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Commission fast-tracks review of proposed Melody Ranch Water System transfer

Expedited process aims to advance long-term water reliability for customers

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC or Commission) has advanced a fast-track review of a proposal that would transfer operation of Melody Ranch Water Company to the Estancia, Moriarty, Williard, and Torrance County Regional Water Association (EMWT). By accelerating procedural timelines, the Commission can consider the proposed transfer more quickly while still conducting a thorough evaluation of the proposed transfer agreement. The move represents an important step toward a long-term solution for Melody Ranch customers who have faced challenges since a system breakdown caused a complete loss of service in July 2025.

The Commission's decision follows a motion from the NMPRC's Public Interest Advocacy Staff requesting an expedited review after Melody Ranch and EMWT signed a transfer agreement on Oct. 29. Advocacy Staff said an accelerated review would benefit residents by helping move long-term water system improvements forward more quickly.

The proposed timeline would notify customers of the transfer by Nov. 9 and give interested parties until Nov. 16 to participate in the case. If no objections are raised, the Commission could consider a final decision as early as Dec. 3.

Under the proposed agreement, EMWT would take ownership of Melody Ranch's water system, including its wells, equipment, property, and water rights, at no cost. EMWT would not take on Melody Ranch's existing debts, and the transfer itself would not add any new charges or fees for Melody Ranch customers.

Advancing a Permanent Solution

The need for an expedited review is underscored by the community's continued reliance on a temporary water-hauling program authorized under an executive order issued by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham following the system failure. That emergency arrangement is set to expire at the end of this year.

If approved, the transfer would allow EMWT to develop a new well for the community and, ultimately, connect the system to the City of Moriarty through a pipeline. Together, those improvements are expected to provide a more reliable long-term water supply for residents.

Commission approval would also allow EMWT to access a $4 million legislative appropriation approved during this year's session. EMWT must take ownership of the system before those funds can be used for critical infrastructure improvements.

Public Participation

Case documents and updates in Docket No. 25-00054-UT are available through the PRCe360 case management system. Before the Commission makes a final decision, members of the public may participate by submitting written comments or providing oral comments during a Commission open meeting.

*The **New Mexico Public Regulation Commission** (NMPRC) serves New Mexico by ensuring safe operations and reliable utility services at fair, just, and reasonable rates consistent with the State's legal, economic, environmental, and social policies. To learn more about the work of the NMPRC, please visit www.prc.nm.gov.*

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