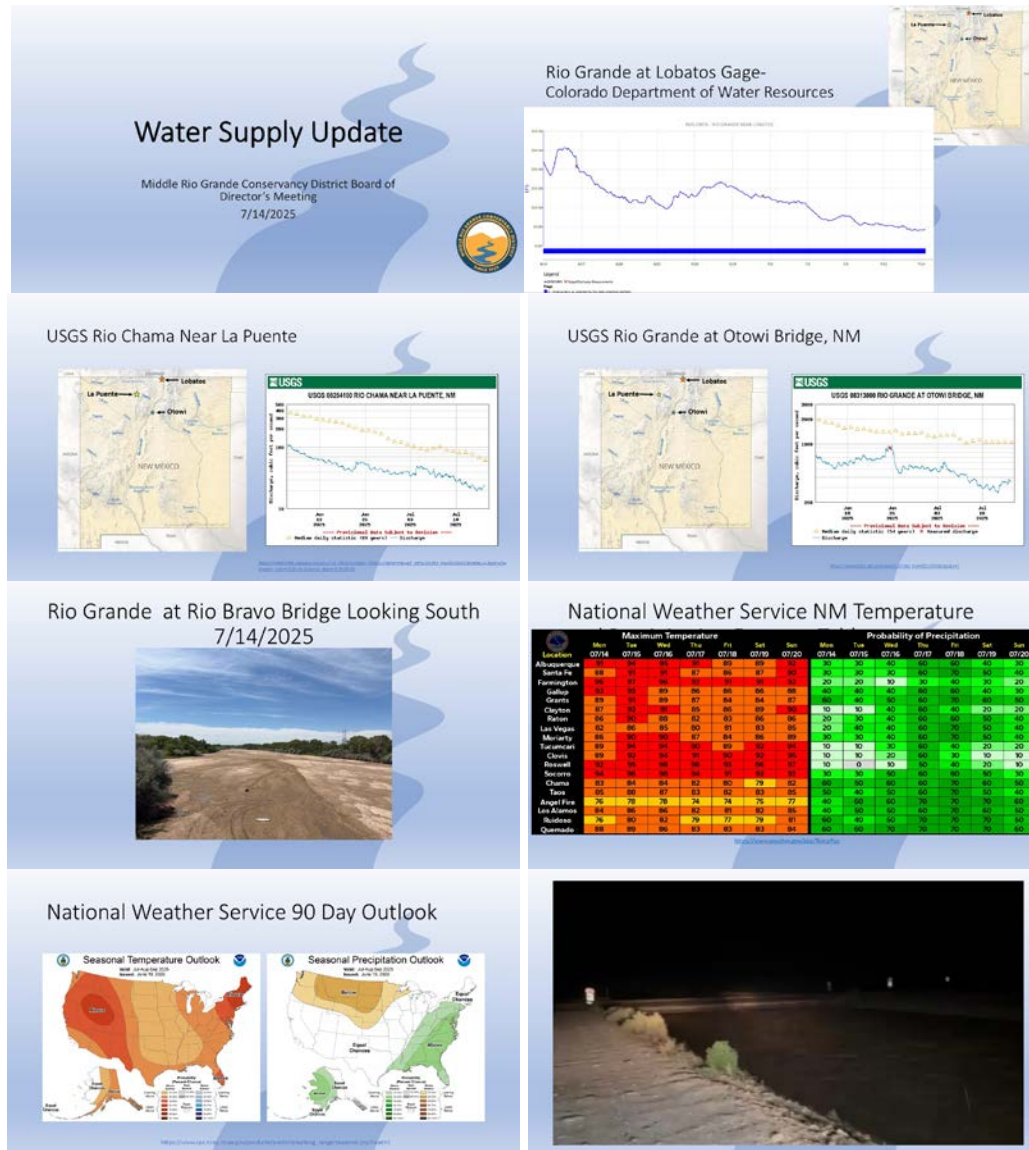
Director Dunning asked how they are handling applications for absentee ballots.

Mr. Smith responded they are currently available for pickup at their office, but they can also make copies and have them available here as well. He added they will also be available on the website.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 - REPORT(S) FROM THE WATER OPERATIONS

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

Anne Marken reported on water supply conditions. She expressed that it has been several weeks since the basin has received meaningful river inflow from rain events and conditions are currently very dry. She said that today Colorado is sending about 40 CFS of native Rio Grande water at the Rio Grande at Lobatos Gage, the La Puente Gage is at 25 CFS on the Rio Chama, the Otowi Gage is at 360 CFS, with approximately 60 CFS of that being San Juan Chama water being released for municipal use and environmental releases, and another 50 CFS were released from stored prior and paramount water to meet the needs of the Six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos. She stated that MRGCD has received 23% of a full San Juan Chama allocation to date this year, and they are expecting another one on July 15th, but it will not be enough to release. She added that MRGCD began releasing San Juan Chama water from storage on June 16th, and since July 6th, MRGCD has been operating as a run of the river system. She noted that drying in the Albuquerque Reach was observed last night and this morning there was a mile of dry riverbed. She said MRGCD is working with water management partners to strategize how to best use the limited resources available to mitigate the environmental impacts, but they do not have many tools in their toolbox right now. A. Marken reported that temperatures should ease slightly this week with promising chances for widespread rain events, and the seasonal outlook through September is predicting above average temperatures and equal chances for above or below average precipitation. She shared that if rain brings water supply, MRGCD will divert and deliver when and where they are able; however, farmers should expect extended periods between irrigation deliveries. She stated that north of Isleta Pueblo is in prior and paramount operations, so they are currently curtailed. She expressed that she understood how difficult these conditions are and gave her sincere sympathy for all facing hardships due to limited water supply. She mentioned they observed some rain inflow into the Socorro Division last night, but those inflows showed up in the river downstream of San Acacia Diversion, so they were not able to divert.



Director Dunning asked if the Water Authority was anticipating switching to wells and not releasing them from Heron.

Ms. Marken responded that the Utility Authority switched to groundwater and will likely be on that for the foreseeable future. She added that Santa Fe released a small chunk of San Juan Chama water, and they were able to divert that downstream of Otowi.

Chairman Kelly shared that he was notified that Christ of Desert Monastery on the Chama has been evacuated due to the Laguna Fire. He said a fire through that canyon would be devastating for natural resources there and conveyance through the canyon, so they should all pay attention to what is going on north of them.

