

Water and Natural Resources Committee

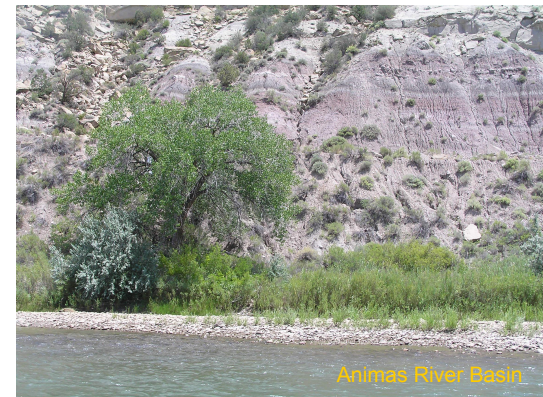


**San Juan Water
Commission
AUGUST 8, 2023**



HOW IT BEGAN

- Local pioneers noticed that there was great land in the La Plata Valley without water.
- Noticed water in the Animas River without great land.
- In 1908 members of the Taylor family traveled to Washington D.C. to seek funding to move water from the Animas river to the La Plata River.
- The Taylor family received \$8,000 (\$264,500.00) for a study on how to move the water.



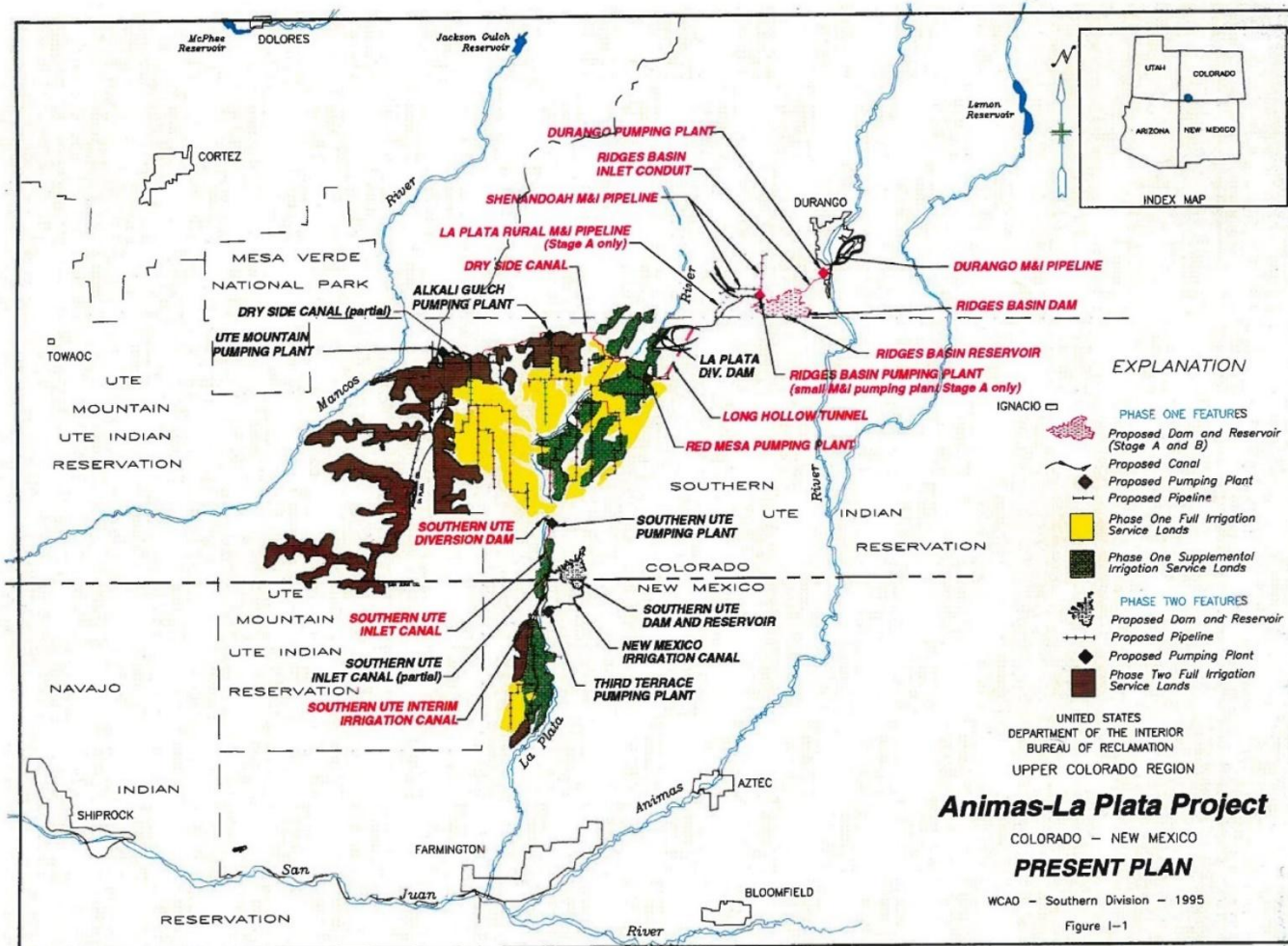
W. R. GIBSON PHOTO CAPTURES CREW PERFORMING RIPRAP WORK ON THE ANIMAS RIVER TO DIVERT WATER INTO AN IRRIGATION DITCH.

