



RIO GRANDE
WATER FUND
A Wildfire and Water Source
Protection Project

**SAN JUAN - CHAMA:
GOT WATER?**



**RESPONSIBLE LAND
STEWARDSHIP**

MEDIA ADVISORY

Contact:

Monique DiGiorgio, Chama Peak Land Alliance
970-335-8174 | chamapeak@gmail.com

Tracey Stone
tstone@tnc.org or c-602-738-1586

WHAT: You're invited to join us for a live demonstration of the San Juan – Chama priority forest treatment area as part of the recent launch of the Rio Grande Water Fund. We will spend the day at Rancho del Oso Pardo, a private ranch in the San Juan – Chama headwaters forests, viewing active forest health and wood utilization activities and discussing the San Juan – Chama Watershed Partnership and how it is working with the Rio Grande Water Fund to secure drinking water, increase forest health, boost the state's economy, and add jobs and improve quality of life for New Mexicans.

WHEN: Wednesday, August 6th – 10:30 am – 2pm

NOTE: Backup Date: Wednesday, August 20th – 10:30am – 2pm

WHERE: Rancho del Oso Pardo on the CO-NM Border, just north of the Village of Chama.

VISUALS:

- Rancho del Oso Pardo, a private ranch that spans the southern Colorado – northern New Mexico border, north of Chama, where forest workers will be conducting aspen rejuvenation treatments on 60 acres, a spruce salvage harvest, and thinning of white fir and dead trees on 25 acres.
- Press event with The Nature Conservancy, Chama Peak Land Alliance, and Western Landowners Alliance describing the Rio Grande Water Fund and San Juan – Chama Watershed Partnership.

RSVP:

- If you plan to attend the launch event, please RSVP to Monique DiGiorgio at chamapeak@gmail.com or 970.335.8174
- Media will be provided a map and list of spokespeople/areas of expertise upon arrival.

WHAT IS THE SAN JUAN - CHAMA WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP: This community-based partnership is working to increase the resiliency and ecosystem health of the watershed. The same private landowners that helped start the partnership also manage a significant portion of the land that supplies the San Juan - Chama diversion waters. This is a unique opportunity because these landowners directly manage their lands with forest health, agriculture, wildlife,

and watershed resilience in mind. The San Juan – Chama Watershed Partnership is enhancing water quantity/quality, fisheries, local businesses, and recreational opportunities in the rural communities of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico through:

- Sustainable forest management practices that include commercial harvesting, thinning, and prescribed burning.
- Researching the utilization of woody biomass from forest treatments to create jobs and energy through a local and sustainable bioenergy industry, and
- Riparian restoration and agricultural efficiency projects to get the most out of each drop of water.

WHAT IS THE RIO GRANDE WATER FUND: The goal of the Water Fund is to leverage funds from public and private donors to increase forest thinning 10-fold, to more than 600,000 acres in 20 years! Currently, on average, 3,000-5,000 acres are thinned in this area each year. The goal of the Water Fund is to increase that amount to as much as 30,000 per year. Forested mountains serve as nature’s water storage and filtering facilities. High-severity wildfires and post-fire floods increasingly threaten the water that serves 1 million people.

The Water Fund is an innovative project that will support a 20-year plan to restore overgrown ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests around the Rio Grande River and its tributaries, which are at high-risk for damaging wildfires. The San - Juan Chama Watershed Partnership is working in one of the key focal areas for the Water Fund – The San Juan – Chama headwater forests.

WHY: Each year the size and severity of wildfires in our state increases, along with subsequent post-fire flooding that degrades rivers, streams and other critical water sources. Without action, New Mexico’s future water security is at great risk. Together, the Rio Grande Water Fund and the San Juan – Chama Watershed Partnership are working for a solution that can bring clean water to New Mexicans for generations to come as well as boost the economy, restore headwater forests, and reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire.

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