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

Mr. Martinez reported on water distribution. He expressed they have entered another period of severe shortage where only rain can help them now. He said early June

brought much needed rain runoff that extended their ability to meet irrigation demand without supplemental storage, but the flows diminished by June 16th, which prompted the release of San Juan Chama Water that sustained them for three weeks. He stated that storm events on June 24th and July 3rd helped stretch their supply but caused significant damage to the Belen Highline Canal and San Juan Main Canal. He voiced that a concerted effort was made to catch up on deliveries in disadvantaged areas before conditions declined and they made the most of what they had. On June 26th, low river levels and mechanical issues forced them to shut down the Corrales pumping operations, but most irrigators across the service area had received seven deliveries beforehand. He noted that the pumps have since been fixed and are ready to be used once conditions improve. On July 10th, BIA declared prior and paramount operations, which triggered the curtailment of non-pueblo deliveries upstream of Isleta Pueblo, and they are working together to coordinate a rotational schedule and distributing water in accordance with P&P needs. Irrigators downstream of Isleta Pueblos are still able to work with limited flows passing below the pueblo, which tends to favor the east side of Belen Division. He assured that they are committed to managing the available water supply as equitably as possible, and they remain hopeful for rainfall in the days and weeks ahead. He urged irrigators to be ready to accept water on short notice and to not pass up water when their ISO offers it, as opportunities may be brief.

Director Russo Baca asked Mr. Martinez to elaborate on saying that some irrigators got around seven deliveries, and if Corrales would be turned back on if they are able to get out of P&P operations.

Mr. Martinez answered that according to the ISO logbook application irrigation records, the majority of parcels in Corrales Service Area received seven deliveries. In regard to the pumps, he believed it would take sustained inflows likely from the Cochiti release to turn them back on.

Mr. Casuga inquired about the anticipated flow rate needed to turn the pumps back on.

Mr. Martinez responded probably about 600 cubic feet per second, as they have to be mindful not to be too aggressive.

Mr. Casuga noted that oftentimes short term bursts of rain that do not happen in the mountains and or produce significant runoff through the system have to be released out, and short-term bursts from arroyos may only last a couple of hours. So, to be able to turn the pumps on, get the system charged, and getting water delivered before that pulse passes is not really realistic. It would need to be volumes coming down from the mountains that would prop up the river for days before being able to turn the pumps on.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 - ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR (Comments are limited to three (3) minutes)

Margarita Sanchez

Ms. Sanchez stated that on the west side of Belen is where most of the water is needed, as there are many small parcel owners like herself who are not getting water due to the streets that have been put in and the loss of their canals, but they are still having to pay the Conservancy for water service and nobody cares about it. She commented that the Conservancy has a lot of equipment, personnel, and ability to do things for them, but felt that they are not representing them. She explained that the resolution where their duct was taken out by the Conservancy is for next year and nothing for this year, not a refund, not a sorry, and not an answer on where

their duct went missing. She explained that she talked to Ms. (Estella) Gamboa about this and was still given another bill. She suggested the lease program going down to a quarter acre so small parcels could have some kind of relationship with the Conservancy. She added that a big organization like this, with all this money, should have empathy and an ability to help service small plot holders that have hung onto their plots through generations.

Tony Tafoya

Mr. Tafoya first apologized to Director Duggins for interrupting him when he was doing his three-minute rebuttal at the last meeting and said that will not happen again. He said with respect to Mr. Martinez's report, he has only had four irrigations on the Sandoval Lateral through the whole year that were 21 days apart, which is a little too long. He felt the water was being wasted, as the ditches are running 7 to 8 days and most of the water at night is going back into the system after they have pumped it. He mentioned that last year, the debris cages around the intakes of the pumps in Corrales were still pumping when they were halfway exposed, and last week they were still completely under water. He did not understand why they had to turn them off.

Director Russo Baca expressed that she also had only four irrigations in Valencia County, and she felt his pain, and she said she understands this is a frustrating year for everyone.

Vincent Sanchez

Mr. Sanchez, Los Ranchos resident, talked about the issues he is having in his area. He first shared that they have had a lot of different ISOs and he felt the ISOs do not get enough support in enforcing what they see, as in individuals watering when they are not supposed to. He said they all seemed to have that complaint, which directly affects him. He explained that he is almost at the end of the Pueblo Acequia in Los Ranchos, and there is a land dispute in that corner where there is fencing that goes across the Pueblo Lateral, and that whole corner is an absolute disaster. He said his neighbors keep putting up fences that either obstruct or encroach onto his personal easement, as well as MRGCD's easement. He stated that he gets no help from the Village of Los Ranchos about this, and MRGCD feels that they do not have the power or ability to fight anyone about encroachment or obstruction. He noted that he is dealing with three fences that neighbors have put across his prescriptive easement and an improperly sloped irrigation channel. He added that his application granted for a turnout upgrade is hinging on a pipe he did not install, and even though he is the dominant estate in this, people have obstructed his water access and the walking access to it. He shared this has been an ongoing fight with MRGCD and the Village, which he found ridiculous when the state statutes are quite clear on all of this, and he has also had struggles trying to figure out historic land uses and water rights for his property, which seems to be the best way to alleviate the problem by getting wells on his property without suing his neighbors.

Chairman Kelly responded that they have resources here to help with some of the historical information. He stated that the Pueblo Acequia has a checkered past, and he understood his concerns.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 - REPORT(S) FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

a. Bureau of Reclamation - Jennifer Faler, Area Manager

Ms. Faler expressed that she has had more time lately to interact with stakeholders, but their capacity of the area office is decreasing. She explained that Congress allows the Albuquerque Area Office 200 full-time staff people, but they are currently at 117. She noted that they are in a hiring freeze that was just extended to October. She stated that they have had a lot of discussions on shared services, and a lot of projects are in jeopardy due to not being able to do the cultural clearances. She shared that they just

did a market analysis down at Elephant Butte Historic District to do a concessionaire contract, but they do not have any realty people left that can do it, so the market analysis will expire. Therefore, they are looking across Reclamation for a realty person with concessionaire experience. Ms. Faler voiced they are doing risk assessments mostly on construction projects to make sure they are done safely with the levels of staffing they have. She said she has heard that some facilities may be closing, but all of that takes approval from above, and they are doing their best to keep things moving, like contracts, financial assistance water operations, facility operations, the river maintenance program, Indian Water Right settlements. She mentioned that they only lost one person in the Chama office, a roving mechanic, but no impacts for San Juan Chama Project so far.

