

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE COUNTY
WATER POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING

January 9, 2025

Santa Fe, New Mexico

1. A. This meeting of the Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) was called to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. by Chair Shann Stringer on the above-cited date in the Plaza Conference Room, 100 Catron Street Santa Fe, New Mexico. The meeting was conducted as a hybrid with people attending in person and on line.

B. A quorum was achieved with the following members present:

Members Present:

Shann Stringer, Chair
Emily Wolf
Peter Gowen
Laird Graeser
Amy Jordan
John Kadlecek
Darrin Muenzberg
Stephen Schmelling
Commissioner Bustamante [non-voting member]

Member(s) Absent:

Jeff Montoya
James Mike Henry

County Staff Present:

Sara Smith, Manager's Office, Operations Manager
Hvtce Miller, Intergovernmental Outreach Coordinator
Jacqueline Beam, Sustainability Manager
Brett Clavio, Planning Manager
Leandro Cordova, Deputy Manager [Webex]
Alexandra Ladd, Growth Management Director
Travis Soderquist, Utilities Deputy Director
Paul Olafson, Community Development Director

Others Present:

Carl Dickens, Pipeline Coalition

SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/18/2025

C. Approval of Agenda

There were no changes, and Mr. Graeser moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Muenzberg seconded and the agenda was approved without opposition.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. December 12, 2024

Mr. Graeser moved to approve as submitted. Mr. Muenzberg seconded and the motion passed without opposition.

3. Discussion Items

A. 2020 Water Use Report Extract

Mr. Graeser said that the OSE reports of statewide water use date back to 1970. The methodology has been fairly consistent over the years. The 2020 report provides a good list by category – public water supply, domestic, ag, livestock, commercial, industrial, power and reservoir evaporation – and aggregates by surface water and groundwater. This report is released every five years and the 2025 report can be compared to the 2020 report. The report could assist in measuring how successful the County is in moving the consumption of water from groundwater to surface water. That data will provide a measurable for WPAC. The biggest hole in the report is a methodology for measuring domestic well water use, because no one is reporting that use. The different well classes could provide an opportunity for improving the assessment of water use by well owners.

The age of the well and its consistency with conservation, and the age of appliances that draw off the well may provide additional useful data.

Mr. Graeser noted that the 2020 report was released November 2024. He has discussed with ISC the notion of updating the regional plan for the entire state.

WPAC needs to have background data to, in the future, evaluate the data following implementation of WPAC's recommendations.

Most of the data has been compiled at NM Tech, contracted by OSE. Mr. Graeser said he extracted all of the Santa Fe County wells, approximately 22,000 that have been sorted by township, range, and section. That sort will illustrate density, and more than half of the wells are in the southern section and in Tesuque. He anticipated having additional data available at the April meeting. Ms. Jordan noted that when working with GIS, the County's lats and longs boundaries are incorrect in the data set.

The American Community Survey data may serve to be useful.

Ms. Beam said that the County requires an annual well reading report.

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4. Miscellaneous Action Items

A. **Final Preparation of 2025 WPAC Work Plan for Presentation to the Board of County Commissioners.**

Mr. Gowen noted that #1 and #7 of the Drinking & Wastewater Managementwork group priorities could be combined or making #7 regarding Cañada de los Alamos the top and include La Cienega within it as 1.a.

Commissioner Bustamante recommended considering the funding of the different projects when designating priorities.

ACTION: Mr. Gowen moved that under Drinking & Wastewater Management #7 be moved to #1 and the current #1 become 1.a. Mr. Muenzberg seconded and the motion passed without opposition.

Mr. Gowen recommended that, as each working group evolves, they can work with staff to understand County timeframes for different projects.

Following discussion, there was agreement to commit to developing timeframes for the three top priorities of each category and recognize that may not be accomplished.

Ms. Beam pointed out that staff is working on some of the top priorities with other groups.

[The following priorities were taken directly from Ms. Smith's tracking at the meeting]

Stormwater Management

1. Develop and present recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on revisions and additions to the Sustainable Land Development Code related to water conservation, harvesting and reuse, stormwater management, and code requirements for new developments
2. Develop a Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Facility Master Plan and GSI Maintenance Training Guide
3. Review proposals for a County Compost Facility and Biogas Capture Project and provide recommendations to the BCC for inclusion in Planning considerations for County wastewater infrastructure expansion.

