

July 1, 2025

SAN JOAQUÍN DEL RÍO DE CHAMA LAND GRANT (AKA CAÑÓN DE CHAMA LAND GRANT)

AUGUST 1, 1806

- A. On August 1, 1806, twenty-eight families were granted by Governor Joaquín Alencaster the San Joaquín Del Río de Chama Land Grant. The procession to formalize the merced was done by Alcalde Manuel García de la Mora de La Canda de Santa Cruz.
- B. Description:
 - On the north, the Cebola Valley; on the east, the boundaries of the Martínez Grant; on the south, the Capulin River; and on the west, the Segita Blanca.
- C. In 1832 Juan de Jesús de Chacón filed a petition in Governor Antonio Chaves' office asking him to enjoin the Alcalde of the Town of Abiquiú from evicting them from the lands upon which they had settled in 1830. It seems that Alcalde José María Ortiz had allocated and placed Chacón and two associates in possession of certain tracts located within the Cañón de Chama Grant as colonists under the Colonization Law. However, the original grantees had protested and the then Alcalde of the Town of Abiquiú, Juan Antonio Gallago, had taken the position that such action was illegal and that they were trespassers and intruders. The question was referred by the governor to the attorney general of New Mexico, Antonio Barreiro, who made an extensive investigation into the matter, and, on May 6, 1832, held that the Cañón de Chama Grant was valid and that distributions made by Alcalde Ortiz should be annulled.
- D. The grantees continuously occupied and used the grant except for a number of occasions when it was temporarily abandoned due to Indian hostilities. In spite of the immense size of the grant, only a narrow strip of land lying within the Cañón de Chama was cultivated but livestock was pastured upon the adjoining mesas. By 1861 the grant was owned by more than four hundred persons who claimed under and through the original grantees. On January 3, 1861, the claimants submitted a petition to the Surveyor General seeking the confirmation of their title to the 184,320 acres which they estimated to be embraced within the boundaries of the

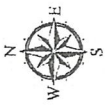
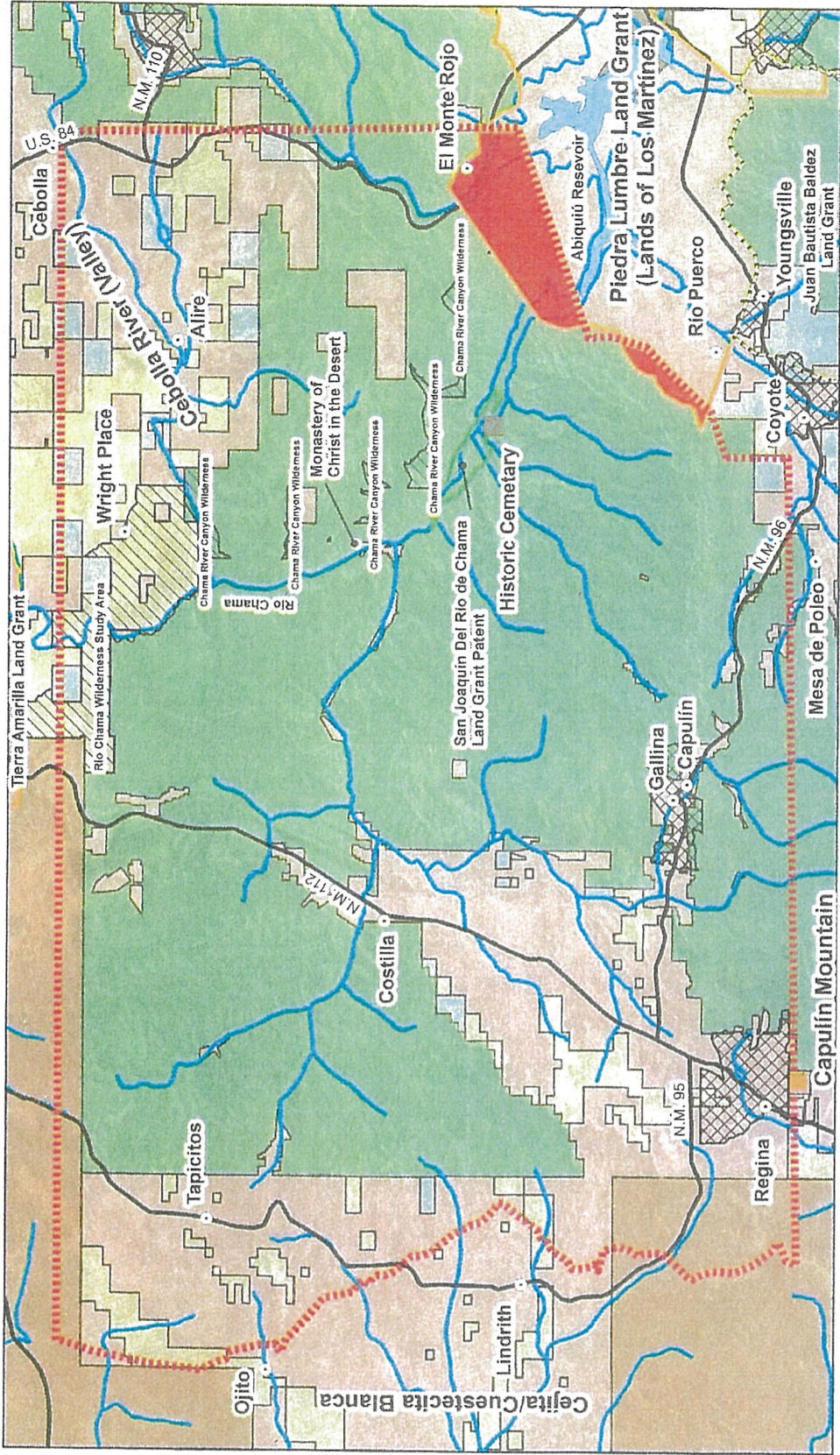
grant. Surveyor General James K. Proudfit, after carefully considering the record, recommended⁴ to Congress on December 17, 1872, that the grant be recognized and confirmed as a community grant. A preliminary survey of the grant was made by Deputy Surveyor Stephen McElroy in May 1878. The McElroy Survey, to the surprise of everyone, showed that 472,736.95 acres were embraced within the boundaries set forth in the grant papers. Between 1870 and 1880 Thomas B. Catron had acquired most of the interests in the land grant