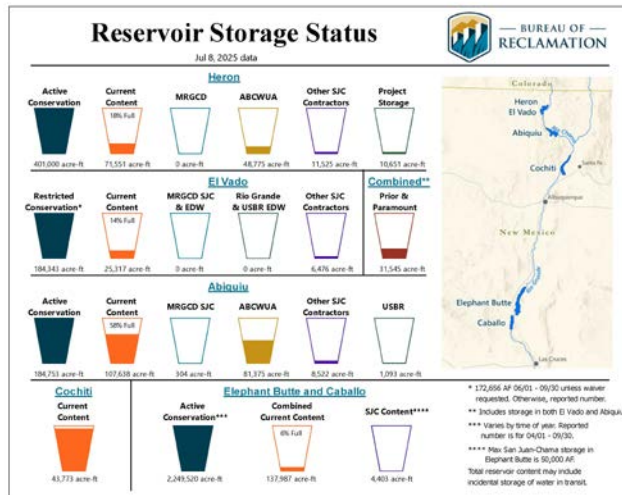
Ms. Faler gave an update on El Vado. She said they have had drilling going on for several weeks that is scheduled to be wrapped up in the next couple months. The appraisal collective action study is scheduled for next month, with feasibility study in two years, which they need to get approval from OMB on which alternative they can select. She stated that the alternatives they are looking at are the tear down alternative and the breach alternative, but they are looking at adding a couple of alternatives that MRGCD would be brought in on, so they are looking forward to their input on that. She shared that they have had several meetings with the Fish and Wildlife Service and are hoping to get approvals to reach out to the District and others about their consultation strategy. She added that the Lower San Acacia Reach Improvement Project is continuing to move forward, and EIS is basically wrapped up. They are looking to finalize the EIS, but they got a new NEPA handbook that they need to review first.

Director Dunning asked if they have a commissioner yet.

Ms. Faler answered that they do not, but there is a nominee so they will see how that goes.

Chairman Kelly stated that their issues right now are compliance with the Compact and they need to evaluate the best options, so he would support adding in a couple more in there and a very deliberate look at the best holistic options they have for not only El Vado Dam, but the entire quarter all the way from Heron down to Abiquiu.

Ms. Faler responded that they want to make sure they end up with an alternative that can get through O&M. She said that running through the schedule, there was some cushion in time to be able to store water in El Vado even if construction was not complete. She said that it was at the forefront of their mind.



MRGCD BOARD MEETING (7-9-2025)

- Heron Summary**

Content	71,551	ac-ft	(7/9/2025)
Arroyo Inflow	0	cfs	
Total S/C Inflow in 2025	15,207	ac-ft	
Currently releasing	0	cfs	
Current MRGCD storage	0	ac-ft	
- El Vado Summary**

Total storage (all contractors and natural)	25,317	ac-ft	(7/9/2025)
Native in El Vado	18,841	ac-ft	
MRGCD's S/C storage in El Vado	0	ac-ft	
P & P	18,841	ac-ft	
Other S/C contractors	6,476	ac-ft	
Current release is	100	cfs	RO inflow is 33 - 145 cfs
- Storage in Abiquiu**

Content	107,618	ac-ft	(7/9/2025)
MRGCD's S/C storage	304	ac-ft	
P&P	12,704	ac-ft	
Total supplemental water released in 2025	3,214	ac-ft	

Total Disposition WY-end Data as of 7/9/2025 (% of module)

Rio Chama Basin	75%
Upper Rio Grande Basin	75%
Sangre de Cristo Basin	95%
Jemez Basin	75%
San Juan River Basin	75%

* Multiple storm pulses throughout the Middle Rio Grande valley reconnected flows intermittently through June. The seventh strong event for the year began today with approximately 32 river miles dry in the San Juan reach and 1.2 river miles dry in the Jemez reach.

** A July allocation of 8,000 ac-ft will bring the 2025 San Juan-Chama total allocation to 30,000 ac-ft (~31% of full).

*** On June 26, substantial debris flows from Pancha Creek within the Black Fire burn scar area discharged into Caballo Reservoir. Surface debris were largely captured by a buoy line and subsequently removed through manual operations by the Elephant Butte Division, though some clearing of the outlet works occurred and will continue to be monitored. Clearing of the lower outlet structure will be completed at the end of the irrigation season. Release plans for the remainder of the year have been adjusted to minimize further slugging.

b. Bureau of Indian Affairs - Patrick Taber, Acting Designated Engineer

Mr. Taber briefed MRGCD on Bureau of Indian Affairs. He gave a shoutout to Ms. Marken and Mr. Martinez on their presentations, as they did a good job of going through some of the situations that have occurred in the past couple weeks with water supply and distribution. He stated that he recently visited the Pueblo of San Felipe, and in reviewing some of their O&M contracts, there were a couple facilities that transitioned off some of the Schedule A items and were on previous maintenance agreements. He noted that he is looking into that but has not been able to complete a full review of the project, but the Pueblo does have limited distribution for some of their prior and paramount waters, so it is possibly worth reevaluating and discussing. He pointed out that water levels within the Rio Grande have been decreasing rapidly, and he has been keeping an eye on that and having weekly calls with the pueblos for thresholds to release P&P waters. He shared that they got saved by rainstorms in late June that presented a good amount of rain up above Otowi, so they were able to maintain but it never really gave them much additional supply in the hydrographs. He expressed that they crossed the threshold on July 8th, and after the Six Middle Rio Grande Pueblo Coalition Meeting on July 10th, they requested release of P&P operations. He mentioned that when they go into P&P operations many non-pueblo users are affected, but many pueblos users are also affected. Since that time, he has been keeping in touch with most of their agency to make sure they are as transparent as possible. Mr. Taber stated this was going to be a challenging year and he would be reviewing with some other agencies actions and activities that have occurred over the course of the year, and he wanted to include MRGCD in that.

Mr. Casuga commented that MRGCD also attended the meeting with San Felipe, and one of the things they talked about was that the current contract with BIA allows an amendment process to add facilities back to Schedule A, which are facilities governed in the agreement. He explained that somewhere between 2004 and 2016, facilities on Schedule A for San Felipe fell off the list, as well as every pueblo. At the meeting, they agreed to work with BIA to look for any documentation identifying why that happened. He said that regardless, some of those facilities need to go back on that list and they need to find a way to review that. He made a commitment to San Felipe that he will present a path for the Board forward on how they want to do that, and offered two paths forward, which are MRGCD staff making a recommendation to the Board or the Board

reconstituting the BIA Negotiating Committee to look at it and review it with MRGCD staff and delegations of the pueblos. He suggested tabling this discussion for a month and he and Mr. Taber can report back in August about what documentation they found.

Chairman Kelly voiced that his first impression was that this was a list of facilities that were attachment to an agreement that the Board focused on with the Committee, but chasing down why a facility fell off Schedule A was not something the Board should deal with. He suggested taking a recommendation from the CEO and staff on what to do here and bringing that back for a vote.

Director Russo Baca pointed out that we have a BIA Committee that could also help with that unless that committee only met when the contract was renewed, and if so, we could make sure we are doing a better job at reviewing it where we notice these things.

Mr. Casuga said it was brought up that it was really important for the community to know that there are newly reclaimed lands that are in parity with non-tribal lands, and this year more than ever may be more important to be able to document that parity. He commented that it has been a while since prior and paramount has operated to this degree, so he recommended monitoring that and having a report on being able to document that to the degree that prior and paramount releases did not disproportionately benefit newly reclaimed lands of the pueblos, and be transparent with the public that acreage beyond prior and paramount volume is not disproportionately benefit the tribes that non-travel irrigators do not get access to.

