

Editor:

Thank you for your August 6th article (Permit to Pump Water Denied) about the State Engineer's dismissal of the application filed by the Augustin Plains Ranch to pump 54,000 acre feet of water a year out of the San Augustin Basin. We and our clients are grateful for your coverage of the issue, and we believe that it is an important one for all New Mexicans.

We would like to take this opportunity to correct one statement made by Michel Jichlinski, the spokesman for the Ranch. Mr. Jichlinski strongly implied that no one is currently using the water in the San Augustin Basin and that no one cares if the Ranch appropriates that water. In fact, the Ranch's efforts to appropriate water from the Basin (which have been ongoing since 2007) have been protested by hundreds of people who live in the Basin and who use the water there. His assertions that the water in the Basin is an unused resource and that no one cares about its use have no basis in fact.

We also would like to provide one piece of information that we believe should have been mentioned in your article. You mentioned only the motion for summary judgment filed by the New Mexico Environmental Law Center. The Catron County Board of County Commissioners, which was represented by Lorraine Hollingsworth and Pete Domenici, Jr of the Domenici Law Firm in Albuquerque, also filed a motion for summary judgment. Since the State Engineer granted both motions, we believe that the County and its attorneys ought to be recognized also.