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## HOW A SMALL TOWN IS DEALING WITH DROUGHT CONDITIONS

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### ABSTRACT

Most small towns in New Mexico face serious water supply problems. These problems range from lack of water supply, to lack of infrastructure, to pollution of the supply source. The one thing that is common among all small towns is a lack of financial resources to deal with the problems.

The lack of water supply can be caused by drought, by changing watershed conditions, by growth or lack of planning for that growth, or by a water supply that was expected to last forever coming to an end. Some small towns have water rights problems. However, most have “wet water” supply problems. One solution is for the water to run uphill to the money. All we need is the money.

Infrastructure problems and pollution problems are the same. There are remedies if there is capital.

One of the major problems facing many communities today is the administrative process involving appropriation of water, or transfer of water to municipal use. The current policy of allowing anyone and their dog fifty miles from the point in question to protest and have standing in the process is killing municipalities (especially small ones). This must be changed.

There are several possible solutions to the money problem available:

1. Municipalities must charge for the true cost of water.
2. The Water Trust Fund needs to dedicate a large portion of its funding to small municipalities.
3. The State Legislature needs to realize the problems facing these communities and take the steps to help them.