Mr. Taber added that out of respect for the government to government relationship with the pueblos, he would not provide any specifics, but he already had a meeting request to go over those kinds of situations that will happen this week.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 - REPORT(S) FROM THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT - Christine L. Nardi, MBA

a. Introduction of MRGCD New Hires

Ms. Nardi introduced MRGCD's new hires, which their new safety program manager, Timothy Bradley.

General Office

TIMOTHY	BRADLEY	SAFETY PROGRAM MANAGER	06/23/2025
DOMINICK	CHAVEZ	IRRIGATION SYSTEMS OPERATOR	06/23/2025

Albuquerque Division

KAYDEN	MCDANIEL	FIELD MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN	07/07/2025
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Belen Division

ALFONSO	PADILLA	FIELD MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN	07/07/2025
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Chairman Kelly asked Mr. Bradley to give a brief description of his background and how he will keep the modifier down where it is.

Mr. Bradley responded that he has been in safety for 10 years, and mostly worked in construction, residential, data centers, and a variety of other things. He expressed that Ms. Corwin did a good job of setting of the program and he did not see any major changes that needed to be made. He said he plans to do ride a-longs, attend safety

meetings with all division directors on a routine basis, and push forward the idea that safety is each individual's responsibility and to watch out for each other.

b. Employee Recognitions

Ms. Nardi recognized Rebecca Thompson, Junior Accountant, in the Finance and Accounting Division, as she was awarded the Excellence Award for providing expertise and support while performing additional critical duties.



L to R: Pam Fanelli, Rebecca Thompson & Jason Casuga

Chairman Kelly congratulated Ms. Thompson on her award and thanked her for her hard work and dedication.

Mr. Casuga introduced another new hire, Joanna “Jo” Strange, Bosque Management Coordinator. He explained that when Yasmeen retired as the planner, her focus was in multiple hats, and she did quite a bit of work that our right of way group does now and she also did the Bosque work. He stated that this is not a new FTE (fulltime employee), but they adjusted the role to focus primarily on the Bosque.

Director Dunning congratulated Ms. Strange and invited her to the Neighborhood Association and Los Ranchos meetings to get to know the people in the communities that she will be serving.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 - REPORT(S) FROM THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIRECTOR - Eric Zamora, PE

a. Updates from the Albuquerque Division Manager, Derek Jarner


Mr. Jarner gave an update on the Albuquerque Division with some of the things that happened over the last year and challenges they are facing. He said they started off the year really well, but constant high winds blew in a lot of weeds that took two months to fix and get the whole system going again. He discussed projects they have done this year, including taking down five trees Pajarito Lateral that they contracted out, rehab checking, replacing the heading of the Ruby Lateral, replacing turnouts, repairing the

check, doing erosion control, and replacing turnout at Pueblo Acequia. He voiced that Albuquerque Division's new vegetation rig they got for the drains has been a gamechanger and a really nice asset. Other projects consisted of improving a gaging station catwalk at the bank on the northside of the Albuquerque Riverside Drain, putting in a new turnout, new headwall, and new concrete apron at the Rice and Chamisal Wasteway, and getting rid of 20 to 30 dead trees near the Bosque School. He talked about the field maintenance techs dealing with encampments, including a major one in Bernalillo County, where they removed 26 dump truck loads full of stuff from. Mr. Jarner highlighted the field maintenance crews, sawyer crew, construction crew, clerks, and crew supervisors. He voiced that their equipment needs right now are dump trucks, as all nine of theirs are aging and ditch banks take a toll on them.


ABQ Division

July '25 Update


- 2025 Update
- Developing Challenges
- Team highlights
- Equipment Needs



Weeds, weeds, and more weeds..



Pajarito Rehab




Aging infrastructure and dying trees..

If we are going into a job, lets do everything that needs to be done and never go back.


Pajarito Rehab

Main priority: Remove five large, dying cottonwoods.


Secondary goals: Rehab check, replace heading of Rubi Lateral, replace concrete apron, improve access for maintenance crews.



