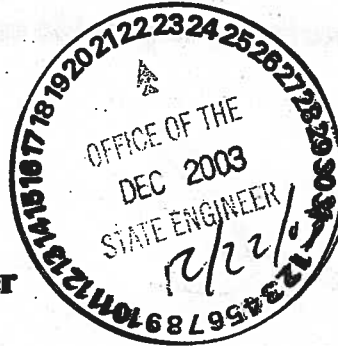


Douglas G. Smith

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December 16, 2003

John D'Antonio
New Mexico State Water Engineer
PO Box 25102
Santa Fe, NM 87504-5102



Dear Sir,

I attended the Public Meeting in Farmington, NM on December 15, 2003 on the proposed Navajo Nation Water Rights Settlement.

First I want to compliment the Navajo Nation and the State Water Engineer on an outstanding effort to settle water claims.

I along with the attendees wanted to hear the State Engineer state that in the negotiations with the Navajos that he was fulfilling his duty to protect existing water right shareholders and their priorities. I was disappointed that this was not covered. Perhaps this contributes to the general lack of trust in your office. The executive summary and hopefully the full document appear to have done just that. Is this a misinterpretation of the executive summary?

While not a part of this settlement, what about other outstanding claims for water rights for recreational and livestock use by Federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management within the San Juan Basin? How and when will these claims be settled?

Will there be sufficient storage capacity at Navajo Lake to provide the annual drawn down for a nearly 24% increase in water demand?

The tables showing priority would be better understood if you would show the dates for the Subordinated priorities for NIIP, Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and the Animas-La Plata Project.

Should the Fruitland-Cambridge Irrigation Project and the Hogback-Cudei Irrigation Project priority dates be 1868 or when the beneficial use began, what ever those dates may be?

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Douglas G. Smith". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Douglas G. Smith