ALP AUTHORIZED

- September 26, 1968 (Public Law 90-537), authorized ALP.
- Project Consisted of:
 - Howardsville Reservoir near Silverton
 - Hay Gulch Reservoir 25 miles west of Durango
 - Meadows Reservoir 48 miles of canals and tunnels and a diversion of the Animas River at Taft, halfway between Durango and Silverton



ALP Authorized on September 26, 1968 (Public Law 90-537)



FIRST REPAYMENT CONTRACT

No. 0-07-40-R

- Project construction cost to SJWC was \$12.8 million to \$16.64 million for delivery of 30,800 AFY.
- SJWC pays operation, maintenance and replacement costs (Article 10.).
- SJWC may use water supply subject to State and Federal rules and regulations before the ALP is built (Article 11.).
- Judicial review required.

IT ALMOST FAILED

- Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund sued Reclamation regarding the possible amendment of the Cost Sharing Agreement.
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Ute Mountain Tribe and the Animas-La Plata Water Conservancy District sued the EPA regarding the failure in the Federal Trust Responsibility related to the ALP.
- The House of Representatives failed to pass the 1998 ALP appropriation 221 to 200, the Senate passed the appropriation 65 to 35 and the appropriation was sustained in Conference Committee.
- Interior Secretary Babbitt and Governor Romer of Colorado jointly convened an ALP discussion to seek solutions to the delay beginning in 1996.
- In 1998, Clinton Administration proposed a plan consisting of a structural element (Ridges Basin Reservoir) and non-structural element (\$40 million to the Colorado Ute Tribes for water rights).

