



\$6 Million Federal Funding Anticipated for San Juan-Chama Return Flow Project

Component of Long-Range Plan to Ensure Water Supply Through End of Century

September 20, 2021 –The United States Bureau of Reclamation has notified the City that the San Juan-Chama Return Flow Project (Project) is recommended to Congress for an award of \$6 million in federal funding. The funding would come through Federal Funding Program No. R21AS00429 – WaterSMART: Title XVI WIIN Water Reclamation and Reuse Program (018).

The grant application for the Project received letters of support from several large water rights holders and regulators along the Rio Grande who recognize the Project's water resources and environmental benefits. The City is working to acquire the necessary state and federal permits for the Project and continues to evaluate additional adaptation strategies identified in the Santa Fe Basin Study (2015) and the Santa Fe Reuse Feasibility Study (2017). The City, in partnership with Santa Fe County, is currently updating its long-range water supply plan through a science-based, stakeholder-informed planning process.

Background

The City of Santa Fe has been a leader in municipal planning and water conservation for decades. The City has developed a diversified water supply portfolio comprised of surface water, groundwater, water conservation, and non-potable reuse. Since 2011 when the Buckman Direct Diversion (BDD) came online, the City has benefited from direct access to SJC water, which currently makes up about half of its annual water supply. Successful conservation and preferential use of surface (river) water over the past decade have enabled the City to reduce its groundwater pumping significantly, and as a result, groundwater levels in the aquifers have been increasing, providing critical drought resiliency.

In accordance with City Resolution 2109-56, the City plans to fully utilize its SJCP water by reclaiming the SJCP portion of its effluent and sending it back to the Rio Grande to be indirectly rediverted at BDD to expand the City's water supply. The Project will allow the City to stretch its imported SJCP water resources in the face of drought and climate change and allow continued recovery of local groundwater resources for times of need.

Project details are available at santafenm.gov/san_juan_chama_return_flow_pipeline.

Santa Fe Water 2100: The 80-Year Plan

The City, in partnership with Santa Fe County, is currently updating its long-range water plan through the Santa Fe Water 2100 planning process, which is looking 80-years into the future and accounting for climate change impacts to water supply and potential growth in demand. Santa Fe Water 2100 and the SJC Return Flow Project are designed to address projected shortages in water supply caused by potential increased demand and more frequent and intense periods of drought caused by climate change.

Planning Details are available at santafenm.gov/water_resources_planning.

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