

**SANTA FE COUNTY  
WATER & UTILITY DIVISION  
MEMORANDUM**

**To:** The Board of County Commissioners  
Roman Abeyta, County Manager

**From:** Doug Sayre, Water & Wastewater Operations Section

**Date:** April 6, 2009

**Re:** Santa Fe Canyon Ranch ("SFCR"), request for water service area boundary extension and for water service

Santa Fe Canyon Ranch has requested a water service area boundary extension to encompass its property in La Cienega, and for water service. See attached.

The proposed development relies entirely on groundwater; to accomplish the general goal expressed in the Conjunctive Management Policy for the Santa Fe Basin, surface water use should be preferred over use of groundwater. The La Cienega community has expressed concerns about the proposed development because its water supply is to come exclusively from local groundwater. The community has expressed additional concerns over the number of homes that might eventually be located within the development. To allay these fears, the developers propose to limit development on the property to that set forth in its current approved master plan, or 174 residential units. The proposed water service area boundary extension would also make it possible to serve the affordable units within the development.

Santa Fe Canyon Ranch received master plan approval for a 174 unit subdivision in September 2008. The water budget in that document called for use of 14.04 acre feet per year for Phase I of the development, and a total 32.32 acre feet per year for the entire development. The developer has approximately 14.55 acre feet of water rights, and has made application to the State Engineer for return flow credits that would permit consumptive use of 32.32 afy. That application has been conditionally approved by the State Engineer.

The developers have requested a water service area boundary extension twice previously. Both requests were denied. See attached (Minutes of the meetings when the requests were denied).

Staff recommends approval of the request. First, county water lines abut the property, and are of sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development. Second, the County's water policies favor use of imported Rio Grande water over groundwater (because groundwater is an important source of water to back up the surface supplies in times of drought). To the

extent feasible, surface water supplies should be preferred over use of groundwater. If the request is approved, the developer would be required to dedicate the water rights sufficient to cover their projected water use to Santa Fe County, Water/Wastewater Operations Section at the time water is taken. Alternatively, the developer could pay cash in lieu of water rights. The developer would be required to accept, by contract, a condition during preliminary plat approval limiting the number of lots developed to that set forth in its current master plan, or residential 174 units. The developer would also be required to meet the requirements of the Water Line Extension and Water Service Policy, Resolution No. 2006-57.

**ROSANNA C. VAZQUEZ de GONZALES**  
**ATTORNEY AT LAW**

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February 20, 2009  
Via Facsimile and Regular Mail

Roman Abeyta  
Santa Fe County Manager  
102 Grant Avenue  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

02-24-09AD9:33 RCVD

Steve Ross  
Santa Fe County Attorney  
102 Grant Avenue  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Re: Santa Fe Canyon Ranch  
Request for Water for Affordable Units

Dear Roman and Steve,

Thank you for meeting with us regarding the resolution of providing water for the affordable units at Santa Fe Canyon Ranch.

Santa Fe Canyon Ranch has agreed to request water from the County Utility for the entire development with the understanding that Santa Fe Canyon Ranch would be limited to 174 units as set forth in the master plan approved by the Board of County Commissioners in September of 2008. County Staff will bring forward this request to the Board of County Commissioners with recommended approval for this request.

We would further request that we be put on an agenda as quickly as possible. Please let me know what, if any, other information you need for this request and I will provide it promptly.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and your ability to work with us.

Very truly yours,

  
Rosanna C. Vazquez de Gonzales