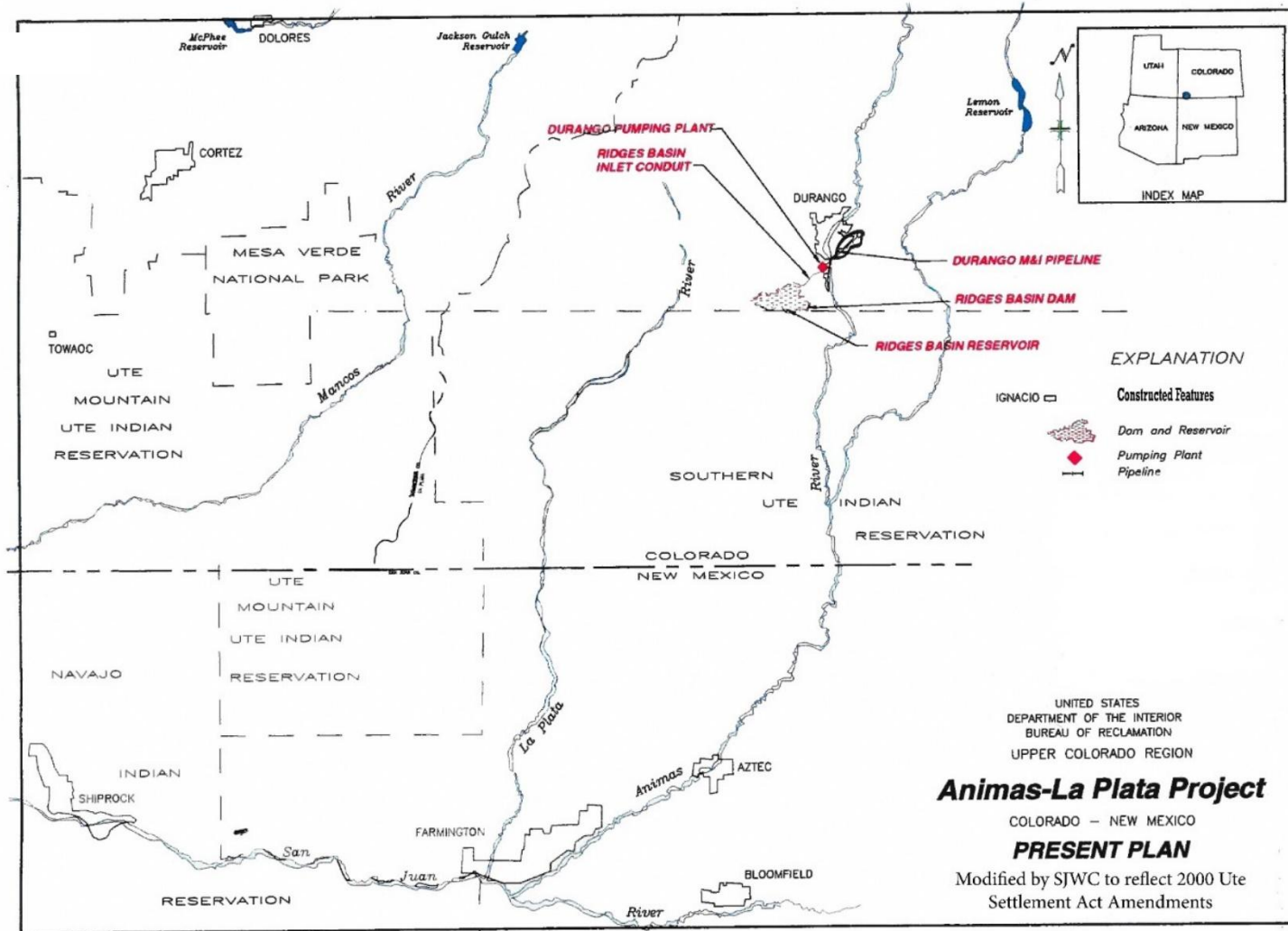
FINAL EIS

- In January 1999, the Clinton Administration announced its intent to conduct a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS), which was completed on July 14, 2000. Secretary Bruce Babbitt signed the Record of Decision on September 25, 2000.
 - a. The preferred alternative included the Administration Proposal, but added a conservation pool to Ridges Basin Reservoir for a total capacity of 120,000 acre feet. It also included the replacement municipal pipeline to Shiprock.
 - b. The FSEIS found that this alternative does the best job of meeting the needs of the region including setting the Ute claims and providing M&I water to non-structural proposal offered by opponents in the Romer process.
 - c. In almost every year, there would be an ample water supply for the ALP, and fully operational Navajo Indian Irrigation Project, existing farmers on the Animas River, and the endangered fish. In those rare years of short supply, the ALP beneficiaries would yield to the senior right holders to ensure their needs are met. In a few years (1 in 25), it would be doubtful if the river could meet all the needs listed plus the Navajo-Gallup Pipeline.

