

## Greetings!

The past few months have been a busy time for the Santa Fe Basin Water Association!

First and foremost, the Monitoring Agreement with the City of Santa Fe, over the Buckman Supplemental Wells, has been agreed to by all the parties – the Association and its partners, the City, and the State Engineer. The Agreement provides for a Monitoring Well to be drilled at the City's expense, and a larger Monitoring Program to be set up by the City to protect the private wells in the area of the Supplemental wells. Also, the seniority of those wells must be protected, and any impairment will be *assumed to be caused by the Buckman Well Field*.

This is a great agreement, in that it places the burden on the area's largest user to protect and mitigate any impairment caused by their taking water from the region. Now, the Monitoring Data will be on a public website, and the burden is on the City to prove they are *not* at fault. ***Representatives from the Office of the State Engineer, who will enforce the agreement, have called this the best monitoring program in the State.***

Of course, it would not have been possible without the support of you, our members. The Tano Road Association and the La Tierra Nueva Homeowners Association were actively involved at every step, and periodic calls to these groups helped keep our lawyers and hydrology experts on the job. We should all be proud to have this Agreement on the books, to be used as a model for the State.

It would be GREAT if this were the end of the story, but the pressure to deplete the aquifer will be with us as long as Santa Fe is a beautiful place to live. The population is going up and land is being filled with development. The Buckman Direct Diversion is supposed to take the pressure off the aquifer, at least for a few years, but some developers still find creative ways to accelerate the depletion of the water table. *And Santa Fe County still doesn't have a Comprehensive Water Plan that includes the public.*

***We will continue to advocate for protection of well owners and their water, and for a long-term sustainable use of all our water resources.***

## New Leadership

This past winter the SFBWA participated in a county-wide water meeting held at Unity Church just north of Santa Fe. The meeting was organized by Paul White of the Pojoaque Basin Water Alliance, with presentations by Chrys Fisher of the Tano Road Association, Carl Dickens of the La Cienega Valley Association and Andrea Streeper, SFBWA president.

The meeting was attended by 65 Santa Fe County residents concerned about the lack of regional water planning and effective water policy. The group included representation from Eldorado, Cerrillos, La Cieneguilla, San Marcos, La Cienega, Placitas and the Santa Fe Domestic Well Owners Association. There was uniform agreement of the need for a ***county wide organization*** to address those concerns.

On March 10 the group met again in the La Cienega Community Center. Andrea Streeper, President ran the meeting and discussed various water issues and challenges facing communities within Santa Fe County. There was a consensus at the meeting that

the “county wide organization” identified in the earlier meeting should be SFBWA. Andrea pointed out that an immediate challenge for the SFBWA was the need to replace the existing officers, since she would be leaving Santa Fe to attend law school in the fall, and that due to time constraints, the remaining three officers had asked to be replaced.

I’ll spare you the details of the next several weeks, but the short version is that new officers were appointed by the outgoing Board at a meeting on June 22. They are:

John McGill, President  
Paul White, Vice-President  
Carl Dickens, Secretary

This group of people had also been put forth at the March 10 meeting in La Cienega. The new Board has since then named Tom Blog to serve as Treasurer. The new leadership – along with many, many others from around the County – is determined to work for an open process for allocating water that protects the rights of *all* existing users.

### **What’s Next?**

- The Monitoring Agreement has to be finalized with the Court, and implemented. The City will probably not make the deadline of January 10, 2008 for the first Monitoring Report, but is working to get it implemented ASAP. We have to find a location for the new Monitoring Well, and shepherd it through the process of easements and agreements. We will need your help – people in the Tano Road and La Tierra Nueva areas – to identify a property owner willing to have a 4’ x’ 4’ concrete pad in some far corner of their property.
- We have protested, as did many of you, the County’s shotgun approach to creating a system of wells for their “utility”. They continue to operate in the shadow of secrecy, without public information or input. We will continue to work at both the political and legal fronts to bring their plans into the open.
- Similarly we have filed a protest against the application by Eldorado to drill a Supplemental Well. Eldorado claims that the new well will only be used to allow a relaxation of the stress on their existing infrastructure. Our protest allows us to stay abreast of the claims and findings in their Application.

We are all volunteers. Many thanks are due to Andrea, Chrys, Bill, Jim, and all the others whom I have not yet seen in action. But we will need legal and technical experts to advance our cases. The new leadership will continue to press for transparent planning and decision making, at both the City and County levels. But the Santa Fe area will continue to grow, the aquifer will continue to be mined, and without the *work of all of us*, inequities will continue to arise.

Please continue your support, and enlist your neighbors in this fight. If you haven’t already done so, go to our website, [nmwaterinfo.org](http://nmwaterinfo.org), and register your email address.

Thanks again,

John McGill  
President, Santa Fe Basin Water Association