

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER FOR THE FUTURE OF RURAL
3 COMMUNITIES IN TAOS COUNTY AND SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF
4 A STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND ACTION PLAN ENABLING THE
5 DIVESTMENT OF FORMER QUESTA MINE WATER RIGHTS FOR THE BENEFIT
6 OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

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8 WHEREAS, the former Questa mine possesses adjudicated
9 water rights; and

10 WHEREAS, the former Questa mine permanently ceased
11 mining operations in 2014; and

12 WHEREAS, the communities of Taos county need access to
13 water rights for their economic development and poverty
14 reduction efforts; and

15 WHEREAS, the Questa economic development fund identified
16 water resources as a key component of economic transition,
17 diversification and poverty reduction in its 2015 economic
18 development plan; and

19 WHEREAS, the former Questa mine and the Questa economic
20 development fund have worked in partnership since the
21 completion of the 2015 economic development plan to transfer
22 Questa mine water rights for the benefit of the community;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, the Questa economic development fund
25 subsequently initiated project development in the areas of

1 affordable housing, light manufacturing, local sustainable
2 agriculture, food security and renewable energy; and

3 WHEREAS, the above-listed projects require access to
4 local water resources; and

5 WHEREAS, the office of the state engineer has the
6 authority to work in partnership with the Questa economic
7 development fund and the former Questa mine to develop a
8 stakeholder engagement and action plan that supports
9 continued environmental remediation and reclamation of the
10 former mine site while enabling the former mine to
11 concurrently divest of water rights for the benefit of local
12 communities;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
14 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the
15 importance of wise water management and administration to
16 promote economic development and poverty reduction in rural
17 communities be affirmed, while noting that a lack of capacity
18 and resources in state agencies may have hampered their
19 ability to fulfill the agencies' potential to support these
20 efforts; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the development of the
22 stakeholder engagement and action plan that supports
23 environmental remediation and reclamation of the former mine
24 site while concurrently enabling the divestment of former
25 Questa mine water rights for the benefit of local communities

1 be deemed beneficial; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the stakeholder engagement
3 and action plan be a collaborative partnership between the
4 state engineer and representatives of the former Questa mine
5 and the Questa economic development fund; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
7 transmitted to the governor, the state engineer, the
8 interstate stream commission, representatives of the former
9 Questa mine, the mayor of the village of Questa, the Questa
10 economic development fund and the board of county
11 commissioners of Taos county. _____

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