SANTA FE COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING

SANTA FE COUNTY WATER: TODAY and TOMORROW

October 27, 2025

Camilla Bustamante, Chair - District 3
Lisa Cacari Stone, Vice Chair - District 2
Justin Greene - District 1
Hank Hughes - District 5
Adam Johnson - District 4

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1. A. This special meeting of the Santa Fe Board of County Commissioners Board was called to order at approximately 9:10 a.m. by Chair Camilla Bustamante in the County Commission Chambers, 102 Grant Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Opening Statement

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: In the interest of full disclosure, I'm just a little bit surprised. I did see this at a meeting that I had last week with the County Manager that this was more of a formal meeting than what was the original intent and have a community-facing integrated conversation which is what the intent was from the day that this was conceived.

The question comes up every time, and I can say every time without exception and at least once, at least, whenever a new building goes up, not usually at the moment of approval, but when something new is going up, the question is, and anyone out there want to take a wild guess?

AUDIENCE: Where's the water coming from?

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: There you go. And it happens every time. And before we hear a proposal and as there it goes through the process here from the chamber and across through the Commission we get the information, we're assured that this is where the source would be etc. But there are these longer term questions that come up that even roll through I think our minds. I can speak for myself and say my mind in what about the long-term issues. During the time when I was campaigning one of the recommendations was how are we focusing on, and it was brought to my attention that there is a Native tradition of looking seven generations ahead. We do a lot of 100-year planning, which frankly once you're 60-some years old, it doesn't really seem like a 100 years is all that much. Another kid could be born and then the hundred years is up, right? I mean, that happens.

But how are we assuring that these buildings and how we develop are going to be served with the adequate amount of water necessary for future generations to thrive here? And I do take sincerely the advice of my Native friend specifically from Pojoaque Pueblo who said, well what about seven gen ahead? And I get it.

In that interest this is established set up as a meeting I'm happy to hear that it was published well but the intent is to be community-facing so we're going to hear presentations

today it is scheduled to go till 2 o'clock. But the community is not only invited, but the intent was to have community questions, issues, and concerns integrated into the dialogue of how and what we're doing today.

I'm also very grateful that this will be extended into the Water Summit that happens every year on the more of a note of sustainability, water conservation, reclamation, etc. So for today, we will get a lot of information that will be available via video. We will have those who work with the City and the County who have been answering to the amount of water that is currently available and what will be available as we continue to move forward. We also have what I'm going to refer to as experts who make it very, very clear that water paper is less drinkable than real water when we talk about water rights and how we're going to assure that in a time in a climate of extreme climate diversity that those water needs are addressed somehow, some way, so we'll be looking forward to that portion of the presentation today for – what's the word I'm looking for – not mitigation but when you plan for something that could really go wrong so there's a word for it. And that's when I just disclose that I've got that 60-some-year-old brain that just about forgot a word that I use probably all the time.

That being said, let's go ahead and start without any further ado, but I do want to make sure that everyone in this room has an opportunity not just to listen, but to participate and to provide questions. And I'll create – somehow we'll work with the forum to ensure that that happens with some type of regularity or at the end of each presenter, etc. Okay.

So, at this point, something that I'm not usually doing, and I need to find the protocol for it, given that this is an official meeting, if I were to ask a question of the people in the chambers, Attorney Boyd, do they need to say who they are and say where they're from or can they if I say does anyone have a question regarding this particular thing that I just said, is there anything that I'd need to ask in particular at that time?

WALKER BOYD (County Attorney): Chair Bustamante, they're not giving testimony, so they don't have to. There doesn't need to be an oath administered or anything of that nature. But since you, as the chair, are choosing who to recognize, you can require them to state their name and where they're from, if you'd like.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: I'll appreciate if a person says their name and where you're from. That would be the best. And I just need to know if there are any questions from anyone about what I just said. Yes, Commissioner Cacari Stone.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you, Chair Bustamante, and thank you for everyone who organized this forum today. I want to be sure and I'll turn to Attorney Boyd, at what point do we vet the questions that came from the community?

ATTORNEY BOYD: Chair Bustamante, Commissioner Cacari Stone, I don't see any matters of public concern item on this agenda. So I would recommend that the Board, unless I missed it, I would recommend that the Board entertain a motion to amend the agenda to insert a portion for the expression of matters of public concern. Certainly it's an alternative to just take these things as they go. But I could see that.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Sure, thank you so much because we got a print out and then I also printed out and did an analysis on community questions this morning and I want to be sure it's included for the record. It looks like the County Manager has a comment and I'll defer to the Chair.

MANAGER SHAFFER: Thank you, if I could, Chair Bustamante,

Commissioners, my understanding is that the discussion relative to questions that were solicited proactively in advance of today's meeting and received would fall under item 7 under the agenda. Obviously, the Board could do it in a different way but that's my understanding of those who worked actively both to publicize this event and solicit questions in advance is that's where that discussion would take place. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. Thank you very much and thank you for the question Commissioner.

So in the interest of starting the meeting and I too want to thank the WPAC and staff who worked really hard on putting this together. I'm really grateful. I know that it was something that came up as an oh my gosh and we also have the rest of this life that we have to manage and put together and made sure that this was happening today because we will get information that some of us just plain old don't have and that we're looking forward to learning more about. So can we have a roll call please?

B. Roll Call

Roll was called by Celeste Garcia from the County Clerk's Office and a quorum was present as follows:

Members Present:	**Members Excused**:
Commissioner Camilla Bustamante, Chair	None
Commissioner Lisa Cacari Stone, Vice Chair	
Commissioner Justin Greene	
Commissioner Hank Hughes [10:20 arrival]	
Commissioner Adam Johnson	

MATT FRESQUEZ (Media Coordinator): Madam Chair, I just wanted to let you know that we have around 30 people on line and I wanted to let them know that they can raise their digital hands if they have questions.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Excellent, thank you very much.

C. Approval of Agenda

COMMISSIONER GREENE: I'd like to make a motion to approve the agenda but I was going to open it to ask, do we want to include the ability, just in a formal motion, to allow for questions that are specific to each of these topics and that's up to you but I would just make that motion.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: I would like to offer that we would at the end of each particular issue we would open it for questions from either the online or the public in the chambers. Is that amendable?

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I'll second that.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Second it. And, also, Chair Bustamante, I wanted to add to the agenda if we can make comments as Commissioners in terms of the vision why this is important. I don't know if that comes now or at the end

but I want to be sure to have that space for us.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Absolutely. As you need to. This is intended to be a community, more of a conversation. We will stay respecting time, but we want to fill in those things when they come to mind. Okay? I don't want to lose anything in people's thoughts and concerns about water because it's the biggest issue that comes up every single year maybe every month or maybe week. All right.

So we have a motion to amend the agenda to allow for questioning and it's not really an amendment of the agenda. We're going to allow that and we will allow for questions from the Commission but more of a dialogue than just a cold presentation. Does that sound – that that doesn't require really an agenda change? We will just recognize that we will run the meeting this way.

So we had a motion from Commissioner Greene and second from Commissioner Cacari Stone.

The motion passed [4-0] without opposition. Commissioner Hughes was not present for this action.

2. Santa Fe County's Water Utility Resrouces

A. Where Does Utility Water in Santa Fe County Come From?

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Jesse, for being here. Probably the most noted water quantity professional in our town for sure.

JESSE ROACH (City of Santa Fe Interim Utilities Director): Chair Bustamante, members of the Commission, thank you for having me. And I will step through a deck of slides to try and address that question and stand for questions.

This is sort of a a bird's eye view of the Santa Fe watershed and the dark blue line represents the boundaries of the watershed and what that means is that any rain that falls within that area will drain to the Santa Fe River and eventually to the Rio Grande. And the utility system relies on four different sources of water. And they are the Santa Fe River itself, wells that are drilled within the city limits, wells that are outside of the city, the Buckman wells which are between the Santa Fe River watershed and the Rio Grande. And then the Buckman direct diversion.

The Buckman Direct Diversion is jointly owned. It's owned between the City and the County and Las Campanas. And I'll talk a little bit more about that in a future slide. And the City diverts what's called San Juan-Chama water at the Buckman Direct Diversion. I'll talk about that a little bit more as well. The County diverts mostly native Rio Grande water at the Buckman Direct Diversion. In addition to these four potable supplies, there's also a non-potable resource which is water that's used indoors is collected by the sewer the sewer collection system ends up at the at the Paseo Real water treatment facility which is just near the airport on the south side of town. That water once it's treated is used to irrigate Swan Park, Soccer Valley, Marty Sanchez, the City's Country Club, and at times Las Campanas' golf courses as well.

I'm just going to kind of go through a few photos of the four different sources just

to put a little visual -- I'm very visual, so I like to pepper everything with a bunch of pictures. The picture on the left is looking downstream from Nichols. So there are two reservoirs on the upper Santa Fe River above the Audubon. This is the lower of the two Nichols and this is a drone photo looking downstream towards the city. And the Canyon Road water treatment plant is pointed out there. And on the right is an overhead view of the treatment plant itself where we take water from the reservoir at Nichols and treat it to potable standards to put it into the system.

The City wells are seven active production wells within the city limits. And the two big ones for us are the northwest well which is up in the La Tierra trails and the Agua Fria well which is north of the Indian School. The Buckman wells, there's 13 of them. This picture shows nine of them. And this is a view looking back towards Santa Fe from the other side of the river. So the Rio Grande flowing through this photo would be flowing from Española upstream to the left and then downstream to Cochiti to the right. And you can see the location of the red dots are the nine wells that are closest to the river and then the blue dot is the Buckman Direct Diversion where the water is physically actually diverted from the river. The Buckman Direct Diversion again – the Diversion itself is owned by the City, the County and entities of Las Campanas. And then once the water moves up to the treatment plant it's City and County owned together. The picture on the lower left shows the diversion – the two pictures on the left show the diversion structure when it was under construction. There was a coffer dam created to keep the river away from the diversion structure. And so you can see that there's five different cells where water flows into, once the coffer dam was removed, the river flows along the side of this and fills up those. And you can there's pumps from there where it begins its journey up the hill about 1,000 feet up close to the Marty Sanchez Golf Course is where the treatment plant itself is treated to potable standards and delivered into the system.

Real briefly, the San Juan-Chama project is Colorado River water. Both the City and the County own San Juan-Chama water. In the City's case, it's the only water that we divert at BDD. And in the County's case, it's a very small portion of your total portfolio. And since I've been at the City, which has been six years, the County has never actually diverted San Juan-Chama water you've always had enough native. And one of the things I like to point out about this project is that it's all gravity-fed. So, there are three diversions off of tributaries to the San Juan in southern Colorado: the Little Navajo, the Navajo, and the Rio Blanco. And those flow then down by gravity through tunnels under to the next diversion point to the next diversion point and finally under the continental divide and out to Heron Reservoir. And so all that water is moved from one side of the continental divide to the other without any energy inputs it's all gravity fed.

Right here is a place to sort of talk a little bit -- I'm going to talk about sort of how these water resources were developed through time, but it's important to keep in context here that the City and the County utility are not only physically connected, but we're also connected by formal agreements between our governing bodies in terms of how these water resources are used and shared. The 2016 amended and restated Water Resources Agreement, the two big pieces of this agreement from a water resources perspective are that the City shall provide up to 1,350 acre-feet a year to the County. And for context, the City uses about 9,000 acre-feet a year. The County I think is between 2,000 and 2,500. I'm not quite as versed on those numbers, but we're talking a large piece, that's a

significant amount of water. It's more than half of the County demand that the City would be obliged to provide if needed. So, the City does serve as a – the City utility serves as a backup supply to the County utility via this term of this agreement. The other term of this agreement that is notable is that the City has the right in the title to all the return flow that ends up at the City's wastewater treatment plant.

Then there's a new a relatively new agreement called the Buckman Direct Diversion Shared Pool Agreement. This agreement allows the City and the County to essentially exchange water at the BDD based on operational flexibility. So there are certain times it's preferable to divert Colorado River water and there's certain times it's preferable to divert native water. And so the City and the County sort of go back and forth. Sometimes we use County water for both, sometimes we use City water for both. But we track it and at the end of the year if there's a balance in favor and it's generally in favor of the County because the County has more native rights on the Rio Grande than they typically than you typically use. And so there by using all of that water for the benefit of both the City and the County, the County then builds up a credit. And so this shared pool effectively in my mind allows the County to store native water rights. So it's an advantage that that allows the City to use County water when it's available and then the County to get it back later when it's not available.

So these are the sort of two – the 1,350 acre-feet from the Water Resources Agreement and the Shared Pool represent pools of water that the County can call for from the City in times of need. And then finally there is an agreement between the City and the County relative to the San Juan-Chama Return Flow Project. I'm going to talk more about that project, so I won't spend a ton of time on it now, but essentially the County has the right to pay for up to 7 percent of the project in in return get up to 7 percent of the project benefit.

I want to go back and sort of show how these different resources have been developed through time. And this particular graph is one that I always show because it it just shows so much. What we're looking at here is from 1925 through 2025. So over a hundred years; how much water was produced and from what sources it was produced through time. The colors of the water are where it came from. And so you can see starting in 1925, the only water supply available was the Santa Fe River. And demand started to grow and the units are in acre-feet per-year. And so the demand grew above 2,000 and then the 1950s a drought of record hit and suddenly the river couldn't supply what had become the demand. So the river in the early 1950s is only supplying less than a 1,000 acre-feet and there's almost 3,000 acre-feet of demand. And so sort of in emergency response wells were drilled within the City to make up the difference and that became the second source of water. Again, and that source of water also is within the Santa Fe River watershed. So these are local supplies.

Then we move forward through time and demand continues to rise and you can see it has gone above 6,000 acre-feet in the 70s and then the third source of water was added which were the deep Buckman wells. Initially nine of them were drilled in the 70s. and that was the first time that the community of Santa Fe was going outside of its own watershed to find water. So now we have three sources of water and demand continues to grow. And so you can see that demand peaked at over 13,000 acre-feet in 1995. And at

that time the City actually purchased what had been to that point a private water utility, a subsidiary at that point of PNM. The City bought it from PNM.and it became the sort of the City public utility serving both City and County at that time.

And then a couple of very amazing things happened from 1995 through 2025. So in that 30 years we see that water the total water production actually decreased significantly by about33 percent. So dropping from 13,000 acre-feet a year down to 9,000 acre-feet a year. And the other piece to note here and I'm going to sort of focus on this a little bit in the next slide as well is that in 2011 the BDD came on line. So this is the same graph now but only looking at the 1995 to 2025 period. And you see the total demand dropping and then you see the fourth color come online in 2011. So the two pieces here to look at are the large reduction in production but also the change in what sort of water was being used. At the beginning of this phase, we're overusing the wells. The levels in the wells were dropping and it was not a sustainable water use regime. And then when the Buckman Direct Diversion came online in 2011, we start to utilize the river water preferentially despite the fact that it's not the cheapest source. We use it preferentially and save the wells for times of times of need.

So to the first piece, how is it that we went from 13,000 acre-feet in 1995 to 9,000 acre-feet in the last decade? Is it because the population stopped growing? No. And, in fact, during the that time where we are using 33 percent less water, we're actually serving 25 percent more people. And so this graph shows the population served by the City utility in the blue bars. And the population served is shown on the right axis. So in 1995 there was about 70,000 people being served a little bit less. And in 2024 in this case there was 90,000 being served but we're using less water. And so one of the metrics that's used often in the utility space is the total production of water by the utility divided by the total population served divided by the number of days in a year to come up with a sort of amount of water that's attributed to everybody who's served by the system. So in this case in 1995 we would attribute 168 gallons per person per day to each person served by the utility. That doesn't mean that's what that person is using in their home. That means that because it includes restaurants, it includes car washes, it includes everything. But it's still an apples to apples way to sort of compare what one utility is doing to what another utility is doing. And we see that we dropped from 168 acre-feet per year in '95 all the way to in the less than 90 in certain years in the in 2019, 2021, 2022. So, this is remarkable success on the water conservation front and we're proud of it and it's part of this community and this County is understanding the importance of water. That's why we're here today and it's something that the community has embraced.

Just to put it in perspective where we are compared to other states. On the left, this is an old graph and it's looking at GPCD average across the states. And I think this is actually just residential. This is not all completely apples to apples, but I just wanted to show in perspective. This was one study I found that compared New Mexico to other states. And you see New Mexico is the least of these other western states. And then on the right side we see the City utility compared to other utilities serving at least 10,000 people in New Mexico. So we're amongst the best of the best in our ability to use water efficiently.

And then the other piece of this is this is another way to look at the shift away

from overusing our groundwater and really focusing on surface water resources. On the left 1995 it shows that we used almost 8,000 acre-feet of groundwater. And then you see and then the scale jumps straight to 2011 through 2024 which are the years that the Buckman Directive Diversion was online. And you can see that we're using about 80 percent of the water from either the Santa Fe River or from the Rio Grande. And what has that done for us? It is allowing our wells that we had over used, the levels in the wells are starting to come back.

So looking at in 1950 when we drilled the first city wells from that point until 2010 so in that 60 years the average water level in each of those wells had dropped by about 150 feet as we had used those wells. Similarly, with the Buckman wellfield from 1970 when we drilled that first well to 2010 in that 40 years the effective water level had dropped by 600 feet. Now the Buckman wellfield is what's called a confined aquifer and so this is a little bit different. It's more of a pressure response than an actual water level and that's why it's so much bigger. But in any cases, significant draw down. We saw subsidence out in Buckman. These wells were being used at an unsustainable rate. But what we've seen since we sort of shifted to using river water preferentially and saving the groundwater, we've seen the City wells have recovered 60 feet of that 150. So, and that was just in in the 10 years from 2010 to 2020. So that's a a great shift, a great change, and that's going in the right direction. And the Buckman wells have recovered 510 feet of that that pressure loss. So, we're seeing, you know, almost 50 percent recovery in the City wellfield and 80 percent recovery in the Buckman wellfield as we transition off of overuse of wells to preferential use of our river water.

This is one graph that's an attempt to really try and say, well, how much of our water are we currently using? And so the left bar shows from 2011 through 2024. Again, this is the period of time since Buckman direct version has been online; how much water we've used. So it's just under 9,000 acre-feet a year and of which 7,000 acre-feet was from surface water. And then the right bar is an estimate of what was sustainably available. And so the reason that we didn't use all the sustainably available surface water is because there's some evaporation associated with storing it in reservoirs. But we estimate based on our understanding of our aquifers. About 4,500 acre-feet a year we could use from the groundwater without impacting the long-term ability of us to recover that amount of water from those wells. And so if you'll recall we were using 6,000 or you know more acre-feet previously. So that was not sustainable. And so this is just an attempt to look at, okay, using about 9,000 currently, about 12,000 sustainably available. We think we're using about 3/4 of what's currently sustainably available to us. And is that enough as we move into a period of climate diversity? That was a new term for me. I like that. The way we try to figure that out is with long range water planning. And we've been doing this all the way back and we've been and the City and the County have been working together on this since 2015 and we're currently working together on this as we speak. And I guess I'll just mention that in 2015, the Santa Fe Basin Study that the City and the County took on together was the first study that I'm aware of, certainly in New Mexico, possibly in the West, that incorporated climate change into our long-term planning projections.

I'm going to go back actually – after that study, that 2015 study suggested that there would be shortages in the relatively near term in the 2030s even, if we didn't do

something. And one of the things that came out of that was the 2017 study looking at the low-hanging fruit here is that there's a lot of water that ends up at the wastewater treatment plant. What are we going to do with that water? And so in 2017, we did a study called The Return Flow Feasibility Study or Santa Fe Water Reuse Feasibility Study, that looked at the different ways we might utilize some of that effluent. And ultimately it landed on a project called the San Juan-Chama Return Flow Project as the most resource efficient way to take advantage of some of this effluent. It used a triple bottom line analysis. So it was not just financial, it included social and environmental criteria as well.

And so what is the San Juan-Chama Return Flow Project? The idea here is to build a pipeline from the wastewater reclamation facility, the Paseo Real Water Reclamation facility on the south side of town and take and in this case we're only talking about the San Juan-Chama portion of the return flow and that was that was a calculated decision based largely on sort of environmental permitting concerns and take it back to the Rio Grande to get return-flow credits. And then that allows us to divert more at the Buckman Direct Diversion and use our existing infrastructure at BDD. As I mentioned before, the County has the right to be up to a 7 percent and I'm calling it silent owner in this project. Essentially, the City will manage this project, but the County has the right to invest in the project and as a result take an equal benefit to the new water that's created.

I wanted to sort of talk a little bit about how this project will work and essentially the goal is to fully consume our San Juan-Chama water by getting a return-flow credit. So right now the all the water that the City – now we're talking specifically the City utility here because we're talking about San Juan-Chama water but all the water that we want to divert at that location we have to release from storage from Abiquiu and in fact all that plus losses and the idea with this return flow is that on average we see, on an annual average, about two-thirds of the water that we produce ends up back at the wastewater treatment plant. So what we're showing here is that on average if instead – and the arrows shown in these photos are sort of representative of the amount. And so on the left the diversion and on the right the diversion are the same. To get the same amount of water. though, if you have a return flow making the river whole, we're only releasing instead of three units being released from the reservoirs on the left, we're releasing one unit from the reservoirs and we're getting two of the units in the return flow. So the upshot of that is that there's no change to the Rio Grande flow below BDD, but now we're getting the same diversion with a third of the release from the reservoirs upstream. Or said another way, the San Juan-Chama water now goes three times farther with this project in place than it would currently. So this project is currently under permitting and design. It doesn't exist yet, but we're working towards it.

Now if we look at the sort of the available water with this return flow project in place if we talk about tripling the San Juan-Chama resource now we're looking at potential availability, sustainable availability in the far right bar of on the order of 20,000 acre-feet per-year and we're using on the order of 9,000 acre-feet per-year. So in the near term with this project in place that we will have a little bit of breathing room. But we also need to keep in mind that those supplies may be diminished by climate change and demand continues to grow.

So this is a slight detour kind – kind of a wonky slide, so if you look at this and it

makes your head spin, you can ignore me for a second. But it's kind of fun for those water wonks amongst us. This shows from 1925 through 2025 essentially a measure of drought of regional drought in New Mexico. The orange line is I think it's a 10-year average and it sort of shows periods of wet, when it goes above zero it's sort of wet periods and when it goes below zero, it's drier periods. And so you can see the things that jump out are pretty dry period in the 50s, that's when we drilled the the City wells. And d then kind of average conditions through the 60s and 70s when we we drilled the Buckman wells. That's probably more to do with growing demand than reduction in supply. And then the big wet years of the 80s and early 90s that everyone talks about and then since 2000 really just this sort of drop away where things where conditions are extremely dry. And often when there's some period of dry we respond with some sort of a supply increase. And so we expanded the reservoirs in the 30s and we drilled the City wells in the '50s.the Buckman Wells 10 through13 went in in the early 2000s. And the Buckman Direct Diversion in 2011. And now the San Juan-Chama Return Flow Project is sort of our next step in augmenting the supply for the utility and the County.

I guess the final piece I would say is, how do we go from a near future with the return-flow project in place, how do we know how well that will serve us going out to 2100s? And so, we're currently working with the County on long-range planning out to 2100. That's not quite seven generations, but it's certainly more than typical water planning and the way we do that – what I'm showing on this far right bar is that in the distant future, once we've incorporated climate change, which we think could impact our water resources by anywhere from a quarter to a third reduction of overall water resources by the end of this century, then we may be down to more like 17,000 acre-feet a year of of sustainably available water. And then what will the demand look like? That's again for the planners amongst us to look at and answer that. So this is a graphical representation of Water 2100 which is what we're calling the City and County utility long-range water supply planning effort. And this is something that the County has has invested in to a significant level. We are waiting on some of the results from some of that work to put it together, but we have been working through this and this year. So, so we started in in 2020 sort of laying out the planning process, receiving some public feedback on that. And then in 2022, we rolled out a demand projection for the City utility. The County's working on that one now. In 2024, we showed the model that'll be used to incorporate this. And this year, we hope to show the supply projections that will drive it. And essentially, we use this tool, which is a computerized representation of the system to play what if scenarios, what if games. What if the demand looks like this? What if the supply looks like this? Where are the shortages and how might we address those shortages? And that and that will be put together in the adaptation strategies and 40- and 80-year water plans.

With that, I'd be happy to stand for questions from the Board or from the public.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you very much, Jesse Roach. Do we have any questions from the public first? Commissioner Anaya, and if you can come to the microphone, that way we can make sure we're getting everything for There we go.

FILANDRO ANAYA: Thank you, Commissioners. My question is, for one, do you guys have a handout on all of this? And two, my concerns that I have is more

about southern Santa Fe County and I'm sure that you're going to be talking about that too down the road, I hope. Do you currently have a hand out or is this on going to be recorded for later?

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: This will all be online available to everyone after.

MR. ANAYA: Okay. Thank you. Very, very good. Lots of good information and I appreciate that.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: And, Commissioner, the Estancia Valley isn't addressed in this particular and that is a question that I'll have later and how we address that more sparse population, Estancia Watershed if you will. And I guess that's a question for Jesse Roach. We don't really – so right over the San Pedros we have Stanley and Edgewood. This doesn't really impact their aquifer and the Estancia Valley aquifer, does it?

MR. ROACH: No, ma'am. This presentation was very focused on the Santa Fe watershed and the City and the County utility. In terms of how that grows though, I think those questions can be asked in the planning process.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you very much. Thank you. Yes, sir.

RICK IANNUCCI: Good morning. Thank you. My name is Rick Iannucci, a 36-year citizen voter here in Santa Fe County, retired, raised a family here. We live in the County now and have a place in the city where my daughter lives. My question is I appreciate you mentioning about the seven generations which is really very important and I always have felt that we were basically stewards and holding this stuff for our kids that are coming not really for us as well. I saw the charts. My question is, at what point, and I live out in the San Marcos area now, or what they're calling the San Marcos district. And every day I come into town, I'm looking at hundreds and hundreds of apartments being built left and right of me. And I wonder at what point, and I saw the charts, but it doesn't quite specify to me, when are elected County Commissioners and administrators will say enough is enough and at what point, what are those benchmarks that you'll be looking at? I just saw that projection in the last slide, but there's no way for us to know that. I guess part of that question would be how do you integrate with County planning and the permitting people to know when oh my gosh there's a 300 or 400 unit place that's going up next to Presbyterian Hospital. Did we count on that? I don't know if that question is too obtuse but thank you.

[Mr. Iannuccio repeated his name for the record]

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you.. What is that process, Jesse? I appreciate hearing that. And if we needed I saw Alexandra Ladd here as well. if we needed to have an answer and how the two work together. And I saw that in the last diagram, but how does this work when a new proposal is made and I think you gave that in the numbers. It's helpful to state what the answer to that question.

MR. ROACH: So, I can't speak as well to the connection between land use and water for the County, but I can speak to for the City. The development is connected to water through something we call the Water Bank which basically means they need to bring the water rights to the table with the development. I won't dive into the weeds of sort of how that works but it's essentially the mechanism that allows us to make

sure that the water will be there and is brought by the developers. That's on paper. What I just showed up here is more sort of the availability that we think is there. And I will say from a City perspective, the mission of the City Water Utility is to provide safe, reliable, and resilient water for the needs of Santa Fe. And we would like to – questions about growth are sort of, they're above my pay grade. And so when we're trying to just make sure that we're providing the water to meet the needs of the community now and 80 years into the future and and we're going to keep working at that. The questions of how big should the community grow or how many people should be here are our larger questions I think that are tackled by our elected governing bodies.

One idea I will put out there for you when you look at apartments is the majority of water use in apartments is indoors and we get another crack at that water and we're seeing the beginning of a new paradigm in water utility management, I believe, which is if we use water indoors then we get to use it again. This San Juan-Chama Return Flow Project is indirect potable reuse because it's by exchange at some point the regulatory and the technology might be in a place where direct potable reuse becomes an option and at that point if you're using water indoors and then reusing it, I think that if you have a vibrant economy you can you can take your water resources a really long way and water is not going to be the reason you need to decide we don't want more growth. There are good reasons to decide you do or don't want more growth, but our job at the utility is to disconnect water from being that reason.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. Sir, please Laird,

LAIRD GRAESER: My name is Laird Graeser and I also live in the San Marcos district. Mention a little bit about the potential for Aamodt water to be connected into City county utility.

MR. ROACH: Okay, that question is about the Aamodt Settlement and the County system that's being developed on the other side of the watershed. I think that in the planning efforts that we're doing that will be an alternative that we look at is if we're now diverting water from above Otowi and potentially at some point it might connect from that County system all the way to the City. What are the different sort of flexibilities that that might open up. To me, I haven't spent a ton of time really delving into that. And so it's certainly – I think it's more than a concept. I think it's more likely than not that at some point there could be a connection between the City County pipes and this new system as it as it works its way up.

MR. GRAESER: But so far that potential hasn't been entered into the model for production.

MR. ROACH: That connection is being incorporated. The model's not sort of ready to show really like how all that works but as the County has joined into this City County combined planning effort those questions are being considered and the model will be set up to incorporate that framework. Both the new demand on that side and the new supply from that side.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. Anyone else from the chambers with a question? We have a question online.

[Paul White was unable to unmute.]

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Jesse, very grateful for your time

and your presentation. Thank you. [applause] I'm assuming that we will get an answer to the question on how Growth Management makes the decisions. Correct. Later in the presentations. Okay. Very good. We have we have questions from the Commission. Let's start with Commissioner Johnson.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you, Dr. Roach. I have a couple questions and that is a very helpful presentation and I appreciate the visual components. It does help us imagine the current state and the future. So the utility, the City of Santa Fe took over the utility in 1995. How did that reduce water use? It looks like there is a sort of even precipitous decline a couple years after that. Was it coincidental? Were there public information campaigns? What accounted for that in your mind?

MR. ROACH: Commissioner Johnson, that's a great question and there are a couple things that I point to with that. One of them is a tiered rate structure and I think this is an interesting case where perhaps a utility, a publicly owned utility maybe had a little bit more leeway and this is entirely my personal speculation, but but had a private utility decided they were going to raise rates, I would imagine it might have been – there could have been some push back. When the City took over the utility and introduced a tiered rate structure which was designed to really send a strong signal that if you go over a certain amount, you're going to you're going to notice it. So I think that that had an impact, the tiered rate structure. And there was a lot of low-hanging fruit associated with inefficient appliances and the one that we went after were the toilets and so there was a big toilet retrofit program. And so I think that had an impact.

I think the other thing that took a little bit longer perhaps was we went through in the early 2000s a fairly dramatic almost water shortage. And for those of us who lived here at that time, you'll remember the bumper stickers about I'll stop watering my lawn when Las Campanas stops watering their golf courses. It was a little bit of our own Malagro Beanfield War right here in Santa Fe. My mom would shower standing in buckets so that she could keep her trees alive. This was like, it was a utility operator nightmare and it also – the City became very aware of the value of water and I think that has created an ethic of conservation in this community that that exists and persists to this day.

So those are the three big ones for me that I would point out as to some of the reasons that we've been able to achieve the significant increases in efficiency.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you for that. So in 2017 the water reuse feasibility study it sounds like, and correct me if I'm wrong, kind of determined and pushed forward the return flow pipeline. So during and in that study was increased gray water or even black water use considered in that and why was the return-flow pipeline briefly for the sort of layman among us myself included, why was that the selected solution?

MR. ROACH: Commissioner Johnson, you're correct. It evaluated many different options for using the treated effluent. I know that, and I haven't looked at that study for some time, but I do remember that increased reuse was considered looking at purple pipes. One of the problems with reuse is you need two separate pipes: you need a silver pipe with potable water you need a purple pipe with a non-potable water and

creating an entire new system of purple pipes is incredibly expensive. And so when you start looking at could we get water back up to this side of town to help everyone use effluent on their landscaping. That was one of the things considered. In terms of gray water reuse sort of distributed around the town. I'm not sure that -- I'm not sure that was considered. I think this was more looking at things that the utility could build essentially. And the reason I believe that the return-flow project came out so far ahead of the other options is it utilizes existing infrastructure. The Buckman Direct Diversion is there. This is a way to allow the Buckman Direct Diversion to have more diversions essentially, to increase the diversions. So we don't have to build a new treatment plant. The treatment plant's already there. We do have to build a pump and a pipe to get the water over to the river to get those return- flow credits. And I think direct potable reuse was considered but it's just more energy intensive, it's more expensive, it's more technologically uncertain, and it's more regulatory uncertain at this point still. And I guess on that note, it's worth I think mentioning that the return-flow project will potentially generate electricity on as the water goes down to the river. You can recapture that that energy with hydroelectricity to then essentially reduce some of that energy impact of sending it to the river and then pumping it back down. The water you send to the river you can get the energy out of.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay, thank you for that. And this is a tiny bit aside, but I appreciate your comment about indoor water use versus outdoor water use and some of that is recaptured and then if the return-flow pipeline, if and when it is completed contribute to that. I am I think and I'm sure that I'm not alone a little bit confused about the apparent doubling of the available surface water credits that we have when – or that the City has really – when the pipeline is completed is it that there's Rio Grande and San Juan-Chama coming in and you have a graph where some of that San Juan-Chama – right, water is water, but is is sort of not being used. I guess I would like another gloss on that. It's a little confusing to me because it seems like magic. So if you could help me understand the doubling effect because it is effectively that, right? If we return this water –

MR. ROACH: It's easy to get spun around the axle on this. And I've been spinning myself around the axle on this for six years. So you're not alone in sort of going, Wait, wait, that's how that work?

Let me just try. If we wanted a 100 gallons of water at Buckman Direct Diversion right now and we I mean the City, the City would have to call for about 101 gallons of water released from Abiquiu. That's to account for – or 102 somewhere in there, account for a little bit of losses and get 100 gallons to the diversion location. And then we would divert the 100 gallons that go into town. So right now it's basically one to one reservoir releases. Once this return-flow project is in place on an annual average basis of that 100 gallons that we put into the system, we see 67 gallons of it back at the wastewater treatment plant. And so now we're going to take 67 gallons and we're going to send it down to the river. And now we're going to continue to divert 100 gallons, but now instead of releasing 100 gallons from upstream, we're only releasing 33 gallons from upstream because we're putting 67 gallons back into the river from the return-flow plant. So now there's 100 gallons that are still effectively being accounted for as our diversion, but only 33 gallons are being released from upstream. And so it's not just a doubling, it's a tripling. And that's on an annual average. If we run this thing in the winter, there's like

90 percent of the water comes back to the treatment plant. And so you could actually have the same diversion for a tenth of the release from upstream during the winter. So that's where the magic happens. And it is magic. And if you increase the amount of water you're using indoors compared to outdoors, it really does this the magic of the math is really stretching that that water that's held upstream in the reservoir.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you, Dr. Roach. So that gets to this question of indoor versus outdoor use. In the summer 33 percent is used outdoor something like that, 10 percent is used outdoors in the winter and there's losses. Am I on the right track?

MR. ROACH: Well, you're close. In the summer it's probably more like half of it is used outdoors and in the winter only 10 percent is lost and so on the annual average it's 2/3.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. So the last part that I don't quite understand is the return-flow pipeline will put it beneath flow-wise the Buckman Direct Diversion. So we're not rediverting the return flow pipeline. So how does it, how do we release more water upstream? Is it because we're measuring total, I don't know the measurement unit, but flows in the Rio Grande and because we're not diverting some of that, we're releasing less upstream.

MR. ROACH: That's right. We're essentially keeping the river whole right now by releasing from upstream the amount that we're going to divert and in the future we're going to keep the river whole and this would be below the point where the water comes in. So, you are correct. The water will hit the river. It's on the order of, you know, 100 yards below the diversion location. So, it won't be rediverting the actual water. But once you're below that point where the water's coming back in, the river will be whole at that point. Right now, we keep the river whole at that point by releasing from storage everything we divert. In the future, we'll keep the river whole at that point by the combination of either putting water in the river from the reservoir or from the return-flow project.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you, Dr. Roach. No more questions.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Cacari Stone, are you ready with questions?

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Sure. Thank you, Dr. Roach. I think we could spend the entire day just discussing this report and all the reports you showed, your presentation, and I appreciate your expertise. I have a quick question. I didn't get a chance to read the innovative report on climate change that we've done that you led; could you say a little bit about more about climate change modeling and where we might stand in the near future since we're doing this future outlook today? Thank you.

MR. ROACH: Yes, Commissioner. Thanks for the question. So prior to let's say 2010 when water managers did planning they would essentially reshuffle historic data and that historic data might be from gauges that they had going back 50 or 100 years. It might be from tree rings they had going back hundreds of years. And they would say okay this is the climate that we've seen, we're going to shuffle it or we're going to take the worst 10 years we've ever seen and we're going to plan for that. And then the

idea of climate change of a changing climate became part of the paradigm and the question was how do we how do we incorporate climate change? We know there's variability. We've seen that but how do we know how much it's going to change? And the best available science is these large global circulation models which essentially look at what is the concentration of CO2 and methane in the atmosphere and therefore what happens how much is the temperature rise how and what happens to precipitation. Those are the two main things we care about as sort of hydrologists and water utility managers is how warm is it because the hotter it gets the more water plants need and people use and how much rain is falling and how much snow is falling because that you know creates our supply. So at the moment we use output from these giant models and one of the reasons we're delayed on presenting the supply is we have to rely on big science. This is way out of our ability to do this on our own. There's 17 organizations around the globe that each run a different one of these models. And then there's people who have to process the output and downscale the output to make it useful to us. And then finally, we can get a something that's useful to our models, which is how much snow fell in the mountains or how much do we think will fall in the mountains over the next 80 years. So we're using that sort of big science to try and inform these models. And one of the criticisms of that is there's so much uncertainty. How can we be planning around this when there's so much uncertainty? And one of the responses to that is maybe we should also look at what conditions would create problems for us. So we're kind of doing a little bit of both. And I think as a water utility, we're inherently conservative and so we tend to try and look at the worst case scenarios that we see coming out of these models and make sure that we would behave some idea of how we would respond to that. So I hope that was kind of along the lines of what you were asking.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: I appreciate it. And I think if you had a silver bullet or one recommendation as we look at the next 10 years and responsible county governance, how do how do we prepare for the uncertainty of climate change and what's your best, like I said, silver bullet recommendation? I know that's not fair, but certainly it looks like we've had some population growth, but we've conserved some supply. So that's the good news. That's the biggest takeaway I got from your presentation. But what would you recommend we start thinking about as a Commission?

MR. ROACH: Well, to quote someone else who was smarter than me, there's no silver bullet, but maybe there's some bronze buckshot. I think it'll certainly be a myriad of different strategies. We can't put all our eggs in one basket. I do see – the first two paradigm shifts that I mentioned in this presentation were conservation and we will always look to conservation first but at some point demand begins to what they call harden. You get the low-hanging fruit. You've asked people to use less and use water more efficiently. Is there more we can do? Yes, and we will keep working on conservation. So, we're always going to start with conservation. The other thing I mentioned was shifting to using the river water first because it's the water we can see and sort of saving our wells. So we'll certainly continue to do that. But the third one, and I alluded to it, is I think that our conservation efforts are really going to shift towards a focus on reducing the amount of utility water that is used outdoors. Now, that doesn't mean we can't have a green city or a green county or a green spaces, but thinking about how can we use stormwater and rainwater for outdoor use and minimize the use of our

potable utility water used outside. Those are questions that we're grappling with. And in this planning process, we've sort of identified four benefits of utility water as, you know, reliability, which is usually the only thing a utility thinks about, in 80 years when those faucets get turned on, we want water coming out, right? That's the number one for the utility. The number two is sustainability, though. Like water could be coming out, but we've just destroyed our aquifers. That's not an acceptable outcome. So, we do want to be in a sustainable situation.

And then there's two others that we're looking at specific to sort of the City is how much water is in our river. Our constituents care about flows of water in the upper river and the lower river. So, that's an output. That's a benefit of our water. And then how much green space is there? So, these are big questions much bigger than the utility, but we understand that our water plan impacts those things. And so those are the dimensions across which we're going to look. And I think that third shift of let's use less of our potable water outdoors is going to end up being one of the ways that we go to to try and enhance our resiliency.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you so much. And I appreciate you talking about paradigm shifts. And I see we have an intergovernmental presentation later because I had some questions around the state's law in response to the Supreme Court Sackett decision, but do you think we're going to be able to preserve more water due to the state Senate Bill 21 in response to Sackett because that was just passed in 2025 and it looks at trying to protect evaporation; just your expertise is appreciated.

MR. ROACH: I don't think I'm prepared to comment on that. That's mostly to do with which waters we're protecting from a quality perspective.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Yes and also the evaporation. No worries. I'm just looking ahead and again we could use the whole day just with you. No worries about that.

I do have a question and thank you Chair for your patience. I always want to look at the bigger picture and this is a bigger picture for all the presenters and in the spirit of what Commissioner Bustamante, our Chair, also had and envisioned for this summit is much of what we look at and all the technical engineering reports of hydrology, the science of all of this as well as the business side of it that I've read from the County since I started, looks at water in terms of ownership. Looks at water in terms of co-ownership. Water as a commodity. Something that we talk about supply demand, it's a resource as a commodity to be diverted, to be shared, to be put in the banks for later days. But we also have when I look at community and I think about from a lay person and as a County official that needs to represent our community and a traditional Agua Fria Village to Las Campanas to local folks who are on other wells and are on City/County water, there's this other paradigm shift that looks at water in relationship and water as a sacred source. People often quote, you know, water is life, la agua es vida, but that comes more from a traditional epistemological knowledge base and paradigm and I when I hear questions coming from the community, I hear that paradigm. And I think there's sometimes a conflict or a gap between the paradigm of the scientist and the paradigm of our community science and our indigenous science. And based on that paradigm, has the City and/or – and this is going to be question for other County officials – have we ever

considered a paradigm of water protection that comes from a more traditional science indigenous and ecological perspective? And have we looked at best practices and had deeper conversations with different stakeholders looking at the science that you have as well as the indigenous science? To your knowledge has that ever happened in our region because we also need a regional approach. Thank you.

MR. ROACH: Commissioner Cacari Stone, those are great thoughts and I think we as a utility are on fairly on the conservative side of things. We look at the level of investment that we want to make to assure that people in this community will have safe, reliable, resilient water for hundreds of years in the future. And we certainly won't make hundreds of millions of dollars of investment without sort of a property right that we feel like we can defend. On the other hand, I will also say that we are often benefited by interactions with indigenous or folks who've been here for longer than us, their insights and we listen to those. And I guess I would say one of the things that has happened in this community that's fairly remarkable is the Target Flow Ordinance or the Living River Ordinance was a decision at some point. It was a decision, really when the BDD came online that we have a moment here where we might decide we want to allow a certain amount of water that we could otherwise store and use for the utility use to go down the river for the sake of the river itself.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you so much. So I appreciate Dr. Roach, your expertise and I just want to for a shared vision together for today, a potential outcome is that we think about the different levels of knowledge and expertise in this room for those who are online for the bringing the western science, the engineers, the hydrologists and all the reports looking at it as a business and savings with the sustainability community sides and indigenous science side. My question is what would be one small win for us in the next year as we try to converge paradigms that really think about the next seven generations and think about water as sustainability and really live through governance water as life. This is the challenge and call it action question I have for all of us. How do we bridge that paradigm and that we don't have an either or but we have both realities going on and we put that in practice in County governance whether it be land use or whether it be our the Aamodt decision whether it be other activities we're doing with Buckman in the City but think about this regional approach. So that's my call to action and vision. Let's look at a small win together. Thanks.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Greene.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Jesse. This is a great presentation, a lot of stuff that I've gleaned over the years, but really packaged nicely and appreciated. And then I'm going to add with some questions and just for some clarification here.

One of the aspects that was brought up that I would hope that we could start to discuss here that we could also get when we talk about the balance between the water utility and our Growth Management Department, I'd love to do that with you all and have a similar thing with City water and land use at the City to understand how that balance works because in this whole pool it's that's the supply demand area here. So that's just a

future thinking aspect here.

Is there capacity for either the City or the County to buy more San Juan-Chama water? Is there anything available in that space?

MR. ROACH: Commissioner Greene, I think the answer to that is no. And in fact, the San Juan-Chama project also has changed with climate change. They way it was designed by engineers at a time when they would assign a firm yield – they would look at historic hydrology, design a project, and assign what they called a firm yield which meant that this project should always yield that amount. And we have been experiencing shortages in that project for, you know, the majority of the last 10 years. So there's a shortage in the actual wet water coming through that project or a reduction, I should say, a reduction in that supply. And in addition, there has been water carved away from that from specifically from the Cochiti rec pool. There was there was a chunk of water set aside for evaporation to keep recreational water in Cochiti and that has been sort of shaved away a little bit to provide water for the Aamodt Settlement in fact. So, I wish we could get some more water from the San Juan-Chama project, but short of, you know, looking at new infrastructure up there, which I think would probably be politically infeasible, there's not additional water available in that project.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: So, it's just purely that the pipeline is built to or is utilized to capacity?

MR. ROACH: Correct.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: But we could potentially buy other people's San Juan-Chama water that is somewhere already in our system.

MR. ROACH: That's correct. And there's water available for lease and potentially I guess, I can't speak for other contractors. We certainly wouldn't sell any. The City wouldn't sell any of ours. The County wouldn't sell any of theirs. There are other contractors who don't utilize all of it and they do lease it regularly, but in terms of a permanent exchange, I'm not sure.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Okay. Same thing, same question for native water on the Rio Grande.

MR. ROACH: That's correct. The native water on the Rio Grande is that there's no new native water and so the rights that the County and the City acquire are from other right holders who already hold those rights.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: And then in terms of within the City, there are some wells, private wells and I know of one that when I sat on the planning commission was pretty large and I don't want to call them out, but I just want to know if there's an initiative to try to retire some of those big groundwater users here in the city.

MR. ROACH: Within the City limits if you want to deepen a well or drill a new well, the the City will not allow it if you are close to a water main. But in terms of the ability to retire existing wells, we don't really have a a hammer for that.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: I would disagree because there was a planning commission decision that had that as a condition of future growth but nobody enforced it but that's something else.

And then in the wastewater treatment plant where are the opportunities, where is

that in the planning process? When do we think a solution will come forward that we would know about here? And then in the full comprehensive look at this, how can the County potentially partner in that because I would say that we are already utilizing a significant portion of the wastewater treatment plant even though it's a City project and my understanding is speaking to the EPA in a previous administration was – but still the EPA while it exists – has more money for a quote unquote regional partnership than it does for the City going alone. And so I want to know if where this the County could potentially partner to make it more affordable for the City and the County and more effective as a project potentially.

MR. ROACH: I think we should probably engage in in conversations at a staff level or potentially at an elected official level. Right now we're in the procurement for an either new or renovated or some combination wastewater treatment facility to assure that we can remain in compliance for the foreseeable future. And we anticipate it to be an expensive proposition. I think one of the pieces that would need to be discussed in terms of County involvement in that is the ownership of the effluent and right now according to the Water Resources Agreement that effluent it all belongs to the City. If the County wants to come help us treat that for our benefit – there might be something missing in that that we would need to flesh out a little bit.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Flush out is a great expression in this industry. So flesh out flush out whatever. How did we get to the 7 percent where was that based on?

MR. ROACH: That was based on sort of conversation and negotiation between City and County staff and elected officials.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Okay. And is that based on what our San Juan-Chama sort of amount that somehow gets back there or that was just pulled out of thin air?

MR. ROACH: I think initially that may have been a basis for it. But ultimately the ability for the County to get San Juan-Chama water to our plant within the context of the Water Resources Agreement which gives all effluent arriving at the plant to the City, as those negotiations proceeded, we realized that that it was really about City resources and the County investing financially and receiving some portion of the wet water created by the project.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: And as we add more Agua Fria Village wastewater pipes into the City's sewer system, would that potentially increase our ability to use some of that?

MR. ROACH: At this time, the Water Resources Agreement specifies that all the water arriving at the Paseo Real at the City's water reclamation facility belongs to the City. So we would need to reopen discussions around that agreement and there are probably some other things that could be considered in that but that's going to be sort of a high level conversation.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: And then sort of two questions in this, One somewhat related but not really there was in the paper last week, the fluoride in the water production Where is that decision being made and where is that happening or not happening?

MR. ROACH: That decision has been made and the City is no longer specified that we should be adding fluoride to the water.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: And that's all that was added at Canyon Road added at BDD.

MR. ROACH: It was not added at BDD because BDD is a joint jointly operated facility.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: So all BDD water didn't have it. It was just at the City somewhere. There was a mixing place that they added it in. Few drops there.

MR. ROACH: That's right.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Okay. All right. I'd love to know more about that. I've had a few people call me on that in the past few days. And then are there any issues with the permitting of and the timeline of the return-flow pipeline or any of the work that's being done due to federal cutbacks, federal, you know, nobody's answering the phone, all sorts of things in there, or do we see some impacts trickling down? No pun intended.

MR. ROACH: The environmental permitting is something we've been working on for years and it's been something that we wish had proceeded a little bit more rapidly. We're not seeing any immediate impacts associated with this shutdown, but I imagine if it continues that things will sort of grind to a halt.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: And are there any risks to this concept of the return-flow pipeline or is this just straight science and mathematics of you return you know if we get 67 percent that we can put back in the river it triples our thing, it's straight math or is there some policy that could be manipulated at a federal level that could ruin this?

MR. ROACH: No, I don't see – I mean at a federal level if we couldn't get the environmental permit then there would be no way to proceed forward with the project. But we have the return-flow permit from the state already. So in terms of the math and the return-flow credits, those are in place.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: And then lastly, is there just something that we're not asking? Is there something here where the City and the County should be, you know, talking about that hasn't been addressed here that is, you know, being the water expert in the room or one of the water experts in the room,; is there something that we should know that we should be asking that you wished we asked or that you've been waiting for us to ask?

MR. ROACH: I wish I'd thought about that question ahead of time. Nothing jumps to mind. I will say that we have a very productive relationship with the County at a staff level and that we have every other week we're meeting for an hour with members of the utilities, members of the attorneys' offices. And so I think at a staff level it's very productive and I think between City staff and City elected officials we have a few champions that that we have good interactions with and so I think whatever interactions are occurring between the Commissioners and the Councilors, I encourage those to proceed and I don't know how we branch all these different things but at a staff level things to me seem very productive.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: And then just to us speaking here, we've spoken about the possibility of a County Commission-City Council meeting. I do want to recommend that we do a planning commission to planning commission meeting that brings sort of water resources and the City's general plan and our land use plans together in a comprehensive multi-level, multi-organization, multi-resource sort of conversation in an effort to really get this instead of all these silos all these different organizations different, you know, it's a checkerboard of different things and thank you, Jesse, this is really great I really appreciate it you're a great resource to us. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. I'm going to try to keep mine brief. This has been a long one, but I think that you carry the information for the largest question, right? To tie into the values that I come from as well, and they're very much aligned with what Commissioner Cacari Stone was talking about and I have worked with in this area for a while in teaching environmental sciences at Northern New Mexico College and as a dean at Santa Fe Community College. But one of there's some core values that we work from and they come from Dine principles but they're very common among other tribes and it goes into native science of tapping into and aligning with the forces of nature and I just want for clarification instead of having it as an open question. One of those things that I ran on was the concern of water. It's something again that's just an easy topic for people. But as a kid when I went to bury my dad's – my chicken that I raised in the 9th grade, I dug a hole and I hit water in La Cienega. Now La Cienega is very much a large part of this conversation because La Cienega means water, it's the marshes if you will. And I hit water. I have goats now. And when I took a small hoe, small backhoe to bury a goat I didn't hit water anymore in the same location. I'm understanding that now with the use of surface water that aquifer is being recharged. Is that correct?

MR. ROACH: Chair Bustamante, the very specifics of groundwater hydrology in La Cienega are not something that I can probably speak to with a great amount of authority. I am aware of some of the studies through time that suggest the reasons for the reduction of the aquifer in La Cienega. I think it's probably reasonable that the City's reduction in the amount of water being withdrawn from the City aquifer has certainly not hurt La Cienega, but the specific flow paths of the groundwater and the specific impacts of different wells on different areas of the aquifer are sort of beyond my ability to speak to you intelligently.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Okay. I guess it would go on the assumption that there is a leverage in the topography that using the surface water would somehow through the rains and we're going to get some information on that later, but that would work with the topography.

MR. ROACH: In general, the connection of the La Cienega aquifer to the City wellfield aquifer would be the key. And I think there is some connection there. And I've seen some reports talking about ancestral river channels. And so there's certainly some amount of connection. And so I think reduction in use of City wells is likely maybe helping to some degree. But depending what other sorts of wells there are upstream of or that are potentially taking groundwater that would otherwise slowly make its way to La Cienega, it may be more than just the City wells that are doing that.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Okay. Thank you. And then the next principle is to feed the hand that feeds you. So when we look at how the water is being diverted and the water that's going to go back into the Rio Grande, we also know that we have agricultural use downstream of the city. Now just for full clarification, I'm District 3. So I'm everything south of the PC's restaurant and the high school side all the way to Edgewood. So I do have big concerns on the Estancia side which I understand we're not addressing here. But with regard to District 3 in that area and the La Bajada and then outside of our County the Cochiti Pueblo, La Peña Blanca there's a lot of agriculture there. there's a lot of agriculture in District 1 and how much we're working within these systems to assure that we're feeding the hand that feeds us. That we don't lose the ability for future generations to grow their own food. So how much of what we're talking about in the availability of water and these plans for how we will continue to have these resources available for a utility, are we considering the natural systems of water to assure that our agricultural – and I've heard people from the agricultural area complain about the return-flow and the digression of water from the Santa Fe River. So can you speak to that briefly and what types of considerations have been made with regard to that second principle?

MR. ROACH: Yes, Chair Bustamante. Specifically to the return-flow project. Certainly the City has been discharging a large amount of effluent to the Santa Fe River for a long time and now is working to reclaim the San Juan-Chama portion of that. One of the things that we have worked through with in some of the agreements there is that the project will be operated such that the river doesn't go dry below the wastewater treatment plant. And our understanding of the lower Santa Fe River is that the La Cineguilla springs and seeps are then recharging the river and providing water for of those downstream diverters. And so we think the combination of the way we operate that project to make sure that the river doesn't go dry and the resting of our wells to allow the the groundwater system to sort of rebuild will allow for continued traditional use of the waters of the lower Santa Fe River.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. And then the last two are related. The way I'll start this one is there are already conversations with various people within the city and the conversation of a joint planning etc. for water. But when we look at how we're developing things in – let me just get to the last two principles are creating non-human centric systems that we're focusing on regenerative ways to protect the environment so that we're protecting ourselves and then designing systems that last for a millennia. And with regard to those last two systems, when we talk about the opportunity for the County in working with the EPA to support some type of joint management of that wastewater, I will speak as a resident of the La Cienega/La Cieneguilla area, playing in the Santa Fe River, knowing that going down Siler Road stank, and then knowing that quote unquote nobody's down there, let's move the wastewater treatment facility to La Cieneguilla was nothing more nothing less than an environmental justice issue. There were people down there and there have been for quite a while. So, I'll leave that not as a question but as a statement for the record and how we consider the redevelopment of that tool that we have for the management of our water in creating a system that is more regenerative for our communities.

So, I just want to thank you sincerely. I understand from Commissioner Hughes

that he has no questions at this time, but sincerely, Dr. Roach, I'm grateful for your time. Thank you.

MR. ROACH: Yeah, thank you all for your interest in your questions. I'm going to go back to the office, but I will join on zoom so that if there are other questions that come up I'm available. T

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. At this time, we have sat for a long time and we understand the value of the conversation that we've just had. I would like to recommend a 10-minute break and then we will hear from Travis Soderquist on where does the Santa Fe County utilities water go. Okay. So, we will have a 10-minute break. We will come back at 10 minutes till 11:00.

[The meeting paused from 10:42 to 10:52]

B. Where Does Santa Fe County Utility's Water Go?

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: All right. Thank you very much. And I want to thank everyone who's present here today and the 55 people who are online. So we have 34 on teams and 21 unless I'm flipping them around and on the YouTube channel. So I'm super grateful for everyone's interest. I think we all agree that so far this has been incredibly helpful. So onward ho Travis Soderquist, thank you Travis. I have to also acknowledge the work that Travis put into bringing this together and acknowledge that they crossed hills and high water.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Today's a day of water metaphors.

TRAVIS SODERQUIST (County Utilities Director): Good morning, Chair. Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Travis Soderquist. I'm the Director of Utilities at Santa Fe County.

My presentation is going to be focused on the Santa Fe County utility portion and a lot of people asked questions prior to this meeting coming together of why are we having a County meeting and then the first speaker is a person from the City of Santa Fe. The best response to that is that our utilities are so intertwined and interconnected that without the City coming and presenting their side of it then you don't get the whole picture. And it also goes to show how much work is going into the partnership and collaboration that we have between the City and the County and hopefully it continues. I think it will. But now jumping into my presentation, it's going to be more focused on the County utility. I didn't collaborate with Jesse on this portion presenting. So I might have some redundant slides and some redundant information, but it'll just be re-impressing it upon you so you can remember it better.

This presentation was generated because we get a lot of questions from constituents and members of the community as to what's going on, why are we doing what we're doing, is there any justification for why you're doing that? And so, we tried to come up with some of the most common questions that we are asked and what the Commissioners are asked and what we're hearing when we're talking to people that live within Santa Fe and Santa Fe County. And so the first question is how are you guys

connected to the City utility? And that's kind of a hard one to answer unless they can see some visuals because it doesn't really make sense to have the Buckman Direct Diversion then you go into the City infrastructure and then back out to the County. It's so we're going to explain that. And then how much water does the County utility have? You get these questions when whenever there's a new development why or where is the water coming from? How can you guys justify building all these new places? Water is finite, etc., etc. So, that's another one of the questions. Who is using the County utility water? And then where does that water go and what are we going to be doing in the future? And so, these are the main questions that we're seeing time and time again. So, hopefully we can touch on them and get some answers.

This is a map of a general overview of the City of Santa Fe and then the Santa Fe County utility to kind of demonstrate how we are connected to the City of Santa Fe. And so the red dots you see are the master meters and this is where we track the volume of water that's coming out of the City infrastructure into the County's utility. The blue areas is all in the Santa Fe County utility and then the yellow is the City of Santa Fe. And so this just demonstrates where we serve versus where the City serves. If you if you want to think about it generally, north of 599 is going to be County utility service area and then south of I-25 is County utility service area. Any anything in between 599 and I-25 is going to be City of Santa Fe.

This map is giving a little bit of context as to how the Santa Fe County utility came to be. And so the map portion is just showing areas that were discussed in an agreement. And so back in 2008, 2009ish there was a settlement agreement between Santa Fe County and the City of Santa Fe to better delineate the city of Santa Fe's boundaries. They wanted to figure out exactly what the presumptive city limits were and where the county utility would begin. And part of that agreement and subsequent agreements over the years has transferred historically City customers to the County utility. And if you look at section K, number two, it calls out some specific ones like Turquoise Trail, Las Campanas, La Tierra stuff like that. Those used to be City of Santa Fe customers. They're now Santa Fe County customers and our utility is mainly made up of customers that used to be City customers. We've had new developments in the past that came online as County customers.

This is another map to kind of demonstrate the same thing. If you look at the purplish pink, that's pre-annexation water service areas. And if you look at the greenish color that's post annexation water service areas. I like this map because it also shows you the sustainable development areas. So we've got SDA 1, 2, and 3. And each one of those SDAs has different scopes of what the County is focused on doing with SDA 1 being primarily County focused for growth and development.

So now we go on to the question of how much how much water does the County have. This table is pulled from the water accounting and availability summary that we give every year to the Board of County commissioners which is kind of an update on water right purchases, any developments that have come through and entered into a ULEDA with the County that's taken into account. But this table specifically is just summarizing what we have as a County. So Jesse spoke to native rights, San Juan-Chama permits and the Water Resources Agreement and the shared pool. And so this just

tells you how much we have of each. So we have 367 acre feet of San Juan-Chama water. And like Jesse said, we haven't used that in his time that he's been here. And I consider the San Juan-Chama water primarily a backup for the Santa Fe County utility. We rely pretty heavily on our native rights. And if you look at the table, you see we have about 1,146 acre feet in native rights. And we're not constantly but fairly frequently purchasing more rights to build up our water right portfolio. You also see that there's 1,226 acre-feet of developer acquired water rights. And so these water rights are tied to the County and diverted at the Buckman Direct Diversion. And these are brought for specific developments within the Santa Fe County Utility Service Area. So there's two different ways for developers to get water rights. It's either bring their own water or they can pay the fee in lieu through the County. The fee in lieu through the County is a little bit more expensive and so the bringing of their own water rights can be beneficial just financially or they just have water rights available to them whatever the reason is they've brought water rights assigned them to the Buckman Direct Diversion and that's their source of water.

The Water Resources Agreement, the 1,350 acre-feet, I also consider that a backup supply to Santa Fe County. We hardly use that if we have used that, not really sure, my time with the County has been short so far. But that is a backup supply for us and it's a really good benefit because like the City said, they have four different supplies of water and so they have a little bit more variation on where they could potentially draw water from than the County does. In addition to the 1,350 acre-feet, we have the shared pool. And this is beneficial to us when the Buckman Direct Diversion is shut down for either non-discretionary or discretionary reasons, it's a way for us to get through the downtime of when our main diversion structure is not running.

So in addition to the surface water rights, the County does have a conjunctive management plan in place. The idea behind this is to get multiple different types of sources. And so the conjunctive management plan is detailing how the utility would utilize groundwater and surface water in conjunction to benefit the system and make the system more resilient and have a more continuous supply of water. And so the idea in the conjunctive management plan of having groundwater is that it would be supplemental water to our surface water or a backup supply. We would not want to rely on the groundwater as a primary source of water for our county utility. It's just in case. And I stole this graph from the City of Santa Fe, it probably looks pretty familiar, but I'm going to use it for the purposes of showing the benefits of conjunctive management when it comes to groundwater and surface water supplies. And so when you see the Buckman Direct Diversion come online in 2011, you see a very, very sharp drop in groundwater diversion. There's still some groundwater diversion, but nowhere near as much as it used to be. And so that's the idea of conjunctive management is maintaining and using resources where it can be used to benefit the utility as a whole.

So the intended benefits of the plan is it's a protection of the local water resource, reliability of supply, optimization of public assets and so on and so forth. And so if we can get a conjunctive management plan enacted and in place to where we can actually have a groundwater backup supply, then I think it would give me a little bit more comfort when it comes to talking about issues that we might be seeing in the future where there's a reduced surface water supply or something that's outside of our control, we have

another source of water that could potentially help us continue delivery.

The benefits for the aquifer management, you might say, well, you guys are adding in an aquifer diversion through a groundwater well to create a backup supply. So, the idea behind the conjunctive management plan that the County adopted is that we would acquire water rights that are typically used on an annual basis and then put them into a groundwater well, but only use them when they're needed. And so, there's a proposed accounting methodology of doing a rolling, a multi-year rolling average based on what the actual diversion of the groundwater well is. And so if you don't use it, then what you could have used is put into a bank of sorts and it just stays in that bank until you actually need it. And so the water rights that we're transferring in are being conditioned to reduce the volume of water that's available to those water rights and then cap the amount of water that could be saved in the bank and then only have a certain amount of years that you could add water to the bank before you actually tap into it. And so the idea of it protecting the aquifer in a sense is that this water right that would typically be used on an annual basis probably or close to full capacity of that water rate would no longer be used to its full capacity annually but instead stored and only be used when it's needed. So that's the idea behind the multi-year rolling average. That's one of the aspects of the plan that is currently being negotiated with the OSE right now. Depending on the outcome of that, the conjunctive management plan might head one direction or the other.

This is a flowchart/decision tree of sorts that is kind of detailing what the process is for a water right transfer or a water right application. I'm showing this now because there's a lot of question about paper water versus wet water or physical water that's available. And so this decision chart comes from the OSE and it's showing what the process is to go through one of these applications and it really highlights how much consideration is going into what this process actually is looking at. When you submit an application, it goes to the State Engineers Office and they look at a few different factors, but they're primarily about does this impair existing water rights? Is there a negative impact to the diversions that are in this area already? Is the water even there for this water right to be transferred into that area? What's the benefit to the public? All sorts of things that would be of concern to the existing well owners or diversion owners in the area that the water right is being transferred into. And so if you answer yes to some of these questions, you go one way. If you answer no, you go another way. But ultimately this is just to show that it is looking at what the availability of the resource actually is, what the benefits are and then if anybody will be affected adversely. So an example of this is a groundwater well right transfer that is in process right now is in a hearing with the OSE. So there were some protestors that did not agree with the water right transfer and said that this is going to impact us negatively. That's currently in the hearing process.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: I have to apologize and interrupt just briefly. This is the an application for the transfer of water rights or the use of water rights. I'm not understanding exactly what the application is for and I apologize for interrupting.

MR. SODERQUIST: Oh, it's a great question and you caught me. This is an application for a new water right as I understand it but the process is very similar for a transfer or new water rights.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: So this is an application for new water rights.

MR. SODERQUIST: Yeah. But the decision tree applies for both where there can be hearings, there can be protests, there can be the opportunity to voice your concerns. And so this specific one is a water right application which a transfer can fall under that.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Can I ask a follow-up question? So I ike that there's a published three weeks at the top, but that's the only timeline in there. Is there an order of magnitude as to from top to bottom what it could take? Short fastest path, longest path.

MR. SODERQUIST: So, I'm not sure. I don't have the knowledge in knowing what the fastest path is or what the slowest path is, but I know that it can be variable depending on the complexity of the case of the transfer. If the parties can come to an agreement, then the transfer can move by a lot quicker. But if you have to assemble a lot of evidence and present that to the hearing officer and then go back and forth between the protestants and the applicant, then it can really drag on for a really long time. And so, this process can take years. It's not a quick thing. There needs to be a lot of due diligence that goes into it and it can be strenuous.

So, now we go into who is using County water. I'm sorry that the map is a little bit pixelated, but the point is to show you pretty much where we are currently delivering water. So, you see the yellow is Las Campanas and then you see south of I-25 is primarily where our our service area is. We do have developments north of 599 but I think the majority of our water would be south of I-25. That big purple blob is not necessarily the fairest representation of a Santa Fe County utility service area because that is the Eldorado service area. And so Eldorado is a bulk water customer of Santa Fe County. And so that should just be a little pinpoint where we deliver water to them and then from there it's their service area. They deliver it. They have operators. They take care of the metering and reporting and whatnot.

To dive into some more specifics of who is using Santa Fe County utility water. We have roughly 4,200 customers that are residential and 142 customers that are commercial or non-residential.you have less customers for the sewer for both. But this graphic is just showing how many customers, how much money we collect per month for those customers and then the total quantity of water that's diverted by those customers. So it's a little blurry for me but it looks like it's about 26 million gallons per month for residential and 31 million gallons per month for commercial and non-residential. So if that gives you a little bit of an idea of what's diverted for the month of August. This is another way to visualize the total diversion for all the Santa Fe Santa Fe County utility customers. It does a really good job of demonstrating the water consumption increase in the summer months. You see a large uptick in June and then it tails off when we start entering into fall. Another visualization, but this time showing that the GPCD that Jesse introduced in his presentation, the County has a 68 gallons per day per capita estimation, I'll call it, for how much our customers consume. And I call it an estimation because it's a little bit harder to parse out the total population of the Santa Fe County utility customer base because if you look at census data, it's pulling all of Santa Fe County. And so you have to go based off developments and then average per capita or per house residents.

So now we get into to new developments. Our SLDC lays out rules and

requirements based on where people are. I made mention of SDA 1, 2, and 3, and these are different sustainable development areas, and they each have their own different requirements. So, in SDA1, there's more requirements of the county utility to provide infrastructure, and there's also more requirements for people that reside within that development to connect if they're within a certain distance from infrastructure that the County has. So this slide is just basically highlighting that there's a lot of different scenarios for whether people have to connect or not and it gets pretty specific.

But let's get into the process for new development. So when people want to develop properties, they need to figure out their water supply. And so a lot of the time they're coming to the County to get water or at least service through the County utility. And so the first part of that is developing a water budget. And that requires the developers to come into the County and work with the growth department and the County utility to determine – they have to tell us what kind of properties are they going to build. Is it going to be commercial? Is it going to be residential? Or is it going to be mixed use? And dependent on what they're going to be building, we will designate a volume of water to that property. And so you get the 0.25 acre-feet per year for a residential property. And then you get variables whether it's a commercial building or something like that. And so the volume of water that's tied to each of these developments is based on a study that was done in roughly I think it was about 2008 and it was led by the City of Santa Fe and it looked at data to existing infrastructure. So, how much are these houses diverting? How much are these businesses diverting? And broke it down by that. We're using that to determine what our water budget is for some of these new developments. And we do add on a 20 percent contingency on top of that, that's a a line loss contingency. It's to be conservative with our delivery in case there is an over, I guess over diversion of water than what they expected for their development. It's a pretty extensive analysis that we go through with the development to say here's how much water we're expecting based what you guys based on what you guys are proposing to build. And then from there the County utility goes through and looks at our water right portfolio, our water right availability and sees we have this number of acre-feet, this much of it is allocated out to existing developments which leaves this differential that we can either say yes we have water available for this new development or say no depending on what that number is. We like to keep a little bit of a buffer within our water right portfolio so that we're not 100 percent committed to deliveries. We're doing this on at least an annual basis where we're going through and checking in with our water rate portfolio and making sure that we have more than enough to cover our existing obligations as well as plan for proposed developments. Because these proposed developments aren't just spur of the moment, these are years in advance that people are planning these out. We have a pretty good idea of what should be coming online or could potentially be coming online in the next few years. And so with that analysis, that also gives us the opportunity to look into whether the County needs to purchase additional water rights and then go through that transfer process of doing this analysis. And like I said, it can take years to do this. And so there's some forward planning and forward thought going into this where we say if it does take two years to get water rights moved into the County's Water Right Portfolio, then we better start now because in 2028 we have a proposed development that might need 50 acre-feet of water, something like that. And so we're doing that at least on an annual basis, but we're doing it

every time a proposed development comes in and we're assessing whether their water budget is reasonable. We're also looking at our water rights to make sure that we can absorb a hit whether they're coming in and asking to pay the fee in lieu. If they're bringing their own water rights, we don't necessarily have to do that analysis, but we do look at what the BDD's capacity is because the BDD can have only have so many water rights assigned to it. And so we have to take into account multiple different aspects prior to actually approving these developments to come online.

So once we get to an agreed upon water budget and the County's done its analysis on water availability, we start getting into the negotiations of what the ULEDA or the Utility Line Extension and Delivery Agreement would entail. And so that portion is where the negotiations happen on what the infrastructure is going to be, what it's going to look like, what's expected of the County, what's expected of the developer. It typically lays out the dedication for the infrastructure that the developer is going to install for the distribution lines within the development. And that dedication would be transferring that privately-owned sewer or water line system back to the County to become part of our infrastructure.

And then we get into the delivery agreement where they either bring their water rights or pay the fee in lieu. I skipped a step, I went backwards. It's applicable though. But once the ULEDA is in place, we can proceed with starting construction of the development and getting everything in line for them to proceed.

Now we go into what are the next steps for Santa Fe County. And so, I put up this map because it shows the SDAs that we have, SDA 1, 2, and 3, and then it also shows the existing infrastructure for the County. The blue lines signify the water lines for the County that includes the Buckman Direct Diversion transmission lines like Jesse said that's shared between the County, the City and Las Campanas. So not necessarily County infrastructure, but it does play a role in our decision making. The orange that you see up there, the darker orange is SDA1. That's where we're prioritizing growth through our policies and resolutions and County commitments. SDA2 is the next level of sustainable development area where it's not necessarily encouraged to expand into. Then SDA3 is outside of both of those.

One of the big projects that the County is partners in is the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System. And so, that was brought up during Jesse's presentation. And I think there was a question that was kind of alluding to utilizing this system to facilitate new development in the Santa Fe Basin through an interconnection. And the way that I envision the interconnection working is that we utilize the Pojoaque Basin in the meantime until we can build out the distribution lines in the Pojoaque Basin to build a customer base that makes it feasible to run the system on its own in that basin and fulfill the Aamodt Settlement requirements. And so if there is an interconnection and any water comes into the Santa Fe Basin, it wouldn't necessarily be allocated for long-term forever use. It would just be a way to generate revenue for the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System until it's fully built out. So that's a large project. It's got lot of different partners that are working in it. So Santa Fe County and then it's got four pueblos that are participating as well. The goal of the project is to provide clean drinking water and consistent supplies of drinking water to communities that might not necessarily have it

right now. There's contaminants being found in a lot of groundwater supplies in this area, whether heavy metals or some other substance that is not safe to drink. And so this would provide a clean drinking water source and hopefully be extremely reliable.

Then some of the other projects that are a little closer to home, we have wastewater projects. And so we've got the SR14 sewer interceptor and this runs along the I-25 corridor and it's going to be picking up a lot of the developments that are just south of I-25. Some of the developments that are in that area have their own local wastewater treatment facilities, but it's gotten to the point where it's potentially not feasible for them to continue operations and maintenance, whether it's because of repairs or replacement of the infrastructure or just finding qualified staff to actually perform the responsibilities of keeping that up and running. The Abajo lift station is another project, but they're all kind of tied together. The success of one is dependent on the success of the others. And so the Abajo lift station is a current lift station that is routed solely to the City of Santa Fe's Paseo Real plant. And this project is to increase the size of the lift station as well as connect it to the Santa Fe County's existing wastewater reclamation facility, also known as the Quill plant. So the SR14 interceptor will dump into the Abajo lift station and then the Abajo lift station will go to the wastewater treatment plant. And then the wastewater treatment plant in order to receive all that new flow is going to have to be expanded. We're going to have to increase our capacity from 500,000 gallons per day to a million gallons per day just to absorb that new flow. And then that other project that I skipped over the Esencia sewer extension is an extension from the Esencia development that goes directly into the wastewater treatment facility. And so the three projects above that are needed to be completed and then the treatment plant needs to be expanded to absorb those.

And then we've got a bunch of planning projects going in going on right now. Santa Fe County Utility Master Plan is hopefully going to help us better determine what we can do as a utility based on our existing infrastructure and proposed infrastructure. The proposed infrastructure, it'll have an effect on our existing infrastructure, whether it's a drop in pressure or water quality issues or something that we're not necessarily expecting that could impact other customers. This model that we have a consultant working on right now for this utility master plan is going to be able to incorporate those proposed new developments and let us run models to see what the effects potentially could be. If there's any negatives, if there's anything we need to plan for just whatever needs to be taken into account, it'll help us get some sort of direction.

Santa Fe 2100 Jesse brought this up. This is the City and the County planning efforts where we're trying to plan long term for water availability and water supply for both the City and the County utility. We've been going through the regional effluent management plan which is looking at instead of water, it's looking at the wastewater for the County utility. What do we need to do infrastructure-wise to make sure that we are collecting as much as we possibly can, providing as good of a service as we can and looking ahead to see what we can potentially do with our treated effluent. And so one of the the beneficial uses that we can use our treated effluent for right now is spray irrigation at the property at the wastewater treatment facility. And in my opinion, that's not the best beneficial use for that water. And so during the projects, the actual infrastructure projects that I talked about on the previous slide, we're going to have to amend our discharge

permit to allow for the increase in water that we treat on a daily basis. And I'm hoping that when we open that discharge permit up for amendment that we can include additional beneficial uses such as treated effluent bulk water station. Currently when people are building new developments and they need dust abatement or compaction or something like that, they need a water supply. We've been pointing a lot of people to the Paseo Real bulk effluent station, but if that goes down, the only source of water is potable. And in my opinion again, I don't think potable water should be used for dust abatement and compaction. It's a demand on our system that be better if it wasn't there. And so if we can get another alternative to using potable water, whether it's through the bulk treated effluent station at the Paseo Real plant or hopefully at the Santa Fe County plant, I think that would be a better use of our effluent than doing spray irrigation. But in additional to that, we are looking aquifer storage and recovery out at the wastewater treatment plant. And we're currently under contract with a consultant to look at the feasibility of passively infiltrating our treated effluent into the aquifer and potentially looking at rediverting that through a groundwater well in another location. We're not too far into that project yet, so I can't really tell you if it's feasible or not at this point, but that's what we're looking into. So, those are just a a quick overview of some of the planning projects that we have going and why we have them going, as well as some infrastructure projects that the County is working on right now.

With that, I'll stand for any questions.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Travis. Are there any questions from the chambers? Seeing none, do we have any questions online? Questions of the Commission. Commissioner Hughes.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Thank you. So the Rancho Viejo well is still under consideration. Is the Office of State Engineer amenable to our multi-year accounting or not?

MR. SODERQUIST: Chair, Commissioner Hughes, we haven't gotten to a point in the hearing process where we would have an answer for that yet.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Well, if that well isn't approved, are there other wells we can transfer the water rights to that might be equally good?

MR. SODERQUIST: We've been having some internal conversations about other potential options for that. We don't necessarily want to give up on that idea at this time, But we'll see what happens.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. But we have other wells we could transfer to potentially. Yeah, because the residents of that area may object and who knows if their objections will be heard or not but it would be honored by the State Engineer, I guess.

The other question I have is with regard to the San Juan-Chama water, if we lose that, are we required to get water rights elsewhere?

MR. SODERQUIST: Chair, Commissioner. Did I get it right? Did you say if we lose our San Juan-Chama water?

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Yeah or part of our San Juan-Chama water.

MR. SODERQUIST: Like lose it to pushing it downstream or lose it forever?

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Lose it forever, lose it to climate change.

MR. SODERQUIST: Oh, well, we might lose how much gets filled into that water right through a reduction in water supply, but I don't see us losing it forever. But if we do lose that, then we would have to backfill it with a a different water supply. It wouldn't be – I mean I would really like to have it just for a comfort level, but since we haven't used it, it's not like it would throw us into critical we need to figure something out now mode.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: No, I understand we don't use it all right now, but if we you know, as we add people to our system, you know, we're giving out the water rights, I guess, to developers. not giving them out, but developers buy the water rights and transfer them to us; we may have fewer water rights going forward. I'm just wondering how that how that affects us all. Are we going to – if we lose, I mean if we lose, I don't know, will the Rio Grande Compact require us to lose some of the water rights from San Juan-Chama or the Colorado River Compact? I guess it's it is.

MR. SODERQUIST: Yeah, I'm not sure exactly how it's going to play out when it comes to that, but I I do know that the San Juan-Chama water availability we're putting a lot of focus on that during the Santa Fe 2100 planning process. And so hopefully through modeling and plugging in all these different scenarios, it should give us a better idea of what the like reliability of that would be. And hopefully we catch something if it is not as reliable as we once thought, hopefully, we catch that and we can do a little bit of a pivot and find a replacement source of water prior to that coming to fruition.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Well, we could use our native water rights to fill in where the San Juan-Chama isn't meeting it.

MR. SODERQUIST: Yeah, and our native rights are our primary supply of water right now.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Well, I realize we have most of our rights there anyway. Okay. Thank you. That's all.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Commissioners.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Travis. I noticed on the maps a couple areas that I know are either on City water, County water, or in this weird in between up on Hyde Park Road there's some developments in District 4 and some developments in District 1 up on that far eastern side just outside the city. It was annexed. It was unannexed. It has City water. It has County water. I think that there's some maybe further detail here. Maybe it doesn't isn't so necessary right here, but I just saw that discrepancy in the in the map. So, we don't have to get into that necessarily.

And I'm wondering, this may be something for Growth Management later in the conversation here, but I find that this quarter acre-foot per unit is a really blunt instrument. And you know it kind of forces us or forces developers as it may be to go for the highest and best use of that water right. And that ends up being some very large home that isn't really targeted at the sort of strategic focus of our workforce needs and our

community's needs for housing. And I'm wondering if there's a way that you see that we can start to say, look, if you're building a, you know, four one-bedroom units on a property, that are, you know, 600 square feet, 700 square foot each, 3,000 square foot total thing, but you're getting three or four families out of it. Is there a way that we can start to look at that water use as opposed to one home that is 7,000 square feet and using one quarter of that water technically but is, you know, a $2 million home.

MR. SODERQUIST: Chair, Commissioner Greene, thanks for that question. I agree that there is a little bit I think we painted with a little bit too broad of a brush in certain areas when it comes to determining what volume needs to be attributed to what type of development there is. And I think that there are opportunities to improve the values that we use for that to better reflect what your question is. There is opportunities. There's an exception within the SLDC that there can be variances approved for a lower volume than 0.25 but I don't think that we frequently do that if at all. So I guess my answer is yes, there have been a lot of calls for us to look at that a little bit closer to see if there's a better solution and a better volume of water to tie to residences rather than just that broad 0.25 acre-feet. We haven't done that yet.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: I would encourage all of us to start looking at that because if this is the metric, right, you know, one unit or whatever, one unit of water. It seems to be needs to be looked at a little more flexibly to more – you talk about our values, but yes, our values literally here up here.

And then also on here is the Eagle Ridge or the former Downs property which is adjacent to the City but in the County but owned by Pojoaque Pueblo, have you started discussing water use and access to them? Do you know if they're planning to tap in directly to the City or because they're in the County tapping into our lines and becoming a customer of the County or are they going to do it all with their own groundwater?

MR. SODERQUIST: That is still very preliminary. They have initiated conversations with the County as to what service would look like from us whether it's wastewater or water delivery. We haven't gotten to a point where there's concrete numbers being thrown around or anything like that.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: It would be great to be proactive on that and give them as much guidance as where we can as well, and understand what their intentions are as much as possible both for potable water and for wastewater. I think that's it for me. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Cacari Stone.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Travis. I appreciate your management and your leadership here. I have a question as we look more upstream and you know this is about the commodification of water, how we manage water, how we purchase, how we sell, how we distribute and I want to ask has the County since you've been here or has there ever been conversations around parameters and metrics that are based on principles of water being sustainable for all, water as a human right, the principles or values or our core vision as a County and how we govern to make sure there's equitable distribution. Has there ever been any of these types of conversations? And I'm just asking because it's my responsibility as a

Commissioner to ask these questions. You all do implementation. You're doing a fine job. It's all rational. It all makes sense. I've learned a lot. But has are these discussions ever broached?

MR. SODERQUIST: Chair, Commissioner Cacari Stone, yeah, we do have conversations like that, but ultimately we do return to what the policies and procedures that govern what the utility can and can't do. That's what we return to and that's what we make decisions based on. But that doesn't mean that we haven't thought of potential recommendations in the past and brought them to the Commissioners with some sort of justification as to why we think it would be a good idea to implement that.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: I appreciate that because I rely on your expertise, what would be your recommendation to us as Commissioners and specifically to myself since I'm asking this question, on how we can govern better and what policies, procedures, codes should be amended so we consider these basic principles and vision and possibly even metrics that make more equitable distribution? What would be your recommendation to me and to us?

MR. SODERQUIST: This sounds a little bit like a copout, but when we do come with recommendations and stuff like that just to listen and hear us out and see if there's some good justification as to why we're recommending some sort of policy change or whether you agree or don't agree with that and if you don't agree with it, suggestions as to what direction to head with it.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Okay. I appreciate that. So it's like we have a mutual relationship and you're looking/you're saying we could offer some guidance. I'm looking for the next steps future outlook for us guidance on directions that are based on those principles. Is that correct?

MR. SODERQUIST: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: I appreciate that. So you mentioned the purchasing we rely on our native water rights but also we are constantly purchasing. What I haven't heard or read so far since January is who do we purchase water rights from? Is there an inventory? Is there a transparent list? Is there some guidance around decision making on who we purchase from?

MR. SODERQUIST: There isn't a transparent list. Primarily the people that we purchase water rights from have approached the County and said, We know that you guys are looking for water rights fairly frequently and we have some and would you be interested and this is the price that we're looking at. And then we do a review to see kind of what the what it would take to bring that water right up to the Buckman Direct Diversion or how much it would cost, what the actual logistics of that purchase and transfer process would be and if it's feasible, then we start the process of actually starting to negotiate and then you guys get looped in.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: I appreciate that. So I was thinking around this next steps and the questions that come from community that you laid out and it seems like we need some sort of inventory of transactions. Do we have anything like that available to the public?

MR. SODERQUIST: An inventory of the water right transaction transactions? We could easily put that list together.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Okay, all right. So who we buy from, who we sell to and trends over time. Because that kind of answers where the water comes from, right? From one angle I I realize it's multifaceted. I think at this point I was looking for a lever and some changes around that. So we could make an inventory and a listing available online on who purchases and who where it goes to because do we do purchases from individual land owners, local community or are those purchases we'll be able to look at trends that's coming from corporations and going to developers. In the 1980s there was a book written and we sold the rain. It's a pretty well-known Latin American literature book by a female Latina author. And rain, when it becomes a commodity away from a human right and becomes something that becomes transactional and less relational, we get to a place where it's all around buying and selling. And I'm trying to figure out in my short term here how I can help guide more transparency and parameters that make it more equitable for Santa Fe County. So, I'm looking for some ideas on how -- what it would it take to get an inventory online and your expertise and I count on you.

MR. SODERQUIST: I don't think it would be very hard to get an inventory put together. I don't know how much information sellers want posted about them. Of course, it's available through IPRAs and whatnot right now. But it it's one step further to getting that information than if it's just over the web. But I don't know. I'd have to talk to Legal to see what their opinion is on posting that.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you. I appreciate that. And definitely I don't know if Legal has a weigh in. When we make purchases as a County, isn't it required for some sort of sunshine rule that it be publicly available online?

ATTORNEY BOYD: Chair and Commissioner Cacari Stone, yes, there's a sunshine resolution that requires contracts to be to be posted online, but that's ordinarily understood through the procurement lens when it comes to procuring goods and services for the county professional services, for example. And so, when you when you introduce the complexity of purchase of water rights that may be subject to adjudication, it becomes a little bit harder to monitor. And so, it would need to be further discussed with Travis and everyone else involved in terms of how we would collect the relevant information, what is the relevant information, and then when it would be posted.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: I really appreciate all of your expertise and thank you so much.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. Commissioner Johnson.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thanks, Travis for the presentation, I have a couple of questions that may stream together, maybe not. In slide 13, which is the sort of infographic about residential versus commercial customers. So the residential customers use 26 million gallons per month and then – I'm just this is kind of a question about the math and what's represented on those slides. So they are build you know on the order of 500,000 and they are and actually in excess of what was billed was collected but on the commercial side 570,000 were was billed but 458,000 was collected. What accounts for that lower collection? They're also using commercial users are also using 31 million gallons. Are the rates the same? So why aren't we collecting more from commercial customers even though we're billing them and

then is the rate structure the same for commercial customers versus residential?

MR. SODERQUIST: Okay hopefully I got that Chair, Commissioner Johnson. There is a different rate structure for commercial and residential users. It's also based off pipe size, meter size, whatnot. And then, Jesse alluded to it being implemented in the City of Santa Fe's rate structure, but it's tiered based on volume on a monthly basis. So, it gets more expensive the more water you use. And if you're constantly exceeding, you're paying more in. It's a little bit hard to pinpoint exactly where the difference is being introduced without actually combing through the numbers, but there's different rates for commercial and residential. And then there's also different rates based on volume.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: But commercial does experience the same tiered rate structure as residential; is that accurate?

MR. SODERQUIST: That's something I just should know off the top of my head. I think theirs is a little more standard than the residential.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: So they pay a flatter rate as I'm imagining one of my questions and I you know can't imagine you know all 147 customers but they're mostly commercial or construction firms or I mean I imagine there's a brewery and there's a, you know, whatever but the major commercial activity in the County would appear to be construction related.

MR. SODERQUIST: Yeah, it's a mixed bag. There's breweries, there's a tortilla factory, there's restaurants in there as well or counted in the non-residential. So, it's all over the board, but there is some construction in there as well.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. Well, I think the upshot of what I'm asking is it seems like we're 100,000 short in collections on the commercial side. And I imagine that's something that you're concerned with or working to alleviate.

The next slide has residential versus non-residential and a bar graph, but every non-residential is lower than the residential, but the slide before it shows that the commercial customers actually use more gallons per month, at least in August, which was the snapshot view. And in this August, the residential, so slide 14 shows a higher residential usage than non-residential. So I guess I got confused when I was swapping between the two because I was trying to understand who uses more water in a bulk in, you know, in a net quantity.

MR. SODERQUIST: You're right, it is a little bit deceiving in the bar graph that you're talking about. There are some factors that aren't factored into the previous slide that just show number of customers. One being is the bulk water station is not counted as a residential, so that's factored into the commercial.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. Slide 18, it's a snapshot of Santa Fe County. Actually, while he's pulling it up, I'll switch to my next question. It's not really a question. It's just to underscore what Commissioner Greene stated, if we have, you know, two one-acre properties with $2 million homes and they're using 0.25 acre-feet per-year or they're sorry allotted that and then we have another, you know, 4-acre property with a dozen units on it. I really do think we should adjust be able to adjust without bureaucracy or without a ton of it the way that that is accounted for given that Jesse before also indicated that when you have apartments or more compacted residential

development you're using indoor water much more frequently and there might be a perimeter, you know, that is using outdoor water. But it seems to me like that would be another roadblock that increases costs for consumers down the road. So, in the mind in the vision of affordable housing or at least lowering the cost of housing, we should try to alleviate that and that's I think we'll talk about that in the growth management presentation. So, I just wanted to underscore that.

So in the southeast pipe, can you tell me a tiny bit about that? This lower, you know, moving south and then to the east, where does that go and who does that serve and does it connect to some something in San Miguel County that I'm not seeing or is that just a pipe that goes to Glorieta and stops?

MR. SODERQUIST: That pipe got into the GIS file from a proposed plan.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. So, that doesn't exist.

MR. SODERQUIST: No.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: That's what I thought. So, I just wanted to clarify that because I was thinking that would really change some of the potential connections to my district, as far as water users go. So, let it be known that that is not an accurate existing pipe.

MR. SODERQUIST: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: I think that's it. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thanks, Travis.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. And on a related note, and thank you, Commissioner, in District 3 and when we look at proposed pipes, but there are other aquifers in District 3. We have the Galisteo Basin. We also have the basin that Edgewood is on, Stanley is on in the Estancia. And I'm thinking of other proposed expansions into other basins and any planning that would be done accordingly. We do approve development in those areas and I think that might be answered later. I know that there are some things that we're answering here as a County that might be part of the State planning process with I don't know if how much we engage with the work that Erdmanm does and that might come up in the future presentation working with other jurisdictions. But that being said, we do have someone online who has a question.

MR. FRESQUEZ: Chair Bustamante, we have Rob Heineman.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Mr. Heineman.

ROB HEINEMAN: Hi, Commissioners and Mr. Soderquist, thanks for all your time and effort on this issue. I have a question for Mr. Soderquist on the regional water system. I believe the statement was that once the transmission lines are built out, the City of Santa Fe will be using that water until such time as the distribution lines in the Pojoaque Valley are completed and people are hooking up to that. Is that correct?

MR. SODERQUIST: Chair, at this time, that's just an idea that's being thrown around as a way to get the project operating and feasible until we get the distribution lines in the communities within the Pojoaque Basin.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: I think he was asking if the City was going to be using the water or if the County would be So, you might want to clarify the

question.

MR. SODERQUIST: Was your question for the City of Santa Fe or Santa Fe County specifically?

MR. HEINEMAN: My well question is if the water is not being used by the NPT Basin who is using it? I guess it doesn't matter to me if it's the County or the City but it concerns me that the water is leaving the basin.

MR. SODERQUIST: At this point we wouldn't know who specifically would be using it. Whoever does end up using it would be paying that money back towards the operations and maintenance of the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System.

MR. HEINEMAN: Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you for your question, Mr. Heineman. Do we have anyone else online? Sure.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Just to make sure that you'll probably be in the room later and maybe it's going to be in the planning part, but there's also a potential request for the Tano Road area to connect to this and I was wondering where that is in the planning process or how we can get that into the planning process because I've had m multiple constituents ask about that? And then also the Chupadero mutual domestic and all the mutual domestics that may be satellites to this system and could be – that we're on the hook for as a resolution to adopt those. And then lastly, the wastewater treatment planning for the Pojoaque Basin as well. If there's some comment, doesn't have to be now, but it could be just to make sure that somebody has it in our discussion today.

MR. SODERQUIST: Okay. Tano Road, I'm not familiar with where it's at in the process, so hasn't really come to me yet. The next one was Chupadero. We're actively working with Chupadero to go through the specifics of what their system is, the state of their system, where the easements are, what needs to be done. We just got through the procurement or we're working through the procurement for design of the system, and that's going to include some asset inventorying and uh, next steps. And then for wastewater treatment within the Pojoaque Basin, I'm not very familiar with that process either. I've heard grumblings that there's a PER that was done a long time ago. I haven't seen that myself. But I do know that it's being reinitiated at least conversations.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Great. Thank you.

MANAGER SHAFFER: Chair Bustamante, if I could, and I'm sorry to interject, I just want to be clear relative to the interconnect between the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System and the remainder of the Santa Fe integrated water system. First, the settlement agreements and the act of Congress that authorized those funds do allow for interim use outside of the basin until such time that the in-basin demand is there. So again, the basin has you know first rights relative to the water; however, I think everyone has recognized that at least initially in-basin demand isn't going to be sufficient to utilize the water being produced by the system. And so the interconnect is a way to make the system more viable relative to the finances as well as from a water quality perspective to ensure that there's an adequate turnover of water through the main transmission lines.

Secondly, the interconnect would allow for reverse-flow into the Pojoaque Basin system. So it would allow for potential supply of backup water as needed to supply that system so the water could flow in both directions.

So I did just want to augment a little bit what Travis said relative to that so that it was clear relative to the interconnect and what role it would play in terms of ensuring both a backup supply to the Pojoaque Basin system as well as ensuring the financial viability of the Pojoaque Basin systems well as water quality. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Manager Shaffer. And it just sort of lends back to the question I had before. I understand that the areas that I'm speaking about are very sparse, but has there been any discussion or consideration for future planning of acquiring water rights in the Galiesteo and the Estancia areas?

MR. SODERQUIST: Chair, not from the County Utility.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Okay. All right. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thanks, Travis. Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: I don't have a question regarding this. Thank you, Travis. I was going to ask a question of the Chair. Regarding process, this has been so rich, so informative, and great questions from everyone. We're at three hours into two presentations. If we average two and a half to three hours for every two presentations, it'll take us into about 8:00 p.m. tonight. How does the Chair want to proceed? Because I don't want to cut the learning and the opportunity short.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: No, thank you for that question, Commissioner. I have been assured, so I pretty much said the same thing, but I think I went maybe an hour earlier than 8 o'clock. I was assured that the next presentations didn't have as there's some overlap and that they would go more quickly. I think that if we did tend to go over that the conversation or have a need, I don't think any of us would be opposed to scheduling for another time because I do believe this is rich and it is important to allow for as many questions to get as many answers as we possibly can. So that that has absolutely been discussed and addressed as well as any consideration for even a half-hour lunch break. So, at this point, we would consider that for 12:30. But I do understand that our next presenter, who is the one who said, Oh, no. We're very brief now from the here on out. So, I'm grateful. If you are ready, Michael, we'll we're happy to hear from you now. Thank you.

3. Water Resources Administration

MICHAEL CARR (Environmental Compliance Officer): And I am ready. And I'll try to keep us onto that 12:30 aim for lunch as well.

Good afternoon Madam Chair, Commissioners I'll be presenting two different presentations back to back here. I'll try to keep them brief but we'll have a segment in between for everyone to raise their questions and hopefully me be able to field them as quickly as possible. Once we're up I'll jump right in.

But to start off my name is Michael Carr. I'm the environmental compliance officer with the Public Works Department. And our first segment for this kind of two-part presentation is going to be how our groundwater resources fit into this conversation.

So just to start off from kind of a bird's eye view here, I just wanted to kind of delineate the responsibilities between the County and the State. The State is really our primary regulator. They're the researcher. They're the data steward for pretty much all the

groundwater resource information in the state. The County on the other hand plays a relatively smaller role in managing that resources at a local level. So our main focus is going to be on water plannings, some domestic well use oversight as well as water conservation efforts. The County doesn't produce any of its own water. We get ours through the system with the City as we've covered in earlier conversations. And also just to iterate that domestic and commercial wells are privately owned and regulated by the OSE at the state level.

Just to touch a little bit more on the State and some of the primary offices that are overseeing our groundwater resources. The Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources is kind of the research arm of the state. So they're the ones managing the aquifer mapping program, a water data initiative, geological mapping, and some water education programs. The OSC and the NMED are sort of more of our regulatory arm that we're in regular collaborations and discussions with. For our resources, OSE is looking predominantly at water rights allocation program, the water use program and oversee the drilling and closing of wells in the state. Meanwhile, at the NMED, they're looking more at water quality and the regulation of that. So, surface water quality, groundwater quality, waste water, drinking water, that sort of thing. They're also performing oversight on our water infrastructure, and our water source protections and the certification of utility operators.

Pivoting a bit back to the County's role in this. Our responsibility for the oversight of groundwater resources is kind of parceled out across departments in the County depending on the responsibilities provided to each of them. So, Public Works, we've heard from Water Utility. We also have our projects and some water administrative programs overseen in that department. And in Growth Management, development, permitting, water planning, planning and outreach. Within our Community Development Department, specifically Sustainability, it's really our main arm for education, water conservation, and outreach and that sort of thing. Community Services also plays a role in this, especially with the recent identification of PFAS contamination in the La Cienega/La Cieneguilla community. So four primary departments there that have a hand at some extent in our groundwater management.

To focus in a even with a little bit more granularity, these are some of the main policies and drivers for groundwater management when it comes to developments. Travis touched on the line extension policy and I have another slide touching on that a little bit more, basically dictating when a constituent needs to connect to the water utility. We have our domestic well use metering program which I'll also touch on in more detail. And the purpose of that is to help the County monitor the usage of ground waters per the limitations listed in the SLDC and plat approvals. We also have a development permit review process. So throughout that process our Growth Management Department is looking at whether developments are bringing in and compliant with state regulations especially at the OSE to make sure that their wells are recorded and documented before we move forward with approving them.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: I appreciate that, Michael. And I hate to stop you because you were so confident in the brevity of your presentation, but we are having problems with the audio in Teams right now. So, I'm going to ask that we pause and maybe for those of us who've been sitting for a while, maybe take a stretch break. Let's

do that and see what we can do to get things stowed up again.

[Meeting paused from 12:05 to 12:15]

Okay, we're good let's go ahead and start from where we are. Thank you.

MR. CARR: Thank you. Okay. So, I'll just continue on where we where we left off discussing basically some of the general policies that are guiding groundwater management across the County.

We discussed a little bit about the line extension policy with Travis's presentation and I'll touch on that as well on a future slide. The domestic well use metering program which is something I'll also consider in a following slide but the purpose of that is basically to help monitor the usage of groundwater in our communities per limitations set out in the Sustainable Land Development Code. We also have a process for our development permit review process in Growth Management. basically to ensure that applicants looking to develop are that their groundwater wells are recorded and in line with OSE requirements and that's supported through the Technical Advisory Committee which is basically a committee that includes staff from across the County to provide insight and question developments that are pending approval from Growth Management and that could be related to where water source for that sort of development is coming from or stormwater or groundwater resources generally.

All right, so here's a closer look at basically the line extension policy. Generally, it's a fairly complicated process with a lot of individual variables that can affect what that process looks like per constituent. Generally, it's with whenever a property is within 200 feet of the utility, that triggers the process to connect to it. If it's a development, a commercial development that'll be sold off, there's usually a meter can installed and that triggers a specific application process. If it's a domestic situation where they might not have that infrastructure in place, there's an application process basically stating that they're ready, willing, and able to connect and that process is looked through by Public Works administrative staff. It's really important for constituents who might have questions on this to communicate with staff. It's really essential to basically identify what those variables are and how to help that individual constituent through that process. Generally once connected, the well needs to be capped when you're connected to the utility, but the water rights are retained by the property. And just to point out as well, once you put a line in the ground, it's not there forever. It requires maintenance. The tree roots here in this little illustration here pretty much represent that we're all subject to the wear of nature. So just because it's in the ground doesn't mean it doesn't need to be up kept going forward.

Very briefly I just want to touch on domestic wells and the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System. How we manage wells within the confines of that project is a little bit different. Basically, per the Settlement Agreement for this program once installed all new non-Indian waters users will be required to connect to it. Existing users will have the option to and basically once you connect to it the water rights associated with the property are transferred to the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System to support their supply of water to users. This gets very complicated. It's a very drawn out process and we're still looking at years out before it's built. So I encourage anyone interested in learning more about how they might be impacted to attend the quarterly outreach events coordinated with Bureau of Reclamation and support with County staff.

So here's a look at I just want to highlight very quickly the domestic well use metering program. This is subject under the SLDC 7.13.11.5. if you want to look at this in any more particular detail, there's a link to it on our website, it'll take you directly to that code so you can read through it yourself. But overall at a high level look, all developments are required to participate in this program. Wells that are installed are required to in include a County approved meter. Right now County approved means complying with the most recent list of well meters approved by the OSE which is available on their website. Well owners are required to submit their well readings annually. There is some leeway if you are reporting your meter readings quarterly to the OSE you can provide those in lieu of our current reporting form which I'll touch on here in another slide. And then we also require that those me well meters get tested every 10 years.

So where's the program go from here? This is generally our kind of groundwater management and with a specific look at the domestic well use metering program just because we put a lot of money and effort into looking at how to amplify this and help basically steward our groundwater resources moving forward. Over the last several years we've had a pilot program in the La Cienega/La Cieneguilla community. An initial report for that pilot program was published in 2023 and available on our website in very thorough detail. We've also received a well sampling report from monitoring wells in that area. That will hopefully be published here soon once we can ensure that there is no personally identifiable information associated with those wells and the properties that allowed us to basically look at that information. Hopefully by the end of the year we'll have a phase two work plan. A draft was provided to us in 2023 but as we've looked closer at the initial recommendations from this pilot program from our consultant we've approached it in a different way and moved forward in certain aspects. So what that work plan will look like will highlight what our next steps will be hopefully for the next several years to implementation.

And just to give like a little bit of background on what that will look like going forward. The road map for implementing this will hopefully include a basically online reporting portal for constituents to upload their meter readings. The goal of this is to make it a lot easier for constituents to provide us with that information. Right now, we're utilizing a two-page fillable PDF that has all the information that the program was initially looking for, but we're hoping to streamline that to hopefully ensure constituents that might not have a background in calculating their water usage based on their well meters have an opportunity to provide it to us and then we'll handle that on the back end of this of this online system. This sort of database that we'd be building out to help track well meters and groundwater usage would also allow us to determine going forward what the groundwater use is in a certain area and help validate potentially building out utility into that area if it seemed appropriate or at least provide us some data on that, as well as understanding if there's areas that are using more groundwater than they have been allocated based on the SLDC.

And then finally, beyond that, once we're able to catch new developments, we'll look back and start reviewing potential incentivization and voluntary compliance programs to hopefully get people into the rhythm of providing that information. realized that the more they're able to provide the County when it comes to their utilization of

groundwater resources through collaborations with the State, specifically the New Mexico Data Initiative, if we can provide a more thorough background on what our groundwater usage looks like, the plans that come out at the state level will be more refined and the County will be more represented accurately from that. So, I've met with the OSE technical team and we're hoping that as we move forward with the program, we can hopefully have some collaborative data sharing to increase the resolution of the New Mexico water rights reporting system, but also ensure that we're getting the information we need to be good stewards of our groundwater resources. And so, with that, I stand for questions.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Michael. Any questions from the chambers? Any questions online?

MR. FRESQUEZ: Chair Bustamante, currently I don't see any hands raised.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Okay, go ahead and just let's keep that open and we can go back to them. Do we have any questions from the Commission? Commissioner Cacari Stone.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you, Michael. I'm here to learn and to see what kind of positive changes we can continue to support moving forward and also what we can implement in terms of innovation. That being said, I've been participating in the Agua Fria Village Water Association waterkeepers meetings and listen to their planning. Can you explain to me how all this interfaces with traditional villages? They are getting – they've received great support from former senator Nancy Rodriguez, from the state. They are doing their own hookups. How do we interface with all of that? And maybe you can give me the quick 411 and maybe coffee afterwards.

MR. CARR: Yeah, absolutely. It's a great question. So, right now the goal of the program because we're looking at just get standing it up to a basically a status that'll let us to start bringing in that data. We're looking primarily at capturing new development data and ensuring that as new developments go in whether that's single family homes, ADUs slowly working through collecting that data and getting it accurately and so people are reporting frequently and we're following through with the program as listed in the SLDC. Going forward that with that especially expanding to communities that might not have a lot of development, our traditional communities are built out and reliant on their domestic wells. We'll have to look at that as it comes up and what works best with that community. So, it would require a lot of outreach and engagement with them and determining whether it's better to approach that sort of situation on a well owner to well owner situation or maybe we can approach that as a community-based approach and figure out a way to hopefully capture that data. But maybe not targeting individuals if they want to provide it collectively. It's a work in progress to figure out what that looks like and I think that's a little further down the road than what we're looking at right now for the next steps for this for this program.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you. I appreciate that and I don't want to disrupt what they have going. They seem to have a very efficient system going, but if they're open to it, I'd like to have coffee with you and one of the leaders of the association. There's a board. Some of these water rights go back many, many, many generations, dating back to 1940s, even before then. And I'd like to maybe for my own

understanding, mostly to see is there a way the County can do some more support of their system. I know they get a lot of state support, but again, I'll check with them on what they want and would appreciate us having coffee with them. Thanks.

MR. CARR: Yeah, happy to be there to support.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. Thank you, Michael. Commissioner Johnson.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thanks, Michael. Aside from perhaps longstanding historical rights that need to be worked out, what is a single property owner's who's on an un-metered wells rights for water use or are those not defined?

MR. CARR: So for the extent of this program, I hesitate to tread into the world of water rights. The purpose of this program is basically to require just the reporting of information associated with their water use. I know during the original consulting review of plat approvals for the LCLC community there was quite a lot of ambiguity into what the history of those properties looked like especially related to their water use just because it's not as a recorded nice PDF scan like some of our newer developments. So when it comes to those specific users, that'll definitely be handled in that second phase of basically figuring out how we engage with communities and traditional communities that have these long-standing unmetered well uses and how we can approach them basically to ensure that they are compliant with the codes set out by the County but also be cognizant of the needs and lifestyle of those of those community members.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay, I appreciate your answer for delicacy's sake. If there is like a baseline though, you know, certain amount of draw per acre, is there some sort of standard baseline that is an abstract principle? That's one question. Second question, which you may skip to first, is where do those discussions happen? I understand this is not part of the pilot program and you know what you're looking at here today. Where do those discussions happen?

MR. CARR: Groundwater usage is identified in the Sustainable Land Development Code. I think it's I'm going to be kind of pulling a number here that I'm not entirely confident. I believe it's a quarter acre-foot a year. And then plat approvals could have a separate groundwater restriction added to that. I won't delve too much into those numbers because I'm not confident of them off the top of my head. But what is the standard allocation of groundwater pull for domestic wells is something cited within our code and that is what we are basing the enforcement of the policy and program on. So it is not an abstract groundwater usage. It's all something that has been codified in Santa Fe County code.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Okay. So then that seems, if you're right and we'll just we'll give you the benefit of the doubt that is akin to the surface water rights that were just discussed which is a quarter acre-foot per dwelling unit. I think I've exhausted my questions for now and I may have one more at the end. Thanks. Thanks Michael.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. We do have a question from the chambers. If you would please approach the microphone. Thank you for your participation.

CHITA GILLIS: Hi, I'm Chita Gillis and my question is about the distinction between groundwater rights and surface water rights. Are they two distinct things?

MR. CARR: Unfortunately, I don't think that is my expertise. I can follow up with that unless there's another member of staff who'd like to give a shot at that.

ATTORNEY BOYD: I'm happy to.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Do we have someone else in from staff who can answer that or can we get your information and we will get you the answer? Attorney Boyd, thank you.

ATTORNEY BOYD: I'm happy to try and answer. Again, it's not legal advice. There is a distinction between surface water rights and groundwater rights, for sure. Groundwater right for a well is going to be associated with the location of the well associated, associated with that property. Surface water right to divert water is going to be a right that generally if it's used for irrigation will travel with the land but can also be conveyable. S that's when you're talking about transfers of water rights that's generally what is happening is a transfer of surface water rights not well rights.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Attorney Boyd. Does that help, Chita?

MS. GILLIS: So, we're in a community that may be switching from groundwater rights because we don't have groundwater to surface water rights if we can hook up with County water, for example. Those aren't interchangeable. You need to purchase new water rights for surface even though you have groundwater rights. That's my question.

ATTORNEY BOYD: We're getting a little bit more complicated here with that question, but if you're purchasing water from the utility, you're not you don't have a water right. You're just buying the water from the utility which will have which will hold the water rights. And if you're talking about a proposal to connect to a utility in an area that's not served, then you're getting into County policy in terms of what the County will require before it agrees to serve your property with its utility service. So, in the examples that have been discussed previously, there's been a discussion of the need for a property owner to essentially transfer water rights to the County in exchange for the County's agreement to serve them with utility water.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. Thank you, Attorney Boyd. Any further questions for Michael Carr? I just have two questions. Does the Technical Advisory Review Committee include community members?

MR. CARR: So that process is includes staff in different capacities from across departments meeting directly with the developer who's going through that development permit process. So it's not an open forum for input from different community members. It's just kind of a place to discuss that development permit process with the individual.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Okay. Thank you. And then what is the time limit for the amount of time a constituent pays for the standby charges? Pays the standby charges.

MR. CARR: I do not know that number off the top of my head. We do have set prices that have been confirmed by the Commission and that information can be

easily looked up depending on the situation with the constituents by calling the Public Works Department.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: I do have the amount that a constituent is paying, but they want to know how long they're going to be paying that money as a standby. So, it's been a number of years now that they've been paying the $90 a month, but they're not receiving any water yet, And it's a standby charge that was approved by a previous Board of County Commissioners. Do we have any idea what the delay is? As well, it states that we would review that in 2026 but that doesn't tell us if there's a time limit for when a constituent would be absolved of their requirement to pay $90 a year if they're not getting connected to County water.

MR. CARR: So that situation sounds like it there might be a little bit more conversation needed to figure out exactly what that holdup is and who that is, where they're at, and that sort of thing. So I would recommend they call Public Works and our ad administrative staff are happy to answer that question.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Michael. And it looks like Alexandra has a comment.

ALEXANDRA LADD (Growth Management Director): Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Commission. I just wanted to clarify that the Technical Advisory Committee, if a project is located within the jurisdiction of a community organization, that community organization is invited to the meeting.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. Thank you. Um, and then this one, I said only two, but this is a third. What kind of incentives would you give somebody to make sure their well is being metered?

MR. CARR: Tthat is going to be the big question we tackle going forward. One of the items that is going to be covered in my next presentation for the storm water management program is to review the feasibility of a GSI green stormwater infrastructure incentivization program. Maybe it'll definitely be part of that conversation as we've stand up this program and look at that potential incentivization program whether they can cross-pollinate and provide incentives across goals that the County is setting to meet kind of a higher quality of water resource conservation, but we're open open to any recommendations as that conversation moves forward.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. All right, any other questions? Then let's go ahead and hear the next presentation.

B. Rain - Where Does it Flow?

MR. CARR: Thank you, Madam Chair, Commissioners. Just for posterity and once this is cut up online for segments for interested constituents to revisit. My name is Michael Carr. I'm the environmental compliance officer with Santa Fe County. This segment of my presentations are going to be covering how we manage storm water and rain.

So, first off, I just want to kind of jump through a couple different ways that we do manage it. The first section here is going to be via policy and legislation. That table on the right was provided to us by our consultant that reviewed all County code and pulled out pieces that relate to six different minimum control measures that I'll touch on a little

bit later and as you can see, policies that relate broadly to storm water include those in the Sustainable Land Development Code, various ordinances, general code. We also have specific items that are looked at during development process such as flood plain review, slope analysis, priority management areas, stuff like that.

And then we have our physical asset management. So when the water hits the ground and how it moves over the landscape, we manage that basically through our built infrastructure. So things like culverts, outfalls, bridges, ditches, this is a picture of me out inspecting the new box culvert under the northeast southeast connector road and it also plays into basically the natural environment and how it is managing its storm water. So natural conveyances include a arroyos, streams, rivers and how we interact between those two is a very important metric on how we how we maintain providing services to the community and keeping water moving downstream and getting into the ground. And the final aspect of these ways that we manage it is going to be via programming and internal collaboration. So, a moment ago I spoke to some of the tasks in our stormwater management program plan that was passed last year and this basically outlines a list of tasks to be completed by the County at specific deadlines going forward over the next several years. We've done a great job at keeping up with those task items and are continuing to work through them and I'll highlight a few of those at the tail end of this presentation. But we also have a designated storm water working group as part of the Water Policy Advisory Committee. And we organize internal monthly meetings to discuss storm water and our MS4 Permit, which I'll touch on as well in a minute. Beyond that is a sort of internal and external conversation. We have a quarterly meeting that includes several County staff that meet with the city of Santa Fe and NMDOT District 5 to basically discuss how we're managing stormwater within the federally designated Santa Fe urbanized area.

Beyond that, kind of more of an external collaboration just to emphasize how diverse and varied and spread stormwater management is, we do collaborate quite a bit with New Mexico Environment Department and EPA and most of that comes down to how stormwater is designated in the State of New Mexico. We are currently one of three states that do not have state primacy over the Clean Water Act. So, as we work with NMED, we're also working with the EPA to follow through with any compliance measures that would affect spills and elicit discharges from potentially wastewater treatment plants or dumps along the road and that sort of thing. And we also report to both of them for regulatory oversight and reporting.

I touched on this a little bit, but I just want to bring it up just because it is important for how we manage stormwater in our community. So an MS4 or an MS4 Permit, it stands for a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. In older cities especially out east sewer and storm water was historically managed as one conveyance. So storm water would go into the culvert, mix with sewage and then discharge into a water body or such. That's the old way of doing it and that is not how we manage our stormwater. Septic and sewage is handled separately. Stormwater is collected and conveyed into water bodies separately. But an overview of the program is under the Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Program NPDES, this is just one of several permits that dictate and oversee how what the standards are for how we manage stormwater.

Specifically looking at the Santa Fe urbanized community, the blue and orange colored shapes here on the map outline the Santa Fe urbanized area. That is how the federal government, the EPA, views the requirement for us to report and control stormwater pollution prevention in our community. The red hatched box identifies the County's MS4 priority area. We know we have a lot of development there south of 25. So, we want to ensure that we're applying the same requirements we would to our federally designated jurisdiction to those communities as well just to make sure that we're applying the best management practices for stormwater in those areas that have high development that might not be captured at the federal level. As a part of that permit, it basically looks at six different minimum control measures. I mentioned that earlier. These include public education, outreach, public involvement, elicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site runoff control, post construction runoff management and pollution prevention. These are all required actions general basically bins that hold actions we're required to undertake in order to fulfill the standards at the EPA.

And to reiterate again that boundary that included both the City, the County and NMDOT, we meet collaboratively every quarter to discuss ongoing projects that might either affect each of our jurisdictions or use that as a platform to basically learn from each other. NMDOT has been really forward thinking in developing maintenance guides for green stormwater infrastructure and sustainable stormwater management across the state. So, we've definitely looked at them for implementing some of the programs we've been pushing forward on in regards to stormwater management. And the City being a more urban area with more impervious structure has had to take additional steps that might not apply to the County, but we can look to as a reference as areas that fall within the County jurisdiction build up over time.

And so to kind of circle back to the stormwater management plan, we've kind of we've accomplished a lot of tasks on that list. Those are broken down in more detail in the most recent MS4 annual report that was made public for comment a couple months ago and is available on our website. The biggest one of those is basically a stormwater web page that has consolidated all of our stormwater documentation. So you can see every report we published since 2022 in addition to all the maps of outfalls and conveyance systems in our community related to this jurisdictional boundary and we've also been moving forward on better training for our staff as it relates to stormwater management and ensuring that we have proper signage discussing the importance of pollution prevention and that their effects on our water supply.

Moving forward with some of these task items. One that we've discussed a little bit earlier is basically to assess the feasibility of an incentivization program for GSI. So we want to in try to push, not push but promote the use of this type of infrastructure for the community. It's something we've showcased several times during our Earth Day events over the last several years. Pictured here is one of the recent GSI infrastructure builds at the Arroyo Hondo Fire Station from the 2024 Earth Day event. We're also working to ensure that we have a consistent documentation of stormwater pollution prevention fans associated with our construction projects and working to basically build out maintenance guides for how to ensure that these the pieces of green stormwater infrastructure are maintained properly going forward either by our staff if they fall under our jurisdiction or provide that maintenance guide to the public or developers if they were

to move forward with implementing this type of infrastructure build on their properties.

And to leave off here, I just want to broadly touch on the future of the legislation which dictating our management here. So, New Mexico is looking towards taking over primacy of the Clean Water Act. That was passed in most recent legislative session but it we won't expect them to have implemented that program and taken full control over that until probably 2028 conservatively. In the meantime, the EPA is also drafting a new statewide MS4 permit. Right now, we're a small MS4 permit. We just manage our area and the type of MS4 we are is broadly applied to similar areas. The statewide permit is basically going to open up the management to every type of urban area in New Mexico. So once that's published we'll be convening again with the City and NMDOT to collaborate on what those changes are and make comment if necessary. And if that does get rolled out, depending on the status of the federal government and EPA, it's expected to roll out in early 2026. But as we know, the federal government can move slow and faces some uncertain times right now with their administration. And with that, I'll stand for questions.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. Do we have anyone in the chambers who have questions for Michael Carr? Seeing none, do we have any online?

MR. FRESQUEZ: Chair Bustamante, currently there are no users raising their hand.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: We'll keep that open. From the dais, Commissioner Greene.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Thank you, Michael. This talked about storm water in this and maybe this isn't the place for it, but I think that also all rain. So, we have regulations that have been in place for a bunch of years for catchment on all homes or homes over 2,500 square feet. And I'm wondering where that is in terms of the success of the program. I hear grumblings from how it really adds significant cost to construction. And I think it would be good for us to have some quantification on how much we think that it's saved us in terms of water. If people are using it if, you know, we have a thousand of these that have been built into homes that essentially based on rainfall we've saved x number thousands of gallons or millions of gallons or whatever that statistic is just to show that we can quantify how we've saved. [Disturbance on line]

And then one of our former commissioners also was a proponent of rain gardens, and I think that that's in the stormwater space, a great opportunity for us to recharge our aquifer and to provide some lush little spots that whether it's for pollinators or just a tree or two.

So those are the two questions. And I'm wondering if maybe it's in part of your story or maybe it's the Growth Management and the building code part of the story.

MR. CARR: As far as quantifying data from rain capture per the requirements in our code, that sounds like a very useful quantitative angle to go at. I'll definitely look into that following this presentation and see if we have some of that available or if that's something that we can look into to help basically rationalize how we move forward with some of the policies internally. As far as rain gardens, yeah, the GSI incentivization program would definitely include rain gardens. The image I shared of the Arroyo Hondo space was a rain garden. It hadn't been planted out at that point, but yeah, we'll definitely be we promoting those across the County just because it's they're a great

way to basically treat stormwater before it enters the systems.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Wonderful. Thank you. Thank you. Additional questions, Commissioner Hughes.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Thank you. Yeah, this is actually very similar to Justin Greene's question. Do we have any requirements or thought to large developers developing recharge ponds to take care of this stormwater that way?

MR. CARR: As far as I'm aware, we do not currently have any requirements for new developments to include green stormwater infrastructure. That is definitely something we've had conversations about in some of our monthly MS4 meetings. So if information on that develops, I'm happy to share that with the Commission.

COMMISSIONER HUGHES: Okay. Yeah, it seems appropriate moving forward since we're getting more of our moisture in big storms at the end of summer or whatever. It'd be good to capture that water rather than just let it run into the river. But glad you're thinking of it. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Cacari Stone.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Michael. Just a quick question around we had a great presentation on the PFAS and the I think it was six various sources and how are you interfacing with that when we have storms that come and there's flow off just I'd like to just learn more.

MR. CARR: So I think for that point we're as we're still currently working through the PFAS situation in the LCLC community and what runoff and the chemicals being carried would look like across the County, I think right now it's probably just conversational until we have a better idea of what those sources are of PFAS in that community and what measurements or mitigation effects are going to be most applicable for that situation. If stormwater happens to be a big as aspect of that, we can definitely see how that intertwines, but at the moment those aren't specifically interlinked just because we're still working through what exactly is is causing that contamination.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Okay, thank you. Is there a way to test and different samples of stormwater runoff in different areas after a large rainfall?

MR. CARR: Yes. So, as we've kind of been building out our stormwater management program, uh, there are goals set out in the MS4 permit to include, wet water sampling following stormwater events. Albuquerque currently carries these out and the process for that is basically within 15 minutes of the start of the rain have somebody out there collecting samples along conveyances to take back to the lab and basically run tests to see what kind of chemicals are associated within that first runoff period. I am aware that the City is currently looking at developing a program similar to that in Albuquerque and their jurisdiction. That is something we are currently not doing. But we'll need to look at in a little more detail with our current consultant and SWPPP goals. it might not be entirely feasible as we don't have a great pool of consultants that can carry out that work in the county and the best practices for that process are basically within 15 minutes have somebody out there collecting that sample. So we're a little bit hamstrung by the fact that we don't have the correct amount of laboratories in Santa Fe to support that testing immediately. So if we were able to get a consultant out to collect that sample, they

have to drive to Albuquerque and there's a certain window of time that that laboratory will accept that sample and a certain amount of time that that sample is viable for that testing. So there's a lot of challenges that we need to look at to figure out whether or not that's a feasible action for us or figure out if there's maybe specific areas we want to implement that if it is feasible.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Well, thank you for thinking through that. It could be, you know, as they're trying to solve this mystery of the six sources and can we collaborate with scientists and students from the universities or community colleges and the New Mexico Environment Department where we would have a workforce interested instead of paying for everything? I'm just throwing out creative ideas.

MR. CARR: Potentially. I think we definitely still are in a bit of a challenging situation where we're not we're still an hour away from UNM and a lot of students. We're kind of restricted in our educational body to Santa Fe Community College and I don't believe there is as big a programs and collaborations with the other universities nearby, but I might be mistaken. So if those opportunities do come up, we're happy to look at them and see if there's a way to kind of collaborate on those efforts.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Yeah, that would be exciting. And just a practical question, rain barrels for all our residents and it's expensive because I'm thinking about the smaller homes and more working class homes in Santa Fe County and you'll have to get a rebate system. So, you can spend up to $250 on a rain barrel and it's a disincentive because people don't have the cash up front. As a County, are we exploring other funding sources so that people can get the rebate right away if they're within a certain income level and we can get rain barrels in communities that can't afford it.

MR. CARR: So to those points, those are conversations we'll be having and ones that will be brought up as we start to review that GSI incentivization program. We want to make sure that we as a County can provide a resource to help incentivize these best management practices, especially in an arid area with limited water. But we do also need to be cognizant of how we move forward with that just to make sure that we comply with the anti-donation clause and any walls we might have either with the community or which area we're targeting to branch that sort of program out to make sure nobody is being left out of that conversation.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Well, I offer a commitment for myself on how to move forward with that. I think that's really important. We have elders and people that come from a generation where water conservation is their core value and really would like to afford like my mother-in-law, those rain barrels are so expensive and, you know, we could really save more water and people could have their little gardens little herbs or something in their backyard and I want to support that and please let me know. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. Commissioner Johnson, did you have anything? I too, other than the commissioner that was referenced earlier, being a former commissioner who was in support of rain gardens. And I invite those new the new commissioners to see how beautiful the proximity to the rain garden gets and how it actually recharges the aquifer and it looks great and life is green and I am with the Commissioner on one of my questions is about how we support private land

owners in both learning about rain gardens and an ability to establish them. So, I back up a little bit on that one because we have had some substantial rains, felt like inland hurricane weather in La Cienega and the runoff from private residences affected County culverts and actually in many ways surpassed the County culverts, but it also plugged them up. So, we just had a lot of – there's a big dynamic there. And the question about the ability for private land owners to establish the catchment systems necessary to not leave their neighbors vulnerable. And there was a statement about it running off into the road, in this case water ran into private residences. So it created damage and it's been quite problematic. And I'm really asking the question more along the regulatory component is is evident and the liability is clear and how do we support those private landowners and this goes back to how we're approving development but also assuring that those uphill residences have the support they need to divert the water in a manner that doesn't affect both County resources and other private residences. Any thoughts, ideas and how that's been discussed?

MR. CARR: Yes, so I've also received comments from the public reporting I think the same incidents that you're discussing now. And that is definitely something we're looking at hopefully moving forward the program. Right now, the program is kind of more of at an introspective look to ensure that the County is doing its best at the best things it can either through procedure or through compliance and ensuring the dissemination of information to the public on what that what that status is. But especially looking forward, there's an interesting interplay with storm water and other infrastructure. So, as you spoke of with uphill residents draining down into a County maintained road, that'll be a discussion to have. Whether that be a code enforcement issue, if there's any non-compliance with the water being directed down off of someone's property into another property, there's just probably a discussion to have with our roads division on how we look at effects like that not only in that specific situation, but if they were to come up anywhere in the County, have a procedure to basically move forward with correcting those. So I think as we move forward with the stormwater program and we catch up internally to where we want to be and are delivering the information to the public that we'd like to have out there, then we can start seeing how it interconnects with that private public dynamic. And if we have that GSI incentivization program and those avenues of communication with the public, we can better identify those areas that are having those problems and figure out what the best solutions are to ensure that we aren't overstepping, but that we're providing the help that we can as a County.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you. I appreciate that very much. The other opportunity that we have that is to sort of break an organizational silo, if you will, is when we do have these flooding incidences that we then communicate with Community Services to let people know that they probably want to have their well water checked. I personally had my well flooded up to about 3 feet and that could lead to an E.coli incident. It's important that people understand that if their wellhouse is flooded, they probably want to take some steps. The public knows that that is their responsibility, but they don't necessarily know the dynamic of having their wellhouse flooded and that they might want to have a water check. Now, I say that also knowing that the State has some responsibility as well, but when we learn about it as the County, it would be a great service to let people know your water may be contaminated after it your wellhouse was

flooded. Appreciate that very much. Thank you, Michael.

Are there any further questions, issues, or statements?

[The meeting was paused for 20 minutes reconvening at 1:20]

4. Collaboration with State, Other Agencies and Stakeholders

A. How Does the County Collaborate with Other Governmental Agencies, Entities and Community-Based Associations?

ANDREW HARNDEN (Water Planner): Madam chair and the Ccommission. Good afternoon. I am Andrew Harnden. I'm a water planner and I sit in the County's Growth Management Department which is just down the street here at 240 Grant. Water planning program has been operating more than a year. Its work is projects and activities supporting sustainable water, wastewater management and regional water sector collaboration by working with county departments, federal, state, local governments. We actually do have a few people from the community from some of those organizations here today. We have Anders Lundahl from the New Mexico Environment Department Drinking Water Bureau here. And we do have from Cañada de los Alamos Mutual Domestic Community Water Association, we have Chita Gillis. And also earlier today we had a Mia Clifford, president of the Eldorado Community Improvement Association. And I'm not sure if Mia is still may have had to go to another meeting. So also other important communities that we collaborate with are the pueblos, of course. We have seven pueblos within the county area. Community registered organizations and of course the County's Water Policy Advisory Committee and myself I'm one of four staff liaisons to the committee the other three as you know are in in the room with us today. And today from the water committee we have Peter Gowen was here earlier today. Laird Graeser and Steve Schmelling. Other senior other senior growth management staff are leading project work to update the Sustainable Growth Management Plan and the Sustainable Land Development Code. And these are presentations 5A and 5B on today's agenda.

And everybody you see a diagram in front of you of a watershed. So basically watersheds or a whole watershed approach is the main the basis of my presentation today. Water plan promotes a holistic approach based on the premise that protecting and restoring surface and groundwater resources depends on a healthy watershed. It works within a whole basin framework engaging and supporting various stakeholders. Many County communities rely on groundwater and acequias for water supply. And one of the first questions that we get is how will land and water be managed in the watersheds above to ensure current surface and groundwater supplies as well as for future potential development. Water planning aims to achieve buy in for a collaborative process for multi stakeholder integrated watershed planning and management. And this is sort of some terminology you've heard before and you're going to hear it again is again. Multi-stakeholder integrated watershed planning and management. And this is the same language that is used by other federal and state water sector agencies and research organizations.

Ground level projects are key for building collaboration with community

members and stakeholders. Participants identify needs and challenges relate to landscape health and water quality. They gain hands-on experience designing undertaking group projects and build community work relationships and finally participants build on these relationships for undertaking future projects. Ground level projects of course are a core activity for county trails and open space and community planning programs and a number of other County departments.

The County's Water Policy Advisory Committee/WPAC is a working committee that augments staff resources by bringing expertise, research, and effort to its assigned work. It provides recommendations and policy advice to the Board of County Commissioners regarding sustainable utility services, domestic water supply and conservation, wastewater management and reuse, storm water management, flood prevention and control. And there are four staff liaison as I mentioned that support the committee in its annual work plan tasks and through its three working groups which are stormwater management, drinking and wastewater management and outreach. The central goal of the current committee is to help strengthen community and county capacity in the water sector through isolating, duplicating and replicating best practices and strategies land water management. For example, WPAC produced a document which comments on forming nonprofit watershed associations which can be found on the committee's web page. WPAC also plans to work on tasks for building healthy soils to also sorry to also support county sustainability department and aggregate program efforts including of course more efficient water use. And am important fact is that more than half of water use in the County actually and statewide is agriculture. WPAC meetings are the second Thursday of every month from 4 to 6 p.m. and at 240 Grant down the street from us in the Plaza room upstairs. Committee members of course can join in person or virtually and they're very welcome.

Office of the State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission: Regional Water Planning is guided by the State 2023 Water Security Planning Act. Local governments and residents are invited to participate in updating regional plans for sustainable water management coordination and the link is here on the screen if anybody from the public or from the committee would like to find more about that. My understanding is that currently the OSE is finalizing its rulemaking process for water planning and reviewing public comments received.

Okay, now we're going to cover some ground level activities which are were gaining some traction. NMED Drinking Water Bureau regional resiliency team: The team works with community water systems to help strengthen resiliency in infrastructure, people and water supply. Drinking Water Bureau is joining County outreach efforts with Mutual Domestic Community Water Associations, MDCWAs. The rural community assistance corporation will also join. Mutual domestics, as many of us know, are actually run mostly by volunteers and they are often under resourced. Meeting state compliance requirements can be challenging and this is needed for obtaining funding and of course of actually holding on to funding. So what happens is a lot of you know mutual domestics have busy lives, they spend a lot of time at work you know trying to meet compliance requirements getting that state funding, again if they're too busy or some of the operators they use to you know for their systems get too busy they may not keep up with compliance reporting requirements and consequently they actually sometimes will lose

the funding that they've already acquired from the state. Fall 2025 initial discussions are taking place with several southern Santa Fe County mutual domestics to identify needs and possible goals. Participation is voluntary of course and this is a grassroots focused consultation. Discussions will also explore ideas for possible collaboration between the mutual domestics level potential interest in pursuing an umbrella concept. It's an idea that some members of the mutual domestics have brought up. An umbrella allows a group of several mutual domestics to pool resources. There is no one-size-fits-all for an umbrella form and structure. In the formation stage, mutual domestics ensure they maintain a high level of control and decision-making over their individual system, infrastructure, and operation. So again there's six, seven or eight mutual domestics who are considering you know partnering together. Of course they would all have to agree what the sort of the overall form and structure of the umbrella organization would be. An umbrella organization can also be an effective contact point for county water conservation and well monitoring programs. June 2026 from the 10th to 14th will be the Next Generation Water Summit. The City- County to co-host Jacqueline Beam from Sustainability Department will be talking about more about that this afternoon and one of the trainings we will be including in that in the NGWS is a financial trainings for small community water systems from qualified and experienced trainers and we've already had some interest from the such trainers

NMED again, Surface Water Quality Bureau: the watershed protection staff work to protect watersheds through managing non-point source pollution and projects to to address it. County Water Planning with input from Trails and Open Space teams is preparing an application for a Watershed Protection Assistance Program Grant WPAP. The allowable amount is up to 75K and no cash mash is required. This sort of really jumped out in terms of getting our attention the fact that because the WPAP grant from what I've been told by NMED is actually probably their most flexible grant so far in terms of project scope can be used for a variety of things. This makes it very practical opportunities because it allow us to engage with multiple stakeholders in a watershed a variety of capacity activities and again of course you know again there's that much flexibility it should be relatively easy to work with the community to come up with a project design everybody's help very everybody is happy with. So again, much more flexible than some of the other previous grants like water-based watershed based plans of course which are very science-based and you have to keep up with all that science on regular basis.

Pueblos, there are seven pueblos in the county area. County Pueblos water sector cooperation includes construction of the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System, which has already been discussed earlier today by Public Works staff. There's a County MOU with a number of the northern pueblos. Initial conversations with, we've had initial conversations with all the pueblos about possibilities for collaborative watershed planning and management. And basically these are initial conversations and they're they're interested in exploring more ideas and in different funding sources as well. Acequias, we've had conversations with all or most of the regional acequia organizations in the county area and again initial conversations they're positive. They're also trying to encourage all their members you know through the New Mexico Acequia Association to adopt a whole watershed approach, collaborate with more stakeholders. And there's some

possibly interesting opportunities. I've been told by the State Engineer Office where where acequias are actually physically connected. If you have one acequia that has very high sort of, you know, accounting and project management capacity that they can apply for a grant say for head gate works or other infrastructure to support maybe those other one or two adjoining acequias. So anyway because acequias again are run by volunteers and often they don't have the time and the resources to get those grants and manage those grants. So again some regional collaboration there. A number of acequia members in the larger Santa Fe area from the upper to lower areas are actually I understand planned organizing a meeting to see if they can you know discuss important matters such as you know coordinating flows and timing from the upper acequias to the lower acequias. Operation maintenance needs possibly pooling resources and you know combining coordinating outreach and advocacy efforts as well.

The next two slides I've actually promised a number of people I was really going to aim exactly for 10 minutes today. So another important slide I'm going to skip it for now but is this is a water plan collaboration with community organizations and other County planning staff on a number of important community and planning programs.

Next slide is an important project that water planning and is undertaking with the community of La Cienega and La Cieneguilla for preliminary engineering report and water planning study. We'll have some more update soon but again for being conscious of time I actually going to skip this slide for now.

New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mines. Many of us are familiar with the bureau's work. The Bureau work includes an aquifer mapping program to map and characterize aquifers and is regularly used in County water sector studies providing valuable information. So Public Works Utilities plan to use a lot of their data and the link is here. They have very, very impressive library of publications and studies and so on including for the Santa Fe area. What I've been told is that a lot of previous work was concentrated on the on the Santa Fe area and it would actually be another probably 10 to 15 years before more detailed aquifer mapping for the Santa Fe area is undertaken.

Santa Fe Watershed Association and the County have a productive relationship already. There's a new planning initiative with the County, City and community parks participation to strengthen health and resilience of the Santa Fe River. And this is through a Bureau of Reclamation WaterSmart grant, phase one cooperative grant that the Watershed Association was able to get and obtain. This grant will be used to complete a watershed restoration plan. Coincidentally, there's a meeting going on right now, it's a visioning exercise with stakeholders in the community at the Santa Fe Watershed's office down on Second Street. But if there's anybody interested out there in the community, there may be still time to join that meeting. And again for this grant activities focus is education capacity building and in increasing collaboration among stakeholders including working on restoration demonstration and pilot projects including preparing site specific preliminary designs. Much of the water committees Water Policy Advisory Committee's outreach efforts for the foreseeable future will also focus on SFWA collaborative watershed plan activities. But as part of this project, County has proposed several project restoration riverside sites with a range of characteristics and needs in highly visible locations, obviously to maximize exposure and to involve a variety of stakeholders. So this is a list of about seven sites which a number of county staff, you know, put together

and forward to the Watershed Association.

And again, hands-on activities, people are out working together face to face. They'll be out in the sites together designing the projects, gaining hands-on experience, building community and working relationships. They're going to get their hands in the dirt, but they actually won't start building the projects as it says surveying and designing the projects. And again there's I think an important opportunity to apply a range of green straw infrastructure, GSI or nature-based NBS techniques and of course participants will capture those learnings with multiple county departments who will be participating. Almost at the very end.

Benefits: benefits of collaboration I think that where there's water any sector is universal, right? People's voices are heard. We build trust and consensus. There's a pooling of resources, information and knowledge. Future opportunities: many I would say. If collaborative is if collaboration is productive it will save time and money and create a better long-term water outcomes for everybody.

So, again, we have much to do and many opportunities. So, I thank you very much, Madam Chair and the Commission and everybody.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Andrew. Do we have any questions from the chambers? Yes, Laird.

MR. GRAESER: Yes. We have not talked all day about agricultural use including stock watering and the 2020 water withdrawal data from New Mexico Tech indicated that we had 23,000 acre-feet used for various agricultural uses. And you know, we're talking here 4,000 acre-feet for the County and 8 to 9,000 for the City and 23,000 for ag and it doesn't seem to be in our awareness. Could you just speak a little bit to that?

MR. HARNDEN: Madam Chair, Commissioners and Laird Graeser, thank you very much for bringing that in. I would just like to mention to Laird that when I was assembling my notes and some important facts, I actually specifically remembered the fact that you did bring up, Laird, about more than half of the water use of the County and statewide actually being agriculture. And I thought well I could go a little more detail but I'm aiming for just for 10 minutes up here at the microphone. Laird who's on our Water Policy Advisory Committee of course did some very important you know research pulling in data from the water data initiative in terms of addressing water use you think of you know ranchers and land managers, farmers out there many of them are probably very responsible and efficient water users some others may not be so and in terms of, you know, promoting better water use, more efficient. It's obviously it's the voluntary programs I think are probably most effective when you're reaching out to a large community, especially in large rural areas. And there's many already. There's, you know, domestic New Mexico Department of Agriculture does quite a bit and some of the soil water conservations, acequia associations, and of course, individual water communities and community organizations. So, I think again if we can get all the right people at the table having this conversation, maybe some ag reps as well, this is a great opportunity to save water. And I think that, you know, common sense, everybody, farmers or ranchers want to save money and they want to save water and they want to do the right thing and maybe even at one of our upcoming water committee meetings having somebody from the ag committee come in or ag associations. So, I don't know if I've fully answered your question, but I approach from where I sit, that's where –

MR. GRAESER: It's all part of the same thing. And, you know, 20 years ago, there was a state program to give a 100 percent rebate to farmers who would adopt more conservative irrigation methods. But the use it or lose it problem, you know, with the state law is that neither acequias nor the ranchers with individual wells can take the risk of risking their water right because of non-use. So that's also something that we have to deal with. But so you don't know of any OSE adjudications in the County that are planned? I haven't heard of any.

MR. HARNDEN: No.

MR. GRAESER: But there's a lot of work that we need to do at the state level as well as strictly at the county level. And thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you.

MR. HARDEN: Madam Chair and the Commission, Laird Graeser, if I could just briefly mention, I do understand that WPAC I believe for 2026 work plan intends to again you know water efficiency for the agricultural sector. I do expect that will be on the work plan. Again, it's up to the committee to do, you know, again to form its work plan and how it works, the different tasks on there. Staff will be supporting that. But I do expect that addressing how to improve water efficiency in the agricultural sector will be on the on the work plan for 2026.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Andrew. Do we have any further questions from the chambers? Not seeing any, do we have anyone online? [There were none] Okay, we have Commissioner Greene.

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Thank you, Andrew. So I do want to encourage looking at agricultural efficiencies and ways that Santa Fe County can support that, both as the gentleman just stated, to help them not lose their rights, but to actually protect their rights, but potentially lease them and, you know, for lack of a better term, become water farmers, right? And so if efficiencies give them the opportunity to lease rights and make a little bit of money off of saving water that maybe that there's water for Santa Fe County to lease on from a farm, help them go to drip irrigation as opposed to flooding and irrigation and find ways to to be more efficient.

Additionally, this is something that I had discussed a few years ago when I came on the Commission and I want to pursue it a little more now because I don't think it got the attention that we needed on it. Which is an acequia ombudsman at least somebody at Public Works or Planning or somewhere in between that becomes a champion for all of our acequias and becomes a one-stop shop for when we have a problem at an acequia that they're the person that the acequias call. That's part of our traditional heritage here and I think we need to have a person that becomes the expert of that.

And, additionally, similar to the program that we have when we go to the legislature and we ask for, I don't know, $10 million for road improvements. I'm not suggesting $10 million for in for acequias but I think that we could go to the legislature or somewhere else in our budget to put a couple hundred thousand dollars in a pool that the acequias could apply to for maintenance projects that are potentially too small for them to deal with just on their own or are just really truly maintenance projects that are, you know, our Public Works needs to have in their budget so they can apply to it and then clean out the dirt, clean out the brush, fix a covert, whatever it is, that we have a pool for them to work on. If it's big, you know, over $20,000, maybe they go to the state

for capital outlay. But when it's a small like one day with a backhoe cleaning stuff out in a dumpster, I think that's something that we could provide in a sort of pool setting. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner. Acequias actually have a very democratic process that they work with for those things that are on the acequia. Any other questions for Mr. Harnden? Commissioner Cacari Stone.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Thank you, Andrew. Just I want to be clear, with Travis's presentation that talked about commercial and residential use water and then you're saying half of the water usage is for agriculture. Where does that fit in our water usage analysis from the previous presentation? Is that included?

MR. HARNDEN: Commissioner Bustamante and Commissioner Cacari Stone, overall staff presentation today has really focused on water use for County residents, businesses industrial and so forth. Travis Soderquist is right behind me – bit basically we're talking about water use again. So I think everybody understands it's just saying it's total water use in the county and statewide. So it can if agriculture is using more than half of the water use in the county, it's not I don't think in the County's budget and it's not something the County is saying yes, we recognize that or we're accounting for that because it's coming from different water rights primarily ground.

MANAGER SHAFFER: So if I could, Chair Bustamante and Commissioner Cacari Stone. So, the, amounts that were referenced again, those aren't going through the Santa Fe County Water Utility. Those are groundwater rights or surface water irrigation rights. And so, to the extent we have any customers that actually use County water utility water for purposes of agriculture, they are very few in number and the only one I think that our utility director could really think of is a commercial cannabis grow operation that is a County Water Utility customer. But again, that large figure that's not running through the County Water Utility. They're using water rights that are permitted specifically to them. I hope that answers the question.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Understood. Makes sense. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Anything else?

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Were you going to add to that, Andrew?

MR. HARNDEN: I just going to briefly mention I didn't actually mention this about for June 2026 Next Generation Water Summit, the County's main focus is actually going to be community and traditional water systems. But again, that's going to be Jacqueline's topic today, including water efficiencies for agriculture. So that will be a major focus of the point the June 2026 Next Generation Water Summit.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: Oh I appreciate that.

MR. HARNDEN: And so Jacqueline knows more about that than I do actually.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: So, Chair, I just have one more question. Thank you for the time. Andrew you mentioned over like 30 organizations, this presentation shows collaboration partnership. This is an exciting opportunity and you're delivering really positive news. We have all these relationships. How do we think as a BCC how we make impact collectively and through the Next Generation Water

Summits? Do we synergize all these human capacities and collaborations to do more network impact? Do we track network impact? What's your thoughts on that? How can as a BCC we support that we make collective impact?

MR. HARNDEN: Well, thank you, Commissioner. We've done just some some basic brainstorming on that. A lot of ideas have come, you know, from the community, other agencies, water committee, and from staff. At this point, we have some ideas. I don't think I can address that in great detail at this point. But again, I think it's again collaboration water sector and harnessing that potential. It's something which sort of gaining momentum and we do want to come back with some more good ideas. I've had people give me advice about county water planning website. You know, we have a good starter page which is mostly the La Cienega, La Cieneguilla PR with links, but ultimately, put all the links on the water page, the County pages that link to other different agencies and good projects out there from Santa Fe water associations and to our each other's department's pages as well. And then making sure those other stakeholder agencies have our links as well. So, there's just one example of a smarter use of time and communication.

COMMISSIONER CACARI STONE: I appreciate you thinking about that. It just seems like an opportunity and we're here to learn and listen, but also look about what are innovations and what we can support in terms of positive governance to harmonize, synergize, to be conveners. So, let's keep thinking about that together on how we make collective impact with instead of going from having list and all these committees meeting to here's our outcome we want, right. Here's the collective impact we want in Santa Fe County and I appreciate your presentation but overall all the presentations that's what I'm asking: What's the impact? What's the small wins? What's the big wins? This was to be a summit this was to be us thinking about generative ideas as a commission, so thank you so much.

MR. HARNDEN: Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Commissioner Johnson.

COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Andrew, for the presentation. This echoes Commissioner Cacari Stone's last comment, this is great. We do obviously so much collaboration and I didn't even have an inkling of the extent of it. So, you know, I think we should give kudos to staff and to the amount of coordination and to our community really who cares about this. But it does seem like, and this doesn't this is just sort of brought out by your presentation but and by the gentleman's comments, which is that there is this sort of disconnect that I notice where we have obviously a lot of experts and committees thinking about water, sustainability, use and all the sort of things in the margin but we also still – right, I think the Chair opened this meeting with something to the effect of where's the water going to come from? And actually I feel pretty like I have a good understanding of the sort of like development pattern and the process of obtaining water for housing developments for instance. But I think and I gather this is what Cacari Stone was getting at but if not I apologize for misreading you. There is some sort of like broader conversation and the problem with that is that it's really esoteric. It's sort of like we live in the desert and, you know, this year it rained more but often it's really dry. So I am intuiting that we don't have enough water and I just wonder how we can improve our sort of community's understanding of

that. I don't expect any of us to have the answer today but I think that we are trying to work towards something like that. I'm optimistic that the Next Generation Water Summit has sort of conversations that go a little deeper into community and traditional water use.

But I just wanted to make that comment because the utilities seem like we have that element dialed in or at least we have the apparatus to be scientific about it. But there is something that was, you know, sort of been thrown into the conversation about use that is outside of the sort of piped use. The well presentation got at that as well. But there are, I think, harder conversations down the road about water use and the rights of individuals to sort of make excessive use of it. So, I just wanted to throw that comment in there as an observation. Thank you.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner Johnson. Any further questions for Andrew? I think the one the one thing that we have on the WPAC is a requirement that we have representation from all the different parts of the County and we have representation from tribal governments but we don't have a required representation from all those organizations which is fine but maybe there's an opportunity to have a report out on the work that is being done when it's appropriate by any of those organizations and I know that you do a lot of that already. We've seen a number of presentations from the various partners even some who are not listed here but it's just a thought. So thank you very much Andrew. Okay, thank you, Commissioners. Thank you very much, Andrew.

We are at 2 o'clock and I did say that we would look at the clock at that time and determine whether or not we would either reschedule or continue on. We have three more presentations. Some of which are very, very – not that they haven't been important, they're very rich. In fact, every one of them has been very rich and important. But I want to just do a check on how people in the chambers feel. Um, I'm going to make the assumption that people online are have been taking care of themselves as needed and that the Board feels that we can hear the next pretty critical or crucial topics or reconvene at another time and I know that I would just like to get a sense of that for people.

The Commission discussed recessing this meeting and rescheduling to complete agenda items 5, 6, and 7. Following discussion, November 17th at 9 a.m. was agreed upon. Commissioner Greene made a motion to reconvene on November 17th and Commissioner Johnson seconded. That motion passed without opposition.

This meeting was recessed at 2:07 p.m.

3. Concluding Business

A. Announcements

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Do we have any announcements?

COMMISSIONER GREENE: Just to remind everybody it's San Isidro this weekend up in Chimayo. Please come up on Sunday between 2 and 4 and come check out the Plaza de Cerro which is an amazing monument to Spanish heritage in the north.

CHAIR BUSTAMANTE: Thank you, Commissioner Greene. Anything else.

MANAGER SHAFFER: Just don't forget about tomorrow's special meeting – I'm kidding.

B. Adjournment

Upon motion to adjourn by Commissioner Greene and second by Commissioner Cacari Stone and with no further business to come before this body, Chair Bustamante declared this meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Approved by:

Camilla Bustamante, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

ATTEST TO:

KATHARINE E. CLARK
SANTA FE COUNTY CLERK

Respectfully submitted:

Karen Farrell, Wordswork
453 Cerrillos Road
Santa Fe, NM 87501

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

BCC MINUTES
PAGES: 64

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for Record On The 22ND Day Of December, 2025 at 03:23:16 PM And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 2073907 Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Katharine E. Clark
Deputy _____ County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

SFC CLERK RECORDED 12/22/2025