

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
FOR
COORDINATED WATER RESOURCE PLANNING
IN THE
ESTANCIA BASIN**

This Memorandum of Understanding is an agreement by the Counties of **BERNALILLO, SANTA FE, AND TORRANCE** which provides for the establishment of an organization and process to help coordinate water resource planning in the Estancia Basin. The boundaries of this Basin are generally described as shown on the Estancia Basin map which is attached and made a part of this Memorandum.

WHEREAS, the Estancia Basin is a hydrologically closed drainage basin located predominantly within **TORRANCE** County and significantly within **BERNALILLO** and **SANTA FE** Counties; and

WHEREAS, the ground-water resources of the Estancia Basin are vulnerable to rapid depletion by wells, saline water intrusion of fresh water aquifers, and contamination of recharge water; and

WHEREAS, there are numerous water user constituencies who are dependent on the renewable, sustainable, and fresh water resources of the Estancia Basin; and

WHEREAS, a basin water planning committee has been established recently by the **TORRANCE** County Commission and has included participants invited from the **BERNALILLO AND SANTA FE** county areas; and

WHEREAS, regional water planning is being promoted and supported by the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, and initial water planning research for the Estancia Basin has been included as part of the regional water planning process of the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of water resource planning and management shall respect local government sovereignty within the Estancia Basin, and implementation that involves funding must be approved by the affected jurisdiction.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES.

This Memorandum of Understanding is intended to provide for the coordination of water planning activities affecting the Estancia Basin. Such coordination can be accomplished through the efforts of a special-purpose, advisory planning committee representing the water users and governmental jurisdictions of the Estancia Basin.

The general goal for this water planning process is to protect the quality and preserve the quantity of water resources of the Estancia Basin for future generations. Various objectives for achieving this goal include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Develop a geohydrologic model of the Basin in order to characterize groundwater flow and to calculate the basin ground-water supply;
- B. Maintain a categorical inventory of water users in the Basin and continuously forecast the consumptive demands on Basin ground water;
- C. Establish a ground-water monitoring system for collecting data on water table changes, saline water intrusion, and contamination in Basin recharge areas;
- D. Recommend various techniques of land use management for reducing threats to water resources, especially in vulnerable areas;
- E. Initiate and conduct a water resource information and education program designed to increase public knowledge of water laws and regulations, water conservation techniques, and the need to develop contamination prevention policies;
- F. Formulate water resource and conservation management policies for consideration by the various governments with jurisdiction in the Estancia Basin;
- G. Prepare a compilation of forty-year water development plans from all municipalities, counties, and public utilities operating water supply systems within the Estancia Basin; and
- H. Secure the future availability of usable water resources to maintain and sustain existing customary and cultural uses.

SECTION 2. ORGANIZATION.

The Torrance County/Estancia Basin water planning committee initially created by the **TORRANCE** County Commission, shall be known as the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee, and shall provide a core group to be expanded with members appointed in accordance with this Memorandum.

Membership on the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee shall be established by mutual agreement of the County Commissions of **BERNALILLO**, **SANTA FE**, and **TORRANCE** Counties. The Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee shall include thirteen voting members with the addition of various non-voting members. Each member shall represent a specific category of interest and shall be appointed according to the following requirements:

- A. Three County Government representatives
 - 1. Each County appoints one member
 - 2. Each member serves a renewable term of three years
- B. Three representatives from the municipal/developer/utility interest group
 - 1. Each County appoints one member

2. Each member serves a renewable term of three years
- C. Three representatives for agricultural enterprise
 1. One representative appointed by SANTA FE County
 2. Two representatives appointed by TORRANCE county
 3. Each member serves a renewable term of three years.
- D. Three representatives appointed by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD)
 1. One representative from Edgewood SWCD
 2. One representative from East Torrance SWCD
 3. One representative from Claunch-Pinto SWCD
 4. Each member serves a renewable term of three years
- E. One citizen-at-large representative
 1. Nominated and appointed by the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee
 2. Member serves a renewable term of one year.
- F. Various non-voting representatives appointed by State and Federal agencies including but not limited to:
 1. N.M. State Engineer Office (required)
 2. N.M. State Land Office (optional)
 3. NMSU Cooperative Extension Service (optional)
 4. Natural Resource Conservation Service (optional)
 5. U. S. Forest Service (optional)

SECTION 3. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee shall perform an advisory role to various governments on matters concerning the water resources of the Estancia Basin. The members of the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee shall continually develop their knowledge and expertise, as a group, about the water resources of the Estancia Basin.

The major responsibilities of the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee shall be described as follows:

- A. Promote and participate in water resource planning activities affecting the Estancia Basin;
- B. Establish its own rules of conduct for purposes of holding public meetings and maintaining an active membership;
- C. Collect and compile all available data and information on the water resources of the Estancia Basin. Such data and information will be placed in a water resources library at the **TORRANCE** County Courthouse;
- D. Maintain communications with the respective Planning Commissions of the Counties of **BERNALILLO**, **SANTA FE**, and **TORRANCE**;

