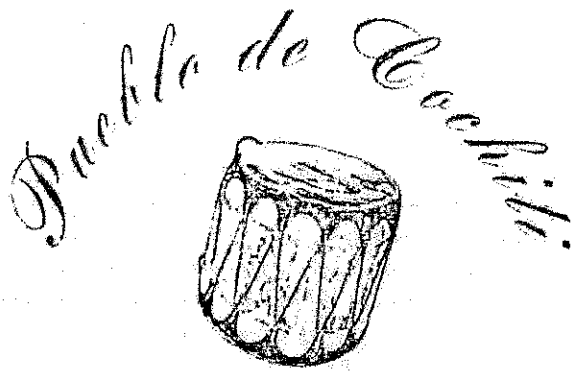
Daniel Chalan
Governor

Joseph U. Quintana
Lt. Governor



Andrew Quintana
Treasurer

Gertrude Lovato
Secretary

BOX 70
COCHITI, NEW MEXICO 87041
Telephone: 505-465-2244

November 14, 1983

Mr. Eddie Lopez, President
La Bajada Village Water Association
La Bajada, New Mexico

Dear Mr. Lopez and Members of the La Bajada Village Water Association:

After three very fruitful meetings with your organization and other concerned residents of the village of La Bajada to discuss the Pueblo de Cochiti's pending claim in Congress for restoration of 25,000 acres of land known as the Santa Cruz Spring Tract, we are pleased to convey the following assurances to you:

1. The Bill (H.R. 3259) itself contains the following protections for all legal rights currently vested in or to property interests arising from or on the tract, including the village of La Bajada:

   "Sec. 3. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to deprive any individual or entity of any legal existing right-of-way, legal mining claim, legal grazing permit, legal water right, or other legal right or legal interest such individual or entity may have in the lands described in section 2."

and,

   "Sec. 8. The Secretary shall recognize and grant necessary easements for access to lands described in section 2 of this Act for the following purposes:

   (1) Access to recreational sites maintained by the United States.

   (2) Access to parcels of land owned by private parties.

   (3) Access to lands subject to valid permits as necessary to allow the permittees to exercise their rights granted in such permits."

2. We believe these provisions of the Bill, which we support, adequately protect the residents of La Bajada Village. However, as further assurance of the Pueblo's intention not to interfere with the established way of life of the village's residents, we offer our Pueblo's own confirmation. Upon passage of H.R. 3259, the Pueblo de Cochiti will respect the rights established by the provisions of the Act as they pertain to existing private rights described in the Act, including a 40-foot easement on the north side of the village for a road leading from one end of the present village boundary to the other; continued use of and access to the water tank which presently serves the village's domestic needs; continued use of and access to the water holding tank which presently serves the village's irrigation needs. It is understood that this confirmation is intended to bind future Pueblo Tribal Councils as well as the current Tribal Council.

We hope that these commitments and assurances suffices your concerns and let us project a meaningful relationship mutually beneficial to the Village of La Bajada and the Pueblo de Cochiti.

Sincerely,

Daniel Chalan, Governor
PUEBLO DE COCHITI