FINAL LEGISLATIVE AUTHORIZATION

- Senate Bill 2508, to amend the Colorado Ute Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 1988, was developed during 1999 and generally incorporated the elements of the FSEIS which was subsequently approved in the Record of Decision in 2000. The legislation, approved by the U.S. Senate on October 25, 2000 by an 85 to 5 vote, passed into law on December 21, 2000 (Title III of P.L. 106-554 Appendix D).
- The legislation (Senate Bill 2508) included a directive to the Secretary of Interior to transfer the Secretary's interest in NM Permit No. 2883 (the original permit of ALP) to the New Mexico beneficiaries, which include the SJWC, but excluding the Navajo Nation (at their request).
- The Repayment Contract between the San Juan Water Commission and Bureau of Reclamation, January 8, 1990 (Contract No. 0-07-40-R1080), was renegotiated.^[1] The Amended Repayment Contract, March 5, 2002 (No. 02-WC-40-8090), in addition to allowing an up-front payment of capital costs, secures the continued benefit to the citizens of San Juan County of allowing use of the ALP water before construction is completed.

Final Legislative Authorization – Senate Bill 2508 – Year 2000.

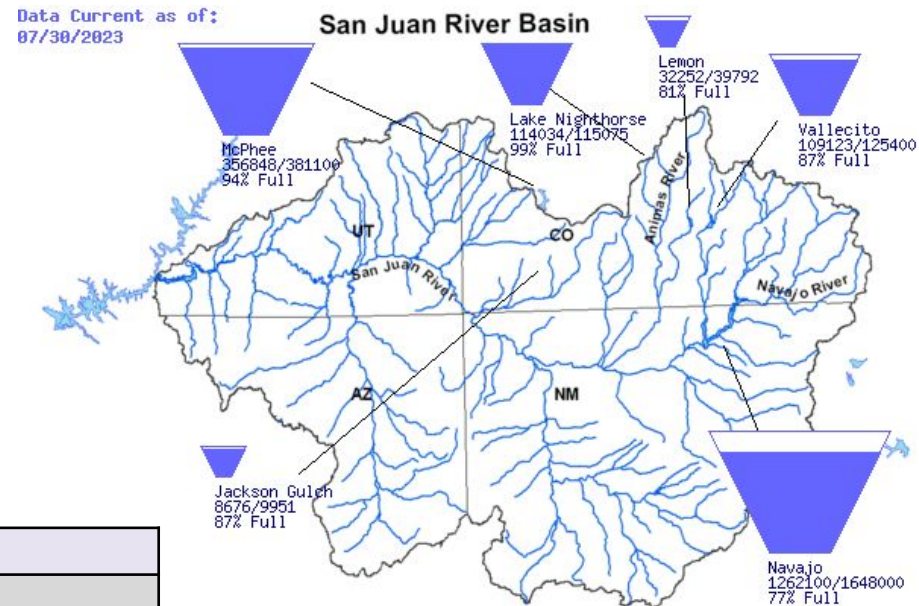


AMENDED REPAYMENT CONTRACT

- Project construction cost to SJWC is \$6.9 million.
- SJWC pays operation, maintenance and replacement costs (Article 10.).
- Creation of Project Operating Committee
- SJWC may use water supply subject to State and Federal rules and regulations before the ALP is built (Article 11.).
- Approval to begin construction was granted in October 30, 2001 and the SJWC began, consistent with the Amended Repayment Contract, paying construction cost in advance in order to reduce the cost of the project to the taxpayers of San Juan County by avoiding “interest during construction.” No state or other funding has been sought or used for the SJWC portion of the ALP capital cost.

Construction Begins April 2002

- Lake Nighthorse began filling on May 4, 2009, and filled for the first time on June 29, 2011.



RIDGES BASIN DAM	
Structural Height	270 feet
Crest Length	1,640 feet
Releases	110 cfs with periodic peaks up to 200 cfs
LAKE NIGHTHORSE	
Active Storage Capacity	115,075 acre-feet
Inactive Storage Capacity	8,466 acre-feet
Total Storage Capacity	123,541 acre-feet
Total Water Surface	1,490 acres
DURANGO PUMPING PLANT	
Maximum Dynamic Lift	550 feet
Capacity	287 cubic feet per second
RIDGES BASIN INLET CONDUIT	
Length	2.1 miles
Capacity	287 cubic feet per second
NAVAJO NATION MUNICIPAL PIPELINE	
Length	30 miles approx.
Initial Capacity	12.9 cubic feet per second

Animas – La Plata Project



Durango Pumping Plant



Internal workings of the Durango Pumping Plant



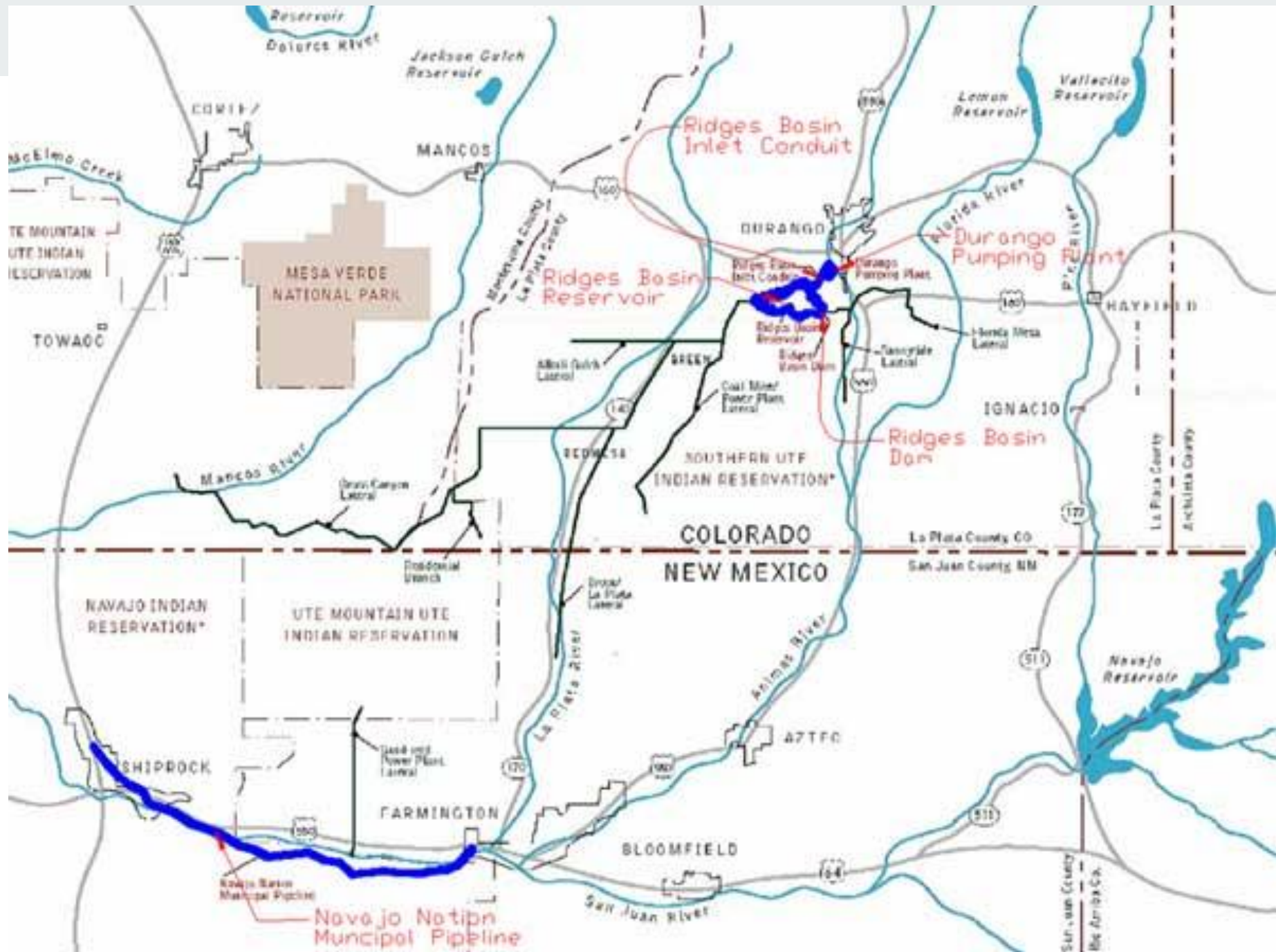
First Fill



Ridges Basin Dam - Lake Nighthorse Reservoir



Photo by: David Gates - 08/21/2008



ALP Operations Maintenance & Replacement Association

2009 – On March 4, 2009 the project sponsors formed the ALP OM&R Association through a intergovernmental agreement to assume operational responsibility for the Colorado project features.

2013 – The Colorado project features were transferred from construction status to operation and maintenance status in March 2013.

Project Sponsors:

- Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
- La Plata Conservancy District (NM)
- San Juan Water Commission (NM)
- Navajo Nation (NM)
- Colorado Water Conservation Board
 - La Plata Archuleta Water District
- Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority
 - City of Durango
 - Animas-La Plata Water Conservancy District
 - Lake Durango Water Authority

SAN JUAN WATER COMMISSION'S PURPOSE

- In 1986 primary goal - Animas-La Plata Water Supply
- Protect and utilize future and existing water rights and water resources of the members which are allocated to the Commission for their needs as a group. To ensure every citizen in San Juan County has a reliable water supply
- Provide for equitable distribution of water rights and untreated water resources allocated to the Commission
- Provide a mechanism to acquire, finance, protect and conserve additional water rights and water resources
- Provide a mechanism for implementation of plans or projects with reference to water rights, rights to untreated water

SAN JUAN WATER COMMISSION

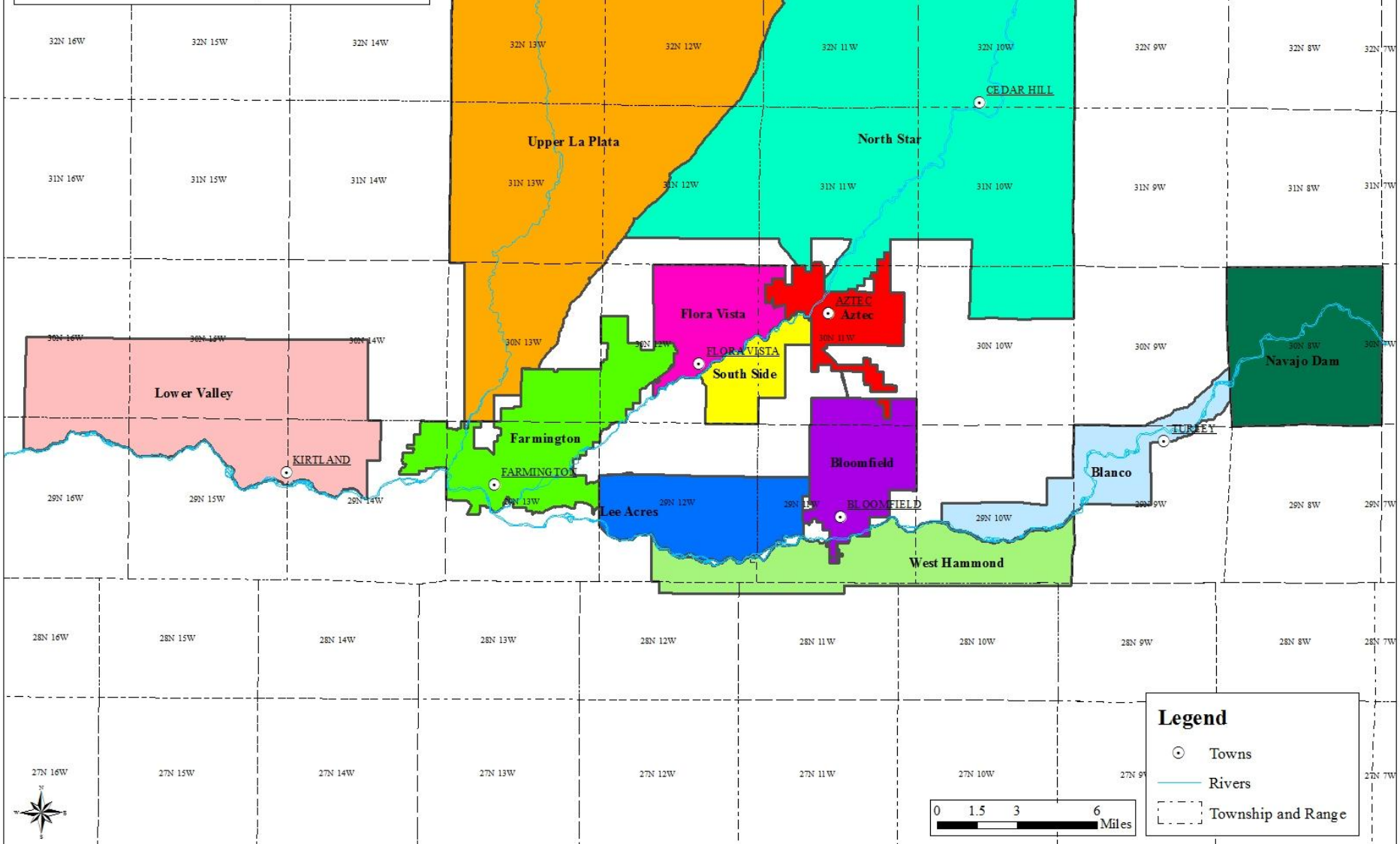
Member Entities and Departments

- San Juan Water Commission was formed in 1986 pursuant to the Joint Powers Agreements Act (Agreement)[11-1-1 to 11-1-7 NMSA 1978]
- Executive Director: Aaron Chavez
- Parties: City of Aztec, City of Bloomfield, City of Farmington, San Juan County and San Juan Rural Water Users Association
- San Juan Water Commission is composed of five Commissioners appointed by the parties of the Agreement. In addition, this includes one Alternate appointee for each member