- E. In 1886 the Surveyor General Proudfit questioned the validity of the grant beyond its individual allotments (Suretes).
- F. In 1887 John Potter and Valentine Walbran Chapman of England enter into an agreement to buy interest into the Rio Arriba Land and Cattle Company Limited (Owned by Thomas B. Catron). Mr. Potter stated in his deposition that he had already made improvements to the land and had tenant farmers on his property (Sharecroppers).
- G. The CLPC (Court of Private Land Claims) on September 24, 1894 (Citing US v. Sandoval 1897) restricts claim to individual allotments.
- H. In 1901 individual allotments in the Cañón de Chama were surveyed 1499 acres.
- I. The patent to the 1499 acres patented were issued to T.D Burns from Parkview NM (Close Associate of Tomas B. Catron) not the land grant.
- J. The San Joaquín Del Río de Chama Land Grants communities (Pueblos) with in its boundaries as of 1897. Canon de Chama, Capulín, Llaves (Costilla), Regina (San Jose), Tapicitos, Cebolla, Canjilon and Ojito.
- K. The San Joaquín Del Río de Chama Land Grant maintained a board of elders from 1897 through 2006, until the grant became a Political Subdivision of the State of New Mexico.
- L. Based on GIS acres that are held by federal agencies US Forest (Service Carson and Santa Fe National) 281,420 acres, or an estimated 59.65% percent of the grant. Bureau of Land Management 36,532.23 acres, or an estimate 7.74 of the grant. State lands of New Mexico were not added into the equation or private help properties. Total held by federal agencies is 317,952 .23 acres, or 67.39 of the grant.

Sources:

1. Selections From J.J Bowden's Papers, "Private Land Claims in the Southwest", Published by the New Mexico Land Grant Council 2018.
2. The Rio Arriba Land Cattle Company vs The United States, Supreme Court of the United States 1894 No 854.
3. Pap and total acres held by the federal government by UNM Land Grant Studies Program

San Joaquín Del Río de Chama Land Grant Historic Boundaries



UNM LGSP
4/23/2012

This is a reproduction of historic surveys.
This is not a survey.
The accuracy of this map is relative to that of the information used to derive it.
Ownership is based on open-source BLM shapefiles.

Ownership Classes

- Forest Service
- Dept. of Defense
- Private
- BLM
- Trust
- State
- Wilderness & Wilderness Study Areas

Boundaries and Features

- 1801 Survey Patented Boundaries (1,432.82 ac.)
- 1878 Survey Historic Boundaries (471,758 ac.)
- Piedra Lumbre-San Joaquín del Río de Chama Overlap (8,397.8 ac.)
- Juan Bautista Baldez Hill Bound.
- Boundaries of Patented Land Grants
- Census 2010 Disaggregated Place
- Abiquiú Reservoir
- Water Channel
- Road
- Historic Landmark
- Physical Feature
- Populated Place

