



# MINUTES

SANTA FE RIVER  
COMMISSION  
AUGUST 08, 2024  
6:00 PM  
VIRTUAL MEETING

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM

2. **ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

Voting Member Jacob Lyon  
Member Bill Carey  
Member Eric Montoya  
Member Lauren Price  
Member Jim Riesterer  
Member William Hutchinson

**Members Excused:**

Chair Heidi Klingel  
Santa Fe County Commissioner Anna Hansen  
Voting Member Patrick Smyth

**Others Attending:**

Zoe Isaacson, River and Watershed Project Administrator

3. **ROLL CALL**

Chairwoman Klingel, Commissioner Smyth, and County Commissioner Hansen were not in attendance, but excused.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Member Riesterer moved, seconded by Member Hutchinson, to Approve the Agenda as presented.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved on the following Roll Call vote:

**For:** Voting Member Lyon, Member Carey, Member Montoya, Member Price, Member Riesterer, Member Hutchinson

**Against:** None



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**Abstain:** None

## 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Approval of the June 13<sup>th</sup> Santa Fe River Commission Meeting Minutes (Heidi Klingel, Chair, heidiklingel@hotmail.com)

**MOTION:** Member Hutchinson moved, seconded by Member Riesterer, to Approve the June 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes as presented.

**VOTE:** The motion was approved on the following Roll Call vote:

**For:** Voting Member Lyon, Member Carey, Member Montoya, Member Price, Member Riesterer, Member Hutchinson

**Against:** None

**Abstain:** None

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER AGENCIES/COMMITTEES

- a. Santa Fe Watershed Shed Association Update (Amara May, Stewardship and Outreach Director, amara@santafewatershed.org)

Mori Hensley, Executive Director of the Santa Fe Watershed Association attended the meeting in Amara's absence. Ms Hensley introduced herself to the group and explaining that the SFWA works closely with various City staff in both Parks and Open Space and Water Divisions and is looking forward to working with the River Commission in a similar capacity to the Water Conservation Committee.

Ms Hensley mentioned that the River and Watershed Section and SFWA are finalizing their Adopt the River and Arroyo Programs contract and is hopeful it will be fully executed in the near term. Ms Hensley reported that SFWA is preparing for the Fall Watershed Festival happening in late September and is partnering with the City on hosting these events. Ms Isaacson mentioned that these events coincide with the River Talks



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schedule and there will be offerings for both events. Ms Hensley described the events as movies, lectures, workshops and a legacy tour of San Ysidro Park, Santa Fe County's first open space.

Ms Hensley encourages Commissioners to reach out if they have questions and looks forward to strengthening their partnership with the River Commission.

Ms Isaacson suggested that the River Commission reach out to Mori and her team to find a project that helps leverage each other's and reminded Commissioners that the Santa Fe Watershed Association is a community resource that shares the same mission and goals as the Commission. Partnering where it makes sense can cultivate advocacy and stewardship community wide.

Ms Hensley then mentioned the SFWA's educational programs and specifically called for volunteers for the My Watershed field trips to the upper watershed to help chaperon the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and provide support. It's a great way to get into the upper watershed. Commissioners had a question regarding what the students learn on the field trip and Ms Hensley explained the kids learn about where our water comes from, where the watershed is, water quality, and about the management of our water resource.

## 6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. Two Mile Pond Complex: A Brief History (Alan Hook, Santa Fe Municipal Watershed Program Manager, aghook@santafenm.gov)

Alan Hook, Water Resource Coordinator for the City, gave an overview of the Santa Fe River and Two Mile Pond Complex. The presentation focused on the reservoirs, points of diversion, monitoring stations, infrastructure (current and historic), and the City's role in these changes over time. This presentation was in preparation for the River Commission field trip to the Two Mile Pond Complex on August 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mr Hook began with an overview of the watershed boundary, the locations of McClure and Nichols Reservoirs, and the location of gauging stations in the upper portion of municipal watershed. Mr Hook described the outlet works to Nichols and how deliveries to the Acequias and the Living River traditionally worked. However, there is currently construction



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happening at Nichols to simplify the delivery process. The current construction complicates deliveries to the Acequias and Living River. However, the Water Division and contractors have developed a workaround using coffer dam and pumps to pipe the water around the outlet works to the river channel. Before the coffer dam can be put to use, the bottom of Nichols must first be drained; flushing of the sediment laden water has begun.

