

Judge denies pumping of water from the San Agustin Basin

Story by Jessica Carranza Pino, Editor | Apr 5, 2024

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Judge Roscoe Woods, Seventh Judicial District Court Judge, denied the application from the Augustin Plains Ranch LLC to pump 54,000 acre feet of water a year from the San Agustin Plains basin at the Catron County Court house this morning, April 5, in Reserve, New Mexico.

There was standing room only with over one hundred people present at the hearing in protest as lawyers shared their arguments for almost five hours.

The State Engineer, the Carol Pittman protestants group, the Catron county board of commissioners and the community protestants argued the application was speculative, had no commitments from an end user and lacked an imperative necessity for the water, among other arguments.

In their defense, the Augustin Plains LLC's lawyer argued there was a demand, a thorough proposal of plans and listed six counties as the targeted end users of the water.

The San Agustin Basin, about fifty miles west of Socorro, supplies water to northwestern Socorro and northeastern Catron County. The first drilling application was submitted by Augustin Plains Ranch, LLC in 2007.

*Editor's note: a detailed article will be available pending a written order from a judge.