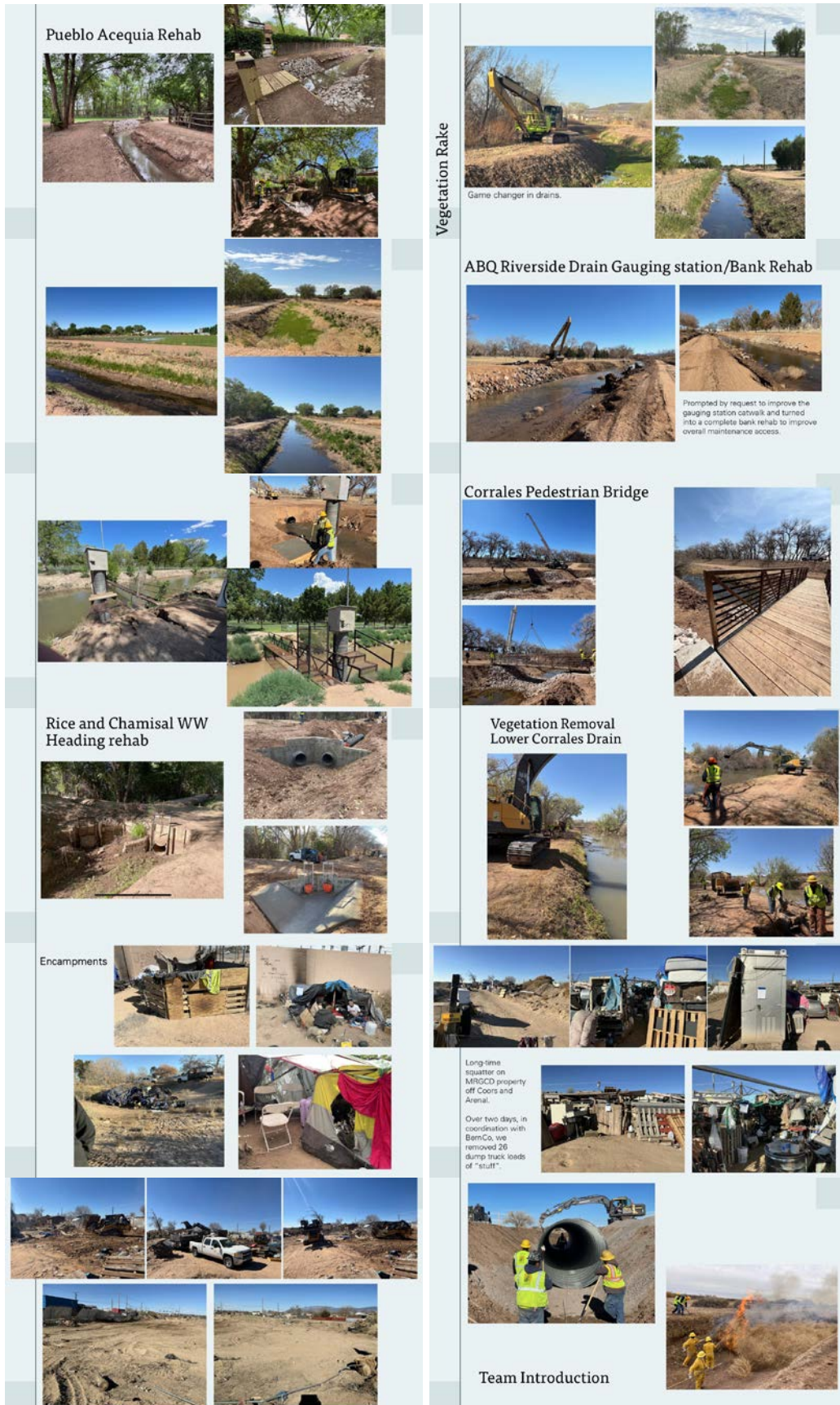
Pajarito Rehab



Pueblo Acequia rehab




If we are going into a job, lets do everything that needs to be done and never go back.




Two field maintenance crews that handle all vegetation maintenance on walking ditches:


North Valley:
Crew Lead: Ernesto Vera,
Crew: Juan Gallegos, Ubaldo Duran,
Manual Mata, Emmanuel Rodriguez



South Valley:
Crew Lead: Manuel Vigil
Crew: Jesus Vega, Juan Quintero, Kayden McDaniel




Sawyer Crew




Crew lead: Will Garcia,
Crew: Joe Lucero, Jorge Mezaiegos, and Erin Morel

Construction Crew



Crew Supervisor: Donald Montoya




Crew: Jose Vasquez, Patrick Chavez (20years+),
Henry Sanchez, and Gregory Herrera

Crew Supervisors

Mike Gonzales: Field
Maintenance Supervisor - (28
Year Veteran)


Donald Montoya: Construction
Supervisor

Jake Jaramillo: Equipment and
Maintenance Supervisor




Clerks

Danielle Yonnie - Clerk II
Pricilla Rodriguez - Clerk



ABQ Division



Equipment Needs

ABQ Division Priority List
1) 7 yard dump trucks X 2 (automatic)
2) Tandem dump truck (Automatic)
3) Volvo Hauler E - Wheelend Dr
4) Large equipment transport trailer
5) Crew Cab X 2
6) 1 ton trash truck
7) Seed spreader
8) 1 ton single cab pickup and trailer for services
9) 3rd ton wheelend cab for (Overhead)
10) 2-ton for new CCL drivers
11) Wood chipper 30" diameter trees
12) Grapple loader for walk ditch
13) Tractor attachment for 720 Backhoe

Dump trucks are the main priority.

ABQ Division has 9, all of which are over 100,000 miles.
6 are over 200,000 miles.
2 are over 300,000 miles.

Ms. Fanelli noted that they have \$4 million available in the FY26 budget reserved for equipment, and as soon as an equipment list comes in, they will apply for a loan.

Director Russo Baca mentioned that they sometimes have to rent some of the small equipment, and they can look at that in the Finance Committee of purchasing outright versus rental cost.

Director Dunning asked if there was any way to put what projects they are doing on the website, so people know what is coming down the pipe.

Ms. Molina added that the team was wonderful about sharing that information with her and those public notices do go out on social media and the website, and states when the projects start, expected completion, the project contact, and how it impacts the community around it.

NOTE: Director Sandoval left the meeting at 4:30pm

b. Monsoon Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Response

Mr. Casuga expressed that as they bring division managers forward and we see photos, this one is uniquely different than the other three counties in density and urbanization. He said that Bernalillo County is urbanized, Valencia County is urbanizing, and it is O&M and lessons learned about losing access as urbanization happens around them and fighting to maintain the O&M access they need to continue delivering irrigation water. However, he stated that they have the right person for the job who is doing an excellent job in Albuquerque.

Chairman Kelly mentioned that he took a ride out there on his mountain bike and noticed a lot of work being done out there and felt the quality of the construction is top notch.

c. Valencia County Fire Updates

1. Discussion on Fire Mitigation Pilot Project(s)

Mr. Zamora discussed the Kid Fire, Cotton Fire, and Cotton 2 Fires. He explained that the Kid Fire was reported on June 18th, around 1:30 a.m., south of Main Street in Los Lunas, where approximately 25 acres burned, and Belen Division responded with a dozer to the scene. On June 21st, around 2:50 p.m., the Cotton Fire was reported, and it impacted around 100 acres and 12 homes were lost. They also responded to that fire with the dozer. On June 22nd, at 9:15 a.m., the Cotton 2 Fire was reported north of Highway 6 and on the east side of the river. It was responded to with two dozers and a water truck, and approximately 160 acres were burned, and 12 homes were lost. He also displayed the areas that were impacted by fire retardant drops.

Vice Chair Baugh opened a discussion on fire mitigation pilot projects. He said he was happy to have a Bosque manager and this conservation of what to do with our precious resource. However, we are behind the ball in terms of having conservation and taking a hard look at what they consider their conservation approach, as catastrophic mitigation is the conversation now. He stated that we need to understand what we are facing when we have a number of resources that are sometimes our treasure and other times our nightmare. He voiced that we need to take the lead on educating and guiding reintroductions of what a sacred and beautiful place the Bosque is, what it needs to be, and how we need to manage it. He shared that he has been talking with constituents and agencies that are looking for the District to take the lead. He said we are already doing a lot in this regard, but we are not doing the best we can in terms of educating constituents on all the efforts we are doing. He proposed coming together in an exploratory meeting of the minds to reimagine the future with our different agencies. Vice Chair Baugh shared that he has been talking about this with people and they are excited about it. He said that if we want to save the Bosque they need to reduce the fuel load, which is going to take heavy equipment and taking out big trees and wild things that we love, but it has to change so they are not such an easy target. He expressed that he does not want to be susceptible to arson anymore and laws need to change on how they push for more strict and enforceable means of holding arsonists accountable.

Ms. Wiggins agreed that an analysis of the risk and fire mitigation has been an ongoing effort by the District, but the current focus seems to result from people's personal experiences, which makes them far more interested. She did not want

to minimize the attention that has been given to this in the past, so she did not want anyone to think this is something new.

Director Russo Baca recognized how devastating these fires are to the community and MRGCD taking a lot of effort to make sure we are fire wise.

Mr. Casuga appreciated what Vice Chair Baugh said. He stated that fire oftentimes falls into the same category as flooding, where people do not worry about it until it happens to them. He expressed that there has been an ongoing conversation about the Bosque and fire risk but now was an opportunity to be able to advance forward. He explained how they can do that, as a Board and organization, is having Ms. Strange and the conservation team interact to do what Vice Chair Baugh was talking about by attending these meetings to talk about steps they are taking, development of mitigation plans, post-mitigation efforts, and pre-fire mitigation. He talked about advocating for funding and shared that he would be attending a meeting tomorrow to speak with lobbyists about preparing and getting an idea of what funding would look like. He added that there is also a public meeting later this week in Valencia County where there will be a discussion on fire. He said these fires are happening because of humans, and humans are not going away, so they have to find a path forward in how they do this. He expressed that Vice Chair Baugh's energy was in the right spot, and they have to capitalize on facing this issue.