My Hook then went on to describe the mandated delivery requirement for each of the four acequias: Acequia del Llano, Acequia Cerro Gordo, Acequia la Muralla, and the Acequia Madre. Mr Hook covered each acequia, their points of diversion, court ordered allotment (including carriage water requirements), delivery schedule, and how the City coordinates with each, especially while work on Nichols is in progress.

Commissioners asked what is considered the River and what exactly is the bypass channel; Mr Hook explained that the bypass channel (built to divert flows during the construction of Two Mile Dam) is now considered the Santa Fe River per the 1977 hydrographic survey.

Commissioner Carey asked when the Acequia Cerro Gordo get its water? Mr Hook: Sundays and Wednesdays. However, in dry years, when there is limited bypass volume, the acequias and river commission will do shortage sharing. Ms Isaacson pointed out that is why in some years, it may seem like the water goes dry every Monday for example, and that is because the acequia will be getting deliveries during this time and then the Living River releases will occur on the days the acequias aren't irrigating.

The next topic covered was Old Stone Dam, Aztec Springs and Two Mile Reservoir: Mr Hook briefly discussed Old Stone Dam, the remaining sediment plug that helps convey seepage water to the Two Mile Pond complex and how due to the location at the bottom of the valley, seepage flows from both the Santa Fe River, Aztec Springs, and Nichols likely flow through Two Mile Pond, regardless of intentional diversions to the pond. Mr Hook spoke to Two Mile Pond specifically and the TNC restoration channel diversion. Restating that this was removed by the Office of the State Engineer due to a lack of water rights for both the diversion from the Santa Fe River and the subsequent storage behind the remnant dam



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at Two Mile. Mr Hook then went on to describe existing infrastructure, both active and decommissioned, that exists in the area and some limitations they may pose if the channel should be restored. Ms Isaacson described the pipes that run from the irrigation dam upstream through Old Stone Dam, and daylight at Two Mile Pond. These pipes continue to carry water to the pond complex and run almost perennially.

The presentation then went on to describe the outflow of Two Mile Pond, where it converges with the Santa Fe River return flow locations downstream. Mr Hook also made note of the Acequia Madre headgate at the bend on East Alameda and how being the last in line impacts the delivery to their headgate, ie. the carriage water required to get the allotted flow to the point of diversion.

Commissioner Carey asked Mr Hook to go over the Acequia Muralla, how much water rights does the acequia have? Mr Hook: 11 acres for the entire season; they usually take less than 1 cfs once a week. Mr Carey: How many parciantes does the acequia have? Mr Hook: I'm not sure, it mostly serves folks living off Camino Pequeno.

Commissioner Price asked about the users of e; do the parciantes have individual gates that bring water onto their property, or do they pump it? Commissioner Montoya responded that parciantes have all the above, they have gates and or pumps and often folks without water rights will pump water from the Acequia Madre when it is flowing and will steal water. The hardest part is finding the "straws" taking water from the ditch. 6 miles of the Acequia Madre has zero parciantes on it, but folks pull from it regardless. Ultimately, it is up to the user if they want to take the water or not. If they don't take the water or don't use all of it, it gets returned to the ditch.

Ms Isaacson then asked Commissioner Montoya to speak to the Acequia Madre and its location through town as she acknowledged that a lot of Santa Feans don't know where the Acequia is. They know about the Acequia Madre, its cultural importance, but not its route through town. Mr Montoya then went on to describe its path through town to Henry Lynch Rd. Mr Montoya made note that it is almost impossible to get water all the way to his property at the end of the ditch. Miche Garcia, a long-time Acequia Madre Association member gave the River Commission some anecdotes of being a child along the Acequia and helping her father and other parciantes maintain the ditch. Ms Garcia



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also described the Acequia as the Upper and Lower ditch and said that the Upper ditch is really where most of the water is delivered and used. The return flow to the river is behind the Indian School.

Ms Isaacson used this as a segue into the sub-committee discussion by posing the idea of an Acquia Madre Historical Preservation project that would highlight and bring attention to the Acequia and provide signage or some sort of demarcation of the ditch through town. Perhaps even a storymap or virtual tour of the Acequia.

