



La Merced del Manzano Common Water Concerns

Presentation by Jason Quintana, President – La Merced del Manzano

History of Our Community

- ◆ Manzano Land Grant was established by community members from the Town of Tomé Land Grant.
- ◆ Settlement in the area by our antepasados (ancestors) began in the early 1800's.
- ◆ A land grant-merced was confirmed to our community by the Mexican Government in 1829.

Land Grant Communities

- ◇ While multiple small communities scattered the southeastern side of the Manzano Mountains when our land grant was being established today the two main communities recognized are Manzano and Punta de Agua.
- ◇ Both communities were established based on the proximity to a good water source.
 - ◇ Punta de Agua's original spring and main water source for their acequia now sits with the the National Park Service property associated with Quarai.
 - ◇ Access for the community of Punta de Agua to that water sources has been severally hampered as a result of the Spring now being managed by the Park Service.

Community of Manzano Water Source

- ◆ The main source of water for the community of Manzano was and still is two ojos (springs) located on the common lands of the land grant just west Manzano Lake.
- ◆ The springs provides water for the community acequia system and for other domestic purposes for heirs.
- ◆ The lake reservoir for storing spring water has been expanded and improved over the years and also sits on the common lands of the Merced.
- ◆ The co-management of these common water springs and the lake has always been by locally elected officials from within the land grant including the Spring and Ditch Commission and the Land Grant Board of Trustees (Formally a Commission).
- ◆ Community leaders have served on both boards, sometimes simultaneously .

Manzano Lake



Manzano Lake



Manzano Lake



Recent Lake Co-management Concerns

- ◆ Third Party Agreements for use of Lake property and Water have excluded the Merced.
 - ◆ New Mexico Game and Fish for stocking the lake for recreational fishing
 - ◆ USFS use of lake water to fight forest fires.
- ◆ Manzano Spring and Ditch has not held an election of officers in over 3 years, missing two election cycles.
- ◆ Lack of transparency with community about use of funds generated by use of lake or sale of water.
- ◆ We are currently working with the NM Land Grant Council who reached out to the NM Acequia Association to try and find a resolution to our concerns.

Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Associations

- ◆ The Communities of Manzano and Punta de Agua both have Mutual Domestic Water Consumer Associations.
- ◆ The Merced del Manzano is currently working serving as a fiscal agent for the expenditure of capital outlay funds appropriated to Punta De Agua for purchase of a building, equipment and improvements to their water system.
- ◆ Manzano along with the other Land Grant Communities of Torreon, Tajique and Chililí and the Town of Mountainair have been working to protect our community waters from encroachment by the Estancia, Moriarty, Willard, Torrance County Regional Water Authority.

How Land Grant Interim Committee Can Help

- ◆ Provide clear definition of land grant-merced common waters and board of trustee authority over common waters.
- ◆ Establish requirement ensuring inclusion of land grant-merced presence in third party agreements affecting water resources on our common lands.
- ◆ Continue to fund capital improvement projects in our small local communities.
- ◆ Continue fund the Land Grant Council to serve as a liaison between land grants and state and federal entities and in order to provide our land grants with direct technical assistance and access to legal and other professional services.
- ◆ Guaranteed revenue stream for land grants-mercedes.