

Many of you already know that the Bernalillo County Commission has approved the Santolina Master Plan, Level A (Level B and Level C will refine the general provisions in the plan). Subsequently the Commission also approved the Development Agreement. As all of you know, the Augustin Plains Ranch LLC has been defeated twice on the basis of no "beneficial use". Santolina could easily become beneficial use.

For anyone interested in a description of what happened here is a link to the story:

<http://nmpoliticalreport.com/4284/santolina-master-plan-approved-legal-challenges-ahead/> The New Mexico Environmental Law Center is fighting the Santolina decision in court, and they are also fighting to stop the Augustin Plains Ranch LLC's attempt to mine water.

Carol

Below for those interested is a well-written description of the water situation in the Middle Rio Grande written by the leader of the opposition to the Santolina project. Keep in mind that the State Engineer has designated the Augustin Plains as part of the Middle Rio Grande basin.

Santolina Master Plan: The water battle continues

By Dr. Virginia Necochea, Director, Center for Social Sustainable Systems (CESOSS)

The entire state of New Mexico should be concerned about what the Santolina Master Plan represents - a disenfranchising of the larger public in issues that will directly impact them. Almost two years have passed in this process and it has been evident at every hearing that the community, especially those connected to agricultural and acequia traditions, have remained largely opposed to this development. One of the main reasons is and will continue to be regarding the question of water.

The Santolina developers, the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA), and including some of the commissioners themselves have publicly stated that the 14,380 acre feet per year of water that would be required to support Santolina is not a concern.

First of all let's put this amount of water into perspective. The amount of water needed by Santolina at build-out would be the equivalent to a new Rio Rancho, 150% of Santa Fe's water supply for an equivalent population, or 300% of Intel's water supply during its peak period^{1[1]}.

During the May 28th hearing, Norm Gaume testified and submitted an insightful report regarding continued water concerns with Santolina. In his report Mr. Gaume states, "Santolina's additional depletions would substantially increase the difficulties of New Mexico's Rio Grande Compact compliance, the risk of non-compliance, the ABCWUA's associated risk of curtailment of its junior water rights, and the impact of such a curtailment on ABCWUA's existing customers. Others in the Middle Rio Grande also would be adversely affected." It doesn't take a water expert to realize that the impacts from Santolina would be greatly felt by especially those whose livelihoods depend on water.