Before wrapping up this item, Ms Isaacson and Mr Hook review the itinerary for the field trip on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Detailing the tour starting at the Randall Davey Audubon Center and ending at the confluence of the Cerro Gordo return flows to the Santa Fe River.

## 7. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

- a. River Commission Subcommittee Updates (Zoe Isaacson, Staff Liaison, zrisaacson@santafenm.org)

Ms Isaacson gave an update on Two Mile Pond, that the City's monitoring and data collection is on-going. The second quarterly report is forthcoming and will be available to the public once the report is finalized.

- b. River Commission Goals (Zoe Isaacson, Staff Liaison, zrisaacson@santafenm.gov)

Ms Isaacson began the conversation by suggesting that the River Commission consider developing a storymap for the Acequia Madre. Ms Isaacson went on to describe the types of projects that previous Commissions had discussed in the past. However, because some Commissioners were not present, Ms Isaacson requested that Commissioners begin thinking about projects and send ideas directly to her so she could begin compiling a list. At the next meeting they will dedicate time to ranking and then deciding on the top two or three projects.



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Commissioner Price asked about a vegetation monitoring and the opportunity to engage schools. Ms Isaacson mentioned the SFWA has school curriculum that could possibly be added to to incorporate a vegetation monitoring protocol, but that is not something Ms Isaacson could do on her own. Ms Isaacson did however mention the potential to use UNM grad students to some of this monitoring work and would be interested in exploring this further. A brief discussion continued how to utilize folks less knowledgeable with plant identification to do monitoring, such as focusing on canopy/ground cover rather than species. Ms Isaacson mentioned also that schools do currently have several reaches of the River Adopted, so perhaps they could help monitor and a higher-level monitoring protocol be developed to bring this into their curriculum.

Ms Price also mentioned educating the public on invasive species. She noted that she has neighbors that water invasive elms, while the City is making efforts to eradicate them along the River. She would like to help educate the community so we're all fighting the same fight. To this Ms Isaacson posed the idea of developing a quick flip book that helps identify invasive species that you find along the river that also encourages folks to spend 10 minutes on their evening walk to pull weeds.

Commissioner Riesterer asked how much time they should spend on these projects and how that would work. Ms Isaacson: that depends on the group. We can carve out an hour at each meeting to do breakout sessions, or you can meet on your own. But remember that the expectation is that each commissioner volunteers four hours per month to the Commission. Commissioners also asked about how the information would be shared. Ms Isaacson said that since they are subcommittees with 3 people, they can avoid the Open Meetings Act and work together without the same restrictions. Ms Isaacson began the conversation by suggestion that the River Commission consider developing a storymap for the Acequia Madre. Ms Isaacson went on to describe the types of projects that previous Commissions had discussed in the past. However, because some Commissioners were not present, Ms Isaacson requested that Commissioners begin thinking about projects and send ideas directly to her so she could begin compiling a list. At the next meeting they will dedicate time to ranking and then deciding on the top two or three projects.



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## 8. MATTERS FROM STAFF

Bill Schneider of the Water Division joined the meeting and encouraged the River Commission to look at water quality; Mr Schneider suggested working with high schools to establish testing locations and work with students to collect samples. Ms Isaacson said that sampling can be difficult because of availability of samplers and the requirements for sample storage and testing. Mr Schneider suggested there are ways to deal with this, and Mr Carey spoke to the idea of perhaps limiting the analytes to those that don't cold storage or to those that can be preserved for longer periods.

Mr Scheider also mentioned that he hopes the River Commission can focus on the downstream reaches; he stated that the upper reaches have for a longtime had the monopoly on the Commission's efforts and the downstream extents should be considered.

Ms Isaacson mentioned that Mr Schneider is heavily involved with the Reuse Pipeline Project and Aquifer Storage and Recovery and would be back to discuss both of these in due time.

## 9. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

## 10. MATTERS FROM THE COMMISSION

## 11. NEXT MEETING: August 15 2024

## 12. ADJOURN

**Persons with disabilities in need of accommodations, contact the City Clerk's office at 955-6521, five (5) working days prior to meeting date.**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM

*Zoe Isaacson*

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Liaison

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Chair