



Rural Development • Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program

Southern NM Communities Excited About New Wastewater System

“I’ve been working since 1978 helping communities with their water and wastewater projects and I’ve never seen so much excitement over the Mesquite/Brazito Sewer System Improvements Project,” said Karen Nichols the project manager for the Lower Rio Grande Public Works Authority.

She reports residents from both communities attend meetings to show their support and they also call all the time to check on the status of the project.

Nichols also stated the residents of both communities have told her they are looking forward to the completion of the project because they’ll be getting rid of their septic tanks which will do away with the possibility of groundwater contamination and by doing so their property values will go up.



Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority receives \$14.2 million to install a wastewater system in Brazito and Mesquite, NM.

When completed the sewer line project will cost over \$14.2 million dollars to build.

Sandra Alarcón the loan specialist for USDA Rural Development from our Las Cruces, NM office reports, “This project is one of the largest financed by USDA Rural Development in Doña Ana County in recent times.”

The funding for this project was made with a \$6,189,000 loan and a \$8,030,000 Colonias grant. The Colonias set-a-side funding was created by Congress to help rural poor communities located close to the U.S./Mexico border access federal funding for infrastructure projects. A Colonia is an unincorporated rural community where residents have high unemployment and low income located within 150 miles from the border.

Alarcón also reports because this project was so big, the entire Colonia allocation assigned to the State of New Mexico for the 2018 fiscal year was used to fund the construction of this sewage delivery system.

When construction is completed more than 76,000 feet of sewer pipeline will have been installed to connect to Doña Ana County’s South Central Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Construction of the project is expected to start in mid 2019 and will take another year to complete.

Obligation Amount: \$6,189,000 loan \$8,030,000 Colonia Grant for a total of: \$14,219,000

Date of Obligation: March 15, 2018

Congressional District: Representative Pearce, District 3; Senators Udall and Heinrich

Partners: Lower Rio Grande Public Water Works Authority (\$54,800 to pay for connection fees)

Demographics: 1,088 residential and 20 commercial users within the two communities will benefit from the project

Impact: The funding will allow the two communities to connect to a modern wastewater treatment facility while at the same time doing away with individual septic system which will decrease the possibility of groundwater contamination.