



ROBERT BROWMAN/JOURNAL

U.S. 60 runs through the San Augustin Plains near one of the radio telescopes that make up the Very Large Array. Seventh Judicial District Judge Matthew Reynolds on Thursday dismissed an application for a permit by a company to pump water from the plains to municipalities along the Rio Grande.

Judge rejects water pipeline application

Augustin Plains Ranch unsure what next step will be

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BY THERESA DAVIS AND SCOTT TURNER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITERS

A proposal to pump billions of gallons of water from a closed aquifer in Catron County to municipalities along the Rio Grande appears dead — for now.

Seventh Judicial District Judge Matthew Reynolds on Thursday approved motions for summary judgment dismissing Augustin Plains Ranch's application for a permit to provide cities and businesses with water from the remnants of a lake under the San Augustin Plains.

It is the latest chapter in a 12-year legal battle that has seen the ranch have two permits dismissed by the State Engineer's Office. Those dismissals have been upheld through the courts.

See **JUDGE** >> **A6**



Datil-area resident James Hall surveys the area near his well on land surrounded by Augustin Plains Ranch, which sought a permit to pump water from the aquifer on which Hall's land sits. A judge ruled against the effort on Thursday.