

# Rio Chama Water Sharing During Water Shortages

The NMOSE/ISC worked with leaders of the Rio Chama Acequia Association and Acéquia Norteñas on the Rio Chama to voluntarily share drought reduced water supplies while allowing San Juan Chama water to flow downstream to its owners.

## 2013 UPDATE

Drought reduced the water available to Rio Chama Acequia Association (RCAA) and Acéquia Norteñas (AN) to a near historic low from June through August 2013.

Members of the Rio Chama Acequia association hold water rights dating back to 1600. They elected to rotate their irrigation schedule to maximize what little water was available so that all the 17 plus member ditches would have some water.

Members of the AN hold water rights dating back to the mid-1800's. In 2012, the Asociación de Acéquia Norteñas de Rio Arriba participated in a voluntary curtailment test of their diversions to help assist NMOSE/ISC staff in determining the effect on downstream flows.

This summer, most of the water in the river downstream of Abiquiu Reservoir was San Juan Chama Project water imported to the Rio Grande from the San Juan Basin. Therefore, that water was not available to Rio Chama irrigators.

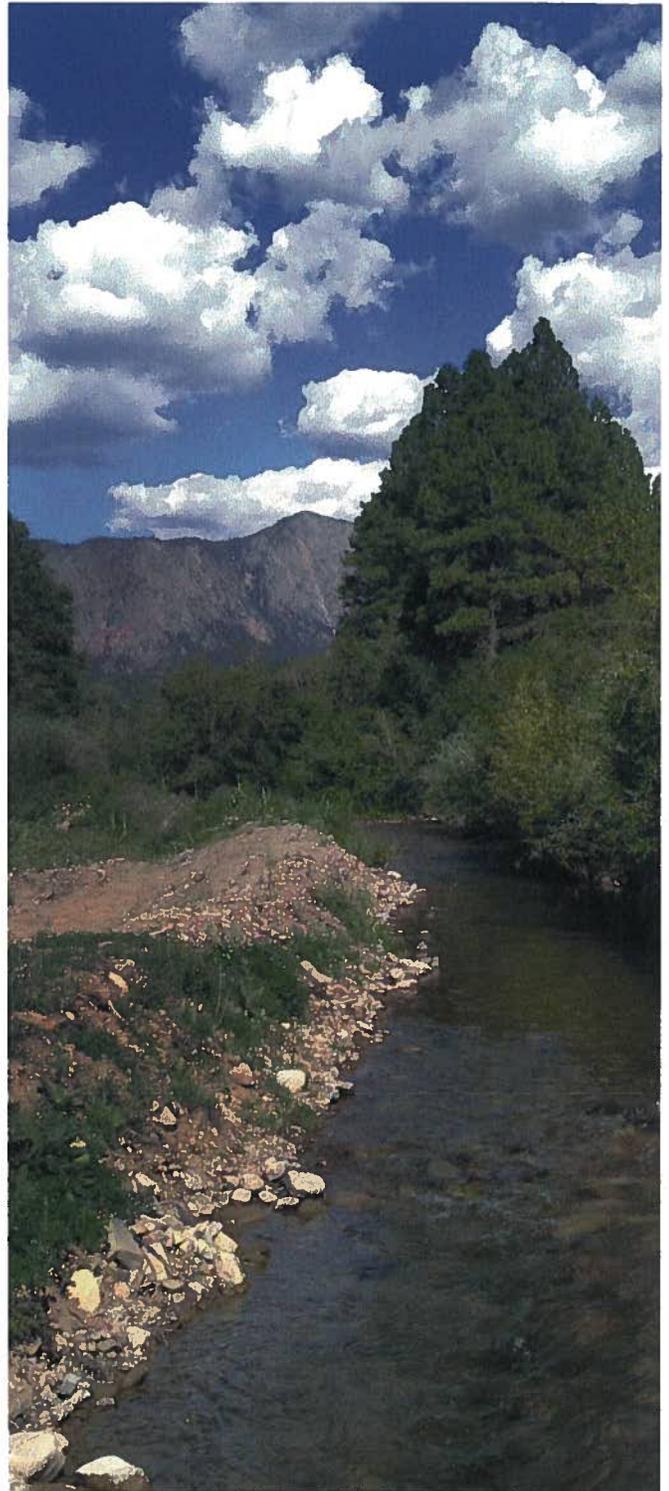
RCAA and AN hosted separate public meetings to determine a way to share the little water available and identified plans.

For RCAA, the plan included shutting off ditches for certain time periods each week and reducing diversions during the remaining time to about half the normal amounts.

For AN, the plan included reducing diversions in an attempt to keep certain amounts of water flowing downstream for the RCAA and to gather more data on flows and diversions.

Both groups are coordinating to purchase San Juan Chama Project water from various San Juan Chama Project contractors to offset their use of water in times of future drought.

The RCAA, working with the NMOSE/ISC staff and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, has successfully used purchased San Juan Chama Project water to offset consumption of water in excess of that available to them and plans to continue to do so in the future.



Brazos Acequia August 2013

# Río Chama Basin