Vice Chair Baugh stated that he enjoys highlighting all the things the District has done, but that it is on us to highlight that better by communicating, educating, capitalizing on the timing, and leaning into these moments where they can progress towards bringing all these agencies together and collaborating more, because everyone wants to do more.

Chairman Kelly agreed and said we need to put the right people together on staff with Vice Chair Baugh to have that discussion and start his process.

Mr. Zamora continued his presentation. He talked about storm damage they received from a quick moving storm that came through Valencia County in the Belen area on June 24th, that resulted in flooding. He also spoke about one of the future ponds that Belen was planning to construct, where a consultant had already performed some preliminary design and analysis on the site and are currently working on right of way issues. He noted that it would intercept a significant amount of flows that cross I-25 on the west side of Belen and just north of Camino del Llano. He talked about sediment that DOT was removing from Highway 304 from arroyos going over the pavement. He noted that they are also working through some issues with Socorro County on some maintenance issues regarding culverts.

Mr. Casuga shared that he had a conversation with one of the landowners along the highline, who said it was a good spot that MRGCD got to on there, as there are sentiments that had the work there not been done, this storm event would have broken the Belen Highline Canal.

July 2025 Technical Services Update

A DAY IN THE LIFE.....



June 24, 2025
10:00 am

COTTON FIRE
[video 1]
[video 2]



June 24, 2025
6:00 pm

Valencia County Storm



July 3, 2025

SOCORRO COUNTY STORM





AGENDA ITEM NO. 10 - REPORT(S) FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER/CFO

a. Consideration/Approval of Resolution M-07-14-25-224 Authorizing Acceptance of WTB Project WPF-6591 Funding Offer: Water Storage Conveyance and Delivery Project - Feeder 3 Pump Station from the NMFA

Ms. Fanelli reported that the District received an award letter from the Water Trust Board for the Feeder 3 Pump Station in June for an award amount of \$5.4 million. She said the loan amount was \$600,000 and the required match was \$3,091,000, with the total construction cost being \$9.1 million. She stated that the District will use the Water Smart Grant in the amount of \$2.5 million as a portion of that grant match of the \$3,000,000 grant match, and the remaining match is \$591,000. She commented that this would come from the Capital Investment Fund, and they are also constructing a \$9.1 million pumpstation for \$1.2 million. She expressed that the interest on the loan is 0%, with an admin fee of .25%. She noted this is another great example of how they are using the Capital Investment Fund to secure grants and turning a \$1.2 million investment into a \$9.1 million project.

Chairman Kelly made the **MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION M-07-14-25-224 TO AUTHORIZE WTB PROJECT WPF-6591 FUNDING OFFER**. Seconded by Director Russo Baca. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes

b. Review of End of Fiscal year 2025 and Fourth Quarter Financials

Ms. Fanelli gave a review of the end of FY25 and fourth quarter financials. She noted that these numbers are not final, as they are waiting for additional information to make final adjustments for the audit, which is due December 15th. For the General Fund, revenues and expenditures were \$28.2 million, and they brought \$1,042,000 in from FY24 encumbrances. She stated they made two budget adjustments to increase expenditures for the Belen Highline Project and reduction of expenses from the Army Corps of Engineers for the San Acacia Levy Project, which reduced expenditures and resulted increased expenditures by \$970,000. She reported that actual revenues year to date are \$29.4 million and actual expenditure is \$27.8. She said they currently have 943 additional expenditures and encumbrances to bring to next year's budget, and the projected surplus for the General Fund is \$1 million, primarily due to projected surpluses in ad valorem revenues. She said they budgeted for a 3% increase in valuations and have seen 5% increases in valuations, especially from Bernalillo County. For the Grant Fund, revenues and expenditures equal their year to date and total \$14,525,000, and the District did not spend approximately \$20 million of their budgeted revenues and expenditures due to delays in certain projects, and they have been budgeted again in

FY26. They brought \$862,000 in from the Capital Investment Fund into the Grant Fund for FY25 and incurred \$461,000 in loan proceeds. The Capital Investment Fund year to date revenue totals \$4.4 million and expenditures total \$3.2. She added that the surplus will be rolled into FY26 and budgeted to be spent on grant match, and they expect to have spent everything in their fund balance in the Capital Investment Fund at the end of FY26.

c. Consideration/Approval of Resolution BA-07-14-25-105 for FY2025 Fourth Quarter Unaudited Financial Report and Unaudited Cash Balance Review as of July 14, 2025

Ms. Fanelli asked for approval of the fourth quarter financial statements and cash balances.

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION BA-07-14-25-105**. Seconded by Director Dunning. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes

d. Report on the Finance Committee Meeting, July 14, 2025 - Chairman Kelly and Directors Dunning and Russo Baca

Prior to the motion to approve, Chairman Kelly voiced that the Finance Committee went through the resolution in detail and accepted the end of year fourth quarter report.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11 - REPORT(S) FROM THE CHIEF ENGINEER/CEO– Jason M. Casuga, PE

a. Report on the Socorro County Informational Meeting, July 9, 2025 - Jason M. Casuga, CE/CEO, Eric Zamora, Director of Technical Services, Chairman Kelly, Director Duggins, Jiron, and Russo Baca

Refer to the board's written reports in the appendices.

b. Report on the Six Middle Rio Grande Pueblo Coalition Meeting, July 10, 2025 - Casey Ish, Director of Lands and Conservation, Anne Marken, River Ops & Telemetry Mgr. and Directors Russo Baca and Sandoval

Refer to the board's written reports in the appendices.

c. Information on Upcoming Events

1. Valencia County Informational Meeting, July 17, 2025, 9 a.m. - noon, Tome Dominguez Hall, 2933 Hwy 47, Tome, NM
2. Sandoval County Informational Meeting, July 24, 2025, 9 a.m. - noon, Black Mesa Casino Auditorium, 25 Hagen Rd, Algodones, NM
3. Bernalillo County Informational Meeting, July 31, 2025, 9 a.m. - noon, South Valley Multipurpose Senior Center, 2008 Larrazolo Rd SW, Albuquerque, NM
4. NM Water Law 32nd Annual Conference, September 11-12, 2025 - Santa Fe, NM
5. Coalition of Rio Grande Water Users Conference, September 30 to October 2, 2025 - Santa Fe, NM

6. **13th Annual Tribal Water Law Super Conference, October 16-17, 2025 - Isleta Resort & Casino**
7. **Family Farm Alliance Annual Conference, October 30-31, 2025 - Reno, NV (August 30 deadline)**

The chair asked that the board be notified of the upcoming events and when to sign up.