Drinking & Wastewater Management

1.
 - Develop and present recommendations to the BCC for La Cienega/La Cieneguilla Drinking Water Pipeline
2. Review PFAS report dealing with the extent of contamination, clean-up timeline, alternatives analysis, and advise the BCC on most efficient path forward
 - Draft policy, procedures, and enforcement for a Countywide Domestic Well Monitoring Program
3. Santa Fe 2100 Water Plan - Work with the City of Santa Fe to prepare for the growth and expansion of infrastructure and increased water demand

4. Pursue petition return-flown credit application
5. Promote SR at the Quill Plan
6. Develop a framework for potential customers to efficiently navigate the process of connecting to the County utility system or requesting that the County take over an existing system
7. Solicit community representation and engagement regarding the scope of work considerations during the project development phase

Outreach

1. Draft Joint Powers Agreements (JPAs) with the City of Santa Fe for stormwater and wastewater management
2. Support efforts for more cooperation/coordination with the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and the Office of the State Engineer (OSE) (1) to require NMED to update and share its septic tank database with the County and require septic permit applicants to submit to County before NMED and (2) to require OSE to update GIS mapping to show well-head meter diversion points so the County can better estimate water use per acre
3. Develop educational materials and partnerships that promote watershed health and water conservation
 - Support Primacy of surface waters in the state
4. Develop maps and a database of all NMED-approved septic systems and wells, arroyos, and rain garden/catchment areas in Santa Fe County
5. Develop a guideline/information packet for communities to form 501(c)(3) watershed associations
6. Support strategies with USDA NRCS to increase agricultural producers' awareness of Soil Health Program

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It was noted that of priorities

Look at the geographic extent of the sampling being used for the PFAS finger printing. WPAC should review the monitoring plan to ensure it is addressing the area residents' concerns. Chair Stringer requested that the PFAS contractor come to a WPAC meeting.

The kickoff meeting for the ASR/Aquifer Storage Recovery project has occurred, stated Mr. Soderquist. The funding is available through July 2026.

Primacy is linked to the legislature and the 2100 Water Plan could be matched up with the timeframes of planning, etc.

ACTION: Mr. Kadlec moved to accept the work plan as modified. Mr. Muenzberg seconded and the motion passed without opposition.

5. Matters from the Public – None were presented.

6. **Matters from Staff**

A. **Presentation Concerning County Staff Report on Cañada de los Alamos Application**

Mr. Soderquist said that technical points have been included to the BCC in addition to WPAC’s report. He highlighted that Cañada currently has 24 connections, with the potential of doubling that, which could be covered under Phase 1 of the project. Some of the existing customers have secondary ADUs. With phase 2, the service area could grow to 592 customers. Phase 1 is a focus on the existing 24+ customers. Phase 2 would be the expansion to 592 existing homesites and some lots. Phase 1 as estimated by Cañada was from \$11 million to \$12.2 million costing \$480,000 per existing connection.

Mr. Soderquist said that for a return on the County’s investment, it would require a new large rate increase for Cañada. There are also water quality issues with the water transmission.

The transfer of water rights also requires review and an OSE assessment of two different basins of groundwater. Cañada would be responsible for the infrastructure from the tanks to the customers. Mr. Soderquist said some of the mutual domestics the County has taken over are in substantial disrepair and require extensive repair to get them to a reliable standard.

Chair Stringer said the information staff is presenting now is what is needed before WPAC acts on a request. He noted that Los Angeles was unable to pump enough water during the fire and that should be considered whenever the County builds out lines.

B. **Organization of WPAC Working Groups**

Mr. Muenzberg moved to table this item and Mr. Gowen seconded. The motion passed without opposition.

7. **Matters from the Committee** - None were offered.

8. **Next WPAC Meeting: February 13, 2025**

The following Thursday were noted for future meeting dates: March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 9, November 13, and December 11, 2025

9. **Adjournment**

Chair Stringer adjourned this meeting at approximately 6:10 p.m.

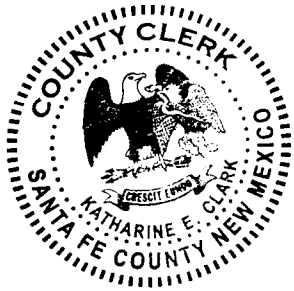
Approved by:



Shann Stringer, Chair

Respectfully submitted by:

Karen Farrell
Karen Farrell, Wordswork



COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss WATER POLICY ADVISORY
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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 18TH Day Of March, 2025 at 09:06:05 AM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # **2054798**
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Katharine E. Clark
Deputy *[Signature]* County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/18/2025

DRAFT

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

SFC CLERK RECORDED 03/18/2025