

Ranchos-area water district gets \$50K for planning in Taos Valley

By Cody Hooks, chooks@taosnews.com

The Taos News, 5/17/2018

The water district that covers the Ranchos de Taos area south of town has received state money to create a master plan that will look at the future of water delivery in the Taos Valley.

The \$50,000 grant was awarded by the New Mexico Finance Authority, according to Bob Romero, chairman of El Valle de los Ranchos Water and Sanitation District. In a nutshell, the plan will explore how cooperatively and efficiently operating several independent water systems in the area would work.

“The idea of cooperation makes all the sense in the world,” said Romero. Even though most small mutual domestic water systems aren’t required to have a long-range master plan, he said it’s a good idea to plan for their future. “It’s time to re-evaluate and look at situations that exist now,” he said.

“The situation that currently exists in the Taos Valley and throughout Taos County is that we have multiple water entities that provide water to their customers in various communities, districts or municipalities. All of these state government entities operate independently... Their services areas sometimes have common borders, and in some cases, the service areas [overlap],” read a statement from the district.

“In order for us to plan to serve the entire district, we have to know what all the entities are doing,” Romero said.

The master plan will “quantify the needs and capacity” of the district “in concert with the diverse water systems and water suppliers in the area,” according to the release. This comprehensive review will mean taking stock of managerial, financial, maintenance and infrastructure needs, as well as the existing supply lines, wells, tanks, tank sites and water rights, according to Romero.

A Santa Fe firm, Souder, Miller and Associates, has been selected to complete the master plan by Dec. 21. After that, “all the participating water systems will determine how to move forward for the efficient operation of their systems either collaboratively or independently, whichever proves to be the preferred option,” read the release from the water district.

A meeting of all the water entities in the area will be held Tuesday (May 22) at the Llano Quemado Community Center.

If you go

What: Meeting of water entities for regional planning

When: Tuesday (May 22) at 6 p.m.

Where: Llano Quemado Community Center (8 Miranda Canyon Rd.)

Who: Contact the district at (575) 751-1700