SJWC - Continued

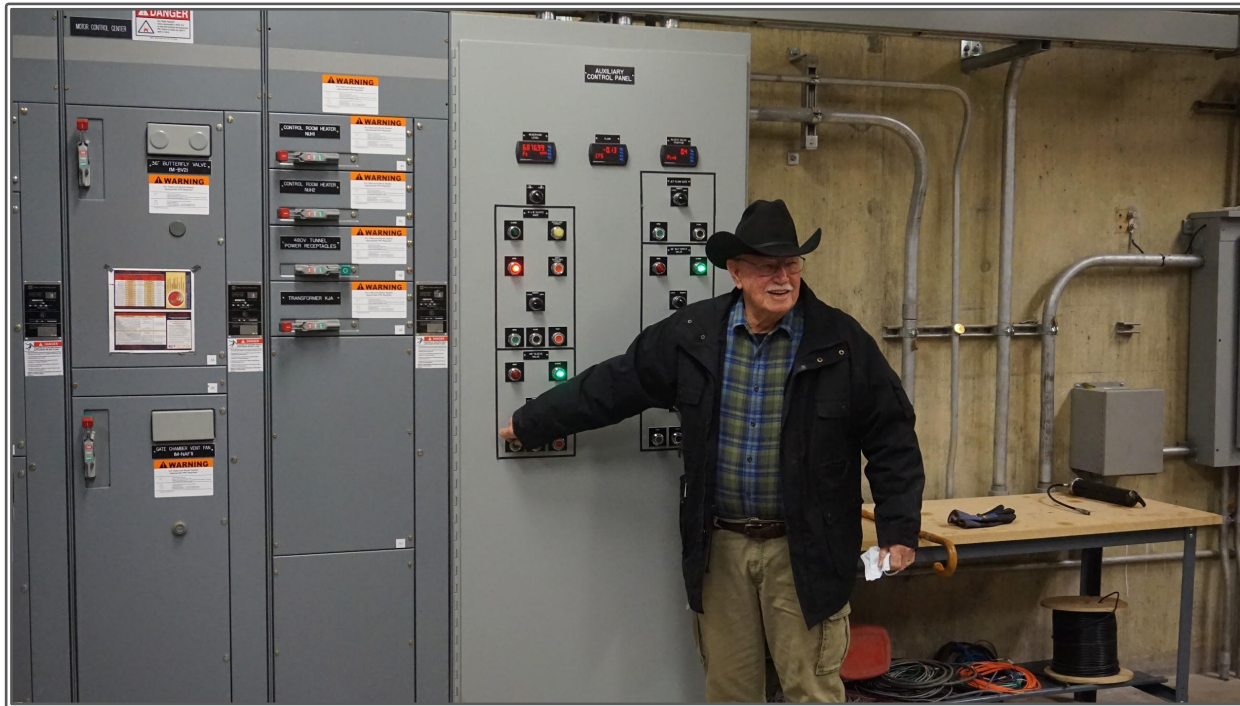
- San Juan Rural Water Users Association
Blanco, Flora Vista, Lower Valley, Navajo Dam, NorthStar, Southside, Upper La Plata and Lee-Hammond.
- Departments, Programs and Projects
Water Resources, GIS, IT/Web, Administrative Services, ALP OM&R Association, Water Quality, Endangered Species (RIP), Regional and State Water Planning, Invasive Species, Top Water Banking, Water Leases/Economic Development, Water Development, Conservation, and Infrastructure Projects in San Juan County

SJWC Member-Entity Service Areas



First Release

- The ALP OM&R Association began its first release from Lake Nighthorse on March 15, 2021 at 8:00 A.M.



San Juan Water Commission made the request for release from Animas-La Plata project on behalf of Seven Member Entities



- The request was for 410 af for 5 days
- 44 cfs for 3 days
- 38 cfs for 2 days
- North Star-1.6 cfs/18 af
- City of Aztec/Southside 5 cfs/30 af
- Flora Vista-0.4 cfs/4 af
- City of Farmington-25 cfs 248 af
- Lower Valley/Upper La Plata 1.2 cfs/12 af
- The release went perfectly. Now we know we can get our water from the ALP.

Ridges Basin Outlet and Basin Creek



8 hours 15 minute travel time from Ridges Basin Dam to the mouth of Basin Creek (475' elevation loss)



Results

- 44 cfs released from reservoir with 41 cfs making it to the Animas River
- State of Colorado assigned a 5% loss on that 41 cfs to the New Mexico State line. Resulting in 38.9 cfs being available at the New Mexico state line
- The Colorado Department of Water Resources kept great communication channels open and informed all stakeholders of all data collected on a real time basis by means of a Google doc
- The New Mexico State Engineer's Office never assigned a transit loss to this water making the full 38.9 cfs available for diversion in New Mexico
- All gaging stations including USGS and CO/NM ditch diversions were monitored and no significant diversions were observed



Questions?