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

Mr. Wechsler had nothing to report during the open session.

Lorna Wiggins updated the Board on the case with Adriana Villar. She expressed that they recently asked the court to lift the stay to entertain a motion to show cause, as Ms. Villar has again cut into the ditch, which is contrary to the terms of the injunction entered by the court. She explained that Ms. Villar failed to timely respond to their filings, so they filed a notice today to the court that briefing is complete, and the court with either set a hearing or make a decision on the matter. She also added that on July 2nd, Ms. Villar, her mother, and her daughter filed a TRO (temporary restraining order) against her neighbors who were walking on the ditch bank on the west side of their property and on MRGCD's easement. She stated that they sprayed them with a garden hose and then law enforcement was called, where law enforcement emphasized that it was public access and declined to arrest the neighbors. As a result, Ms. Villar filed a request for a temporary restraining order asking to restrict access to the right of way behind her property. Ms. Wiggins voiced that she would keep the Board informed on that.

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

- a. **Report on the City of Albuquerque Open Space Meeting, June 10, 2025 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- b. **Report on the Farmers for Future Farmers Meeting, June 10, 2025 - Director Russo Baca**
- c. **Report on the River Mile 60 Tour with Office of Rep. Gabe Vasquez, June 11, 2025**
- d. **Report on the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) Board Meeting, June 12, 2025 - Director Russo Baca**
- e. **Report on the TOTAL NM (Teacher Outdoors to ALL Learners) Teaching Beyond the Walls Conference, June 13, 2025 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- f. **Report on the Valencia Soil & Water Conservation District Board Meeting, June 13 & June 26, 2025 - Director Russo Baca**
- g. **Report on the Tierra Viva Neighborhood Association, June 20, 2025 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- h. **Report on the Valencia County Emergency Commission Meeting, June 23, 2025 - Director Russo Baca**
- i. **Report on the Interview for the MRGCD Documentary, June 24, 2025 - Director Russo Baca**

- j. **Report on the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) Environmental Science Program, June 24, 2025 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- k. **Report on a Constituent Meeting off the Harwood Lateral, June 25, 2025 - Vice Chair Baugh**
- l. **Report on the NM Water Resources Research Institute (WRRI) Agricultural Water Resilience Program Webinar, July 1, 2025 - Director Russo Baca**
- m. **Report on the ISC Meeting, June 18, 2025 - Director Russo Baca**

The chair stated that board reports were submitted. *Refer to the written reports within the appendices.*

Director Dunning made the **MOTION TO APPROVE ALL THE REPORTS FROM THE BOARD**. Seconded by Director Russo Baca. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Dunning	Yes	Director Russo Baca	Yes

The chair requested a motion to go into the closed session at 5:22 pm.

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**. Seconded by Director Dunning. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Russo Baca	Yes	Director Dunning	Yes

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14 EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. **NMSA 1978 Open Meetings Act, Section 10-15-1(H)2**
 - 1. **Limited Personnel Matters**
- b. **NMSA 1978 Open Meetings Act, Section 10-15-1(H)7**
 - 1. **Threatened or Pending Litigation**

The chair requested a motion to go back into the regular session at 6:03 pm.

Director Russo Baca made the **MOTION TO GO INTO REGULAR SESSION**. Seconded by Vice Chair Baugh. Rollcall vote was administered with all members voting yes. The **MOTION CARRIED**.

Chairman Kelly	Yes	Vice Chair Baugh	Yes
Director Russo Baca	Yes	Director Dunning	Yes

With no further comments, questions, or concerns, Chairman Kelly adjourned the meeting at 6:03 pm.

Approved to be the correct Minutes of the Board of Directors of July 14, 2025.

ATTESTED:

Pamela Fanelli, CMA, CGFM
Secretary/Treasurer

John Kelly, Chairman
MRGCD Board of Directors

*APPENDIX I***Vice Chair Colin T. Baugh Board Reports July 2025****a) Report on the City of Albuquerque Open Space Meeting, June 10, 2025**

Attended a great meeting with Albuquerque Open Space and design firm addressing the Harwood Lateral linear park design with the neighborhood. Great turn out and a lot of important topics were discussed with the overall consensus being that the neighborhood is very excited and the city and District are dedicated to including the neighborhood throughout the entire process.

b) Report on the TOTAL NM (Teaching Outdoors to ALL Learners) Teaching Beyond the Walls Conference, June 13, 2025,

Spoke at this teachers event at Valle Vista helping highlight the unique approach of the outdoor acequia classroom and the overall trend that APS, community, and district are creating around more ways to engage teachers and students in better understanding places through cultural lessons around better use of water and agricultural stewardship.

c) Report on the Tierra Viva Neighborhood Association, June 20, 2025,

Walked this acequia with a concerned constituent regarding the upkeep that the neighborhood has inquired since its inception. The idea is that the neighborhood would like to pay the District to maintain their section of the ditch. I would like to have this discussed in detail with staff at an urban issues committee in the near future.

d) Report on the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) Environmental Science Program, June 24, 2025,

I spoke to a group of students from SIPI regarding the efforts that the District is taking towards empowering local ownership of unique issues, with support and guidance from the District in deep collaboration with the experts of the community. This occurred at the Gutiérrez-Hubble house and was following a beautiful monsoon rainfall!

e) Report on a Constituent Meeting off the Harwood Lateral, June 25, 2025,

This meeting took place following the meeting with Albuquerque Open Space and the District regarding the Harwood Lateral. I met with several interested constituents that irrigate at the end of the Harwood who are very interested in making their lateral work better and ways to address decades of neglect.

APPENDIX II

Director Russo Baca Board Reports July 2025

Report on the Farmers for Future Farmers Meeting, June 10, 2025

This meeting was well attended with various farmers from the district. There were questions about the water outlook as well as water enforcement issues. I provided an overview of the water outlook, along with a brief update on the storage situation and SJC.

Report on the River Mile 60 Tour with Office of Rep. Gabe Vasquez, June 11, 2025

Jason Casuga, Casey Ish, Anne Marken, and I met with Eli Baca from Rep. Gabe Vasquez's office to show the current situation at River Mile 60.

Report on the MRCOG Board meeting, June 12, 2025

The board reviewed the FY2026 Proposed Budget, which includes regional transportation planning, Rio Metro Operations, economic development, Regional and Local Planning, Workforce Development Programs, and the general fund. The full agenda and proposed budget can be found on <https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/449/MRCOG-Board-of-Directors>

Report on the VCSWCD Board meeting, June 13 & June 26, 2025

The Valencia County Soil and Water Conservation District Board met twice in June, and I was able to attend both meetings virtually. During these meetings, I provided updates on water and emergency responses, as well as shared information about the public meetings that MRGCD is hosting in July in Socorro and Valencia counties, since the VCSWCD spans both counties.

Report on the MRGCD Election Committee Meeting, July 14, 2025

Declaration of Candidacy and Petition Forms will be available beginning Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at the General Office of the MRGCD, 1931 Second Street SW, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The deadline to file a Declaration of Candidacy with the required petition signatures (75) is no later than 4:30 p.m., Friday, August 8, 2025. <https://www.mrgcd.com/board-election-information/>.

Report on the ISC Meeting, June 18, 2025

RIO GRANDE BASIN KEY UPDATES

2025 Rio Grande Compact Status – New Mexico's cumulative Compact status is 124,000 acre-feet, and Article VII restrictions remain in effect. Usable Water in Project Storage was about 242,000 acre-feet as of June 8.

El Vado Reservoir Operations – Reclamation is currently storing about 32,000 acre-feet of San Juan Chama Project (SJCP) and Prior and Paramount (P&P) water. Reclamation's reassessment regarding construction to rehabilitate the Dam is ongoing.

Abiquiu Reservoir and Dam Operations – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Bureau of Reclamation are continuing to evaluate the best storage options for P&P water in 2025. Releases from Abiquiu Dam are being monitored to evaluate downstream channel capacity.

WORK AREA OVERVIEWS

INTERSTATE COMPACTS

Article VII restrictions remain in effect, and the only native water stored in 2025 will be for P&P needs. There will be no additional native storage in post-1929 reservoirs this year.

WATER OPERATIONS

El Vado Operations – Reclamation is continuing to test the safe water storage capacity at El Vado while they study new alternatives to rehabilitate the Dam. Currently, approximately 5,800 acre-feet of San Juan-Chama Project (SJCP) water and 19,000 acre-feet of P&P water are being stored in the reservoir, totaling around 24,800 acre-feet of storage in El Vado. The maximum volume that Reclamation plans to store in El Vado is 25,200 acre-feet.

Abiquiu Operations – Very low water supply conditions in 2025 have resulted in an above-average storage requirement for P&P purposes. Based on the May forecast, the final P&P storage requirement is approximately 32,000 acre-feet. In addition to the 19,000 acre-feet of P&P water stored in El Vado, Reclamation is storing about 12,800 acre-feet of P&P water in Abiquiu under a temporary emergency permit. Due to sedimentation in the Rio Chama, the USACE plans to make incremental releases from Abiquiu Dam during high runoff to test the channel capacity downstream of the Dam.

Rio Chama Plug Updates – So far, no flooding or saturation issues have been reported in the lower Rio Chama this spring. The NMISC is continuing to collaborate with partners at the USACE, Reclamation, and the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority to find solutions and further increase channel capacity. The NMISC is also exploring various programs to provide technical and/or planning assistance, as well as educational opportunities for local communities in the Rio Chama basin.

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) – Models are predicting that the allocation for all SJCP contractors will be between 35 and 40 percent of a full allocation.

River Mile 60 – Reclamation has reduced flows to the west at the bottom of the Low-Flow Conveyance Channel. It continues to collect and analyze data from these experimental operations, evaluating the impacts on bird habitat. These reduced flows will continue through October, and flows will be reduced to 0 cfs from November through January 2026. Reclamation is reviewing the 2024 data, and it will be shared with the NMISC once their evaluation is completed. NMISC continues to express concern related to increased depletions associated with these flows to the west.

Elephant Butte Reservoir and Usable Water – Models indicate that storage in Elephant Butte Reservoir could fall below 30,000 acre-feet by the end of July; levels this low haven't been seen since the severe drought of the 1950s. Without a significant monsoon season, Usable Water in Elephant Butte and Caballo Reservoirs is not expected to rise above 115,000 acre-feet by the end of 2025. The full agenda can be found at https://www.ose.nm.gov/ISC/isc_meetings.php.

Report on the Valencia Board of County Commissioners Emergency Meeting June 23, 2025

This was an emergency meeting held by the Board of County Commissioners regarding the devastating Desert Willow Complex fire, which originated from two separate fires: the "Cotton 1 Fire" and the "Cotton 2 Fire." The fires started on Saturday, June 21, near the Main Street bridge, impacting areas on both sides of the Rio Grande.

Report on the Interview for MRGCD documentary, June 24, 2025

Arcie Chapa conducted interviews with Cecilia Rosacker, Gina DelloRusso, and me at Cecilia Rosacker's farm. These interviews were conducted for the film and to gain a few different perspectives for the upcoming MRGCD Centennial documentary.

Report on the NM WRRI Agricultural Water Resilience Program Webinar, July 1, 2025

The NM WRRI Agricultural Water Resilience Program funds projects to incentivize agricultural water conservation and resilience. The program is administered by the New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute (NM WRRI) at New Mexico State University. The New Mexico Legislature appropriated Fiscal Year 2026 funds for the program. \$4.5 million will be made available for individual projects, with a maximum award of \$250,000 per project. Project funds must be expended from September 15, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Applications are due July 28, 2025. Eligible applicants include Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Irrigation and Conservancy Districts, Acequia and Community Ditch Associations, Watershed Districts, local governments, and tribal governments. Eligible applicants will partner with ranchers and farmers to develop and propose projects that improve the ability to manage, conserve, and efficiently apply limited water resources for agricultural production—total funding pool of \$4.5 million, with a maximum award of \$250,000. Eligible applicants are not required to contribute to the project costs; however, a 25% match is desirable. Examples of Potential Projects Are Provided Below. Funded activities can be summarized as projects that Improve Water use efficiency and enhance water management and resilience, improving stock water management. Improving water use efficiency in Irrigation. Agricultural Water Management Improvement. Technologies such as mulching and other enhancements to efficiency and resilience, including the Multi-Depth Soil Moisture Sensor, Smart Float Valve, and Automated Irrigation Gates. If an applicant is uncertain about whether their proposed project or technology aligns with these goals, they are encouraged to submit questions to nmwrrri@nmsu.edu. Submit questions with the subject Line: "FY26 Agricultural Water Resilience Application Questions." Answers will be posted in the FAQs on the NM WRRI AgWRP website. To see the complete Request for Applications, including the entire program description, further eligible applicant criteria, application templates, and other helpful information, click the link: <https://nmwrrri.nmsu.edu/nmwrrri-agwrp/nmwrrri-agwrp.html>.

Report on the Socorro Farmers Meeting, July 9, 2025

The meeting was well attended by both MRGCD staff and community members. Topics of discussion included the water outlook, water enforcement practices and policies, and field drains. The audience was given time to ask questions based on these topics.

Report on the Coalition of Six Middle Rio Grande Basin Pueblos, July 10, 2025

Anne Marken provided the water update to the coalition members, and I announced the NM WRRRI Agricultural Water Resilience Program funds. Eric Zamora and Casey Ish were also present.