

Asociación de Acéquias Norteñas de Rio Arriba

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June 29, 2024

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Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources

Honorable Cliff Bentz, Chairman, Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries, Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Request for hearing on H.R. 8685 Ohkay Owingeh Rio Chama Water Rights Settlement Act of 2024.

Dear Chairmen Westerman and Bentz:

On behalf of the Asociación de Acéquias Norteñas de Rio Arriba, I want to express our strong and enthusiastic support for the Rio Chama water rights settlement, and we respectfully request a hearing on this important legislation. Our organization represents 545 individual private individuals and families irrigating nearly 8,000 acres in the upper Rio Chama, whose water rights and traditional uses will be protected by the settlement, if enacted.

If this settlement is approved, it will be a monumental achievement for our part of Northern New Mexico. The settlement is comprehensive and resolves major issues on the river. In addition to settling the Pueblo water rights, the agreement comprises water sharing terms that benefit all water users on the Rio Chama, including the 80 community non-tribal ditches that rely on this vital source for their continued existence and vitality.

In addition to greater security in water supply and preservation of our historic way of life and cultural practices, the settlement will generate substantial economic benefits up and down the valley, increasing business activity and employment opportunities.

This is a well-crafted, inclusive and comprehensive settlement. Residents of the Rio Chama Valley are greatly encouraged and very supportive of this settlement. The Acéquias Norteñas respectfully urge you to help us get this bill enacted into law.

Very Truly Yours,


Antonio Manzanares, President

copy: Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva
Honorable Jared Huffman