



RESOLUTION NO. 2025-26

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONSERVATION POOL AT ELEPHANT BUTTE LAKE

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Sierra County met in a duly noticed, regular Commission meeting on March 18, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Sierra County Administration Building, 1712 North Date Street, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901; and,

WHEREAS, Elephant Butte Dam, constructed in 1916 as part of the Rio Grande Project, was designed not only to regulate the floodwaters of the Rio Grande but also to provide a dependable water supply for agricultural irrigation during dry seasons; and,

WHEREAS, Elephant Butte Lake spans 40 miles and boasts over 200 miles of shoreline, serving as a vital reservoir for water storage, recreation, and wildlife habitat; and,

WHEREAS, the lake sustains a diverse fishery, including record-breaking bass, walleye, catfish, crappie, stripers, and numerous other species, contributing to a thriving recreational and ecological balance; and,

WHEREAS, the presence of a healthy fish population supports a dynamic ecosystem that includes American white pelicans, western and Clark's grebes, terns, shorebirds, and other avian species that depend on the lake's resources; and,

WHEREAS, excessive depletion of the lake disrupts critical fish spawning cycles, leading to diminished fish populations, altered aquatic vegetation, and cascading ecological consequences; and,

WHEREAS, a conservation pool, maintained at a stable and sustainable level, would safeguard the lake's biodiversity, ensuring the long-term viability of aquatic life and associated ecosystems; and,

WHEREAS, a conservation pool is a pragmatic and widely acceptable solution that prioritizes both ecological integrity and water resource management; and,


WHEREAS, a thriving lake enhances economic and recreational opportunities, supporting local businesses, marinas, tourism, and the quality of life for residents and visitors alike; and,

WHEREAS, the establishment of a conservation pool at Elephant Butte Lake represents a forward-thinking, scientifically sound, and economically beneficial approach to sustainable water management.

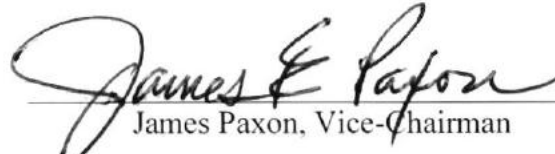
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Sierra County that Elephant Butte Lake is an invaluable regional asset that provides recreational opportunities, water storage, and critical wildlife habitat, and that depletion of its water level has far-reaching negative consequences. The Board urges the Bureau of Reclamation to take the lead in implementing a conservation pool at Elephant Butte Lake to ensure long-term ecological balance, economic sustainability, and the continued vitality of our community.

APPROVED, ADOPTED, AND PASSED on this 18th day of March, 2025.


BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF SIERRA COUNTY



Travis Day, Chairman

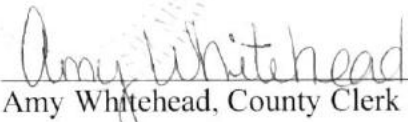


James Paxon, Vice-Chairman



Hank Hopkins, Commissioner

Attest:



Amy Whitehead, County Clerk

