

SJ-17
Navajo Settle

Definitions

“Project Area” means the communities in northwestern New Mexico described in the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project: Appraisal Level Designs and Cost Estimates, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, April 2002, and shown on USBR Drawing No. 1695-406-49, encompassing portions of San Juan, McKinley, and Rio Arriba counties in New Mexico which would receive Project water.

“Water Authority” means an inter-agency entity created by the Project Beneficiaries and Reclamation under State, Federal, and Tribal law to insure construction and/or ongoing operation maintenance, and repair of the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project.

Findings

Congress finds that:

- a) Groundwater supplies are inadequate to meet the sustainable needs of the Navajo communities, the Jicarilla Apache communities, and the City of Gallup within the Project Area;
- b) The lack of groundwater resources poses a current and growing threat to the public health and welfare to the communities within the Project Area;
- c) The only potential source of renewable water supplies for the Project Area is from the San Juan River;
- d) Renewable supplies vary depending on yearly weather patterns;
- e) The best method for ensuring adequate water supplies for communities in the Project Area is to build a regional water system which can deliver renewable surface supplies, and supplement surface depletions with groundwater depending on climatic conditions;
- f) The Project Beneficiaries will have an ongoing interest in ensuring their water supply from the Project; further, they will have an interest in keeping the Project costs to a minimum.

Authorization

- a) Construction, Operation, Maintenance, and Repair: The Secretary is authorized to enter into Cooperative Agreements for the construction and OM&R of the Project with a Water Authority *provided that*,
 - 1) the Secretary finds that the Water Authority is properly constructed under Federal, State, and Tribal law; and
 - 2) the Secretary finds that the Water Authority has the engineering capability to adequately oversee construction and maintenance of the Project.