

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

To: Dan McGregor, Bernalillo County Hydrogeologist

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From: Erwin A. Melis, PhD, PG, Senