

PRESS RELEASE

From: ESTANCIA BASIN RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

**TO: Albuquerque Journal Telegraph
The Independent
Santa Fe New Mexican**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO ALL MEDIA OR PUBLIC FORUM

THE FIGHT TO PROTECT ESTANCIA BASIN WATER GROWS RAPIDLY

As the people of the Estancia Valley learn more about the 27 million dollar deal now on the table for the purchase and transmission of Estancia Basin water to the City of Santa Fe they are rising in increasing numbers to support the fight to oppose the purchase.

At an initial membership meeting of the Estancia Basin Resource Association (EBRA) held Friday, January 14th in Estancia, over 200 farmers, ranchers and residents showed up to listen, learn, and overwhelmingly endorse the fight. When asked if they were willing to give financial support the response was positive. Many farmers thought they would be glad to consider a self-assessment, with one saying he would consider it a “luxury tax” to fund payment of attorneys, hydrologists, and legislative efforts to stop what is seen as a threat to their continued existence in the Estancia Valley.

After listening to presentations by each of the town mayors an explanation was given of EBRA's mission and intent and the first members of a fifteen man board were elected. Represented on the board are the town mayors of Moriarty, Estancia, Edgewood and Mountainair, as well as farmers, ranchers and other residents.

Following an initial business session, a presentation was made by Charles Dumars, Professor Emeritus, UNM Law School. He related this situation to a multitude of situations he has been involved with where rapidly expanding urban entities dry up surrounding farming communities by removing water for urban use. The Estancia Basin has a good case because Santa Fe did not really need the water, he said, but was going after the water because "it can".

Santa Fe has current water resources which it is reluctant to fully use, according to Dumars, but Santa Fe people really care about being fair." He thought many Santa Fe residents supported the concerns of the Estancia Basin.

Everyone was encouraged to attend the next public hearing before the Santa Fe City Council January 26. When asked how many would go, a majority in the room raised their hands. The town of Estancia and Moriarty are planning to arrange for bus transportation.

EBRA plans a second information sharing meeting in Moriarty, Monday January 24th. Jim Corbin, Executive Director of The Estancia Basin Water

**`Planning Committee will be the featured speaker. He will provide background on
he hydrological issues involved in the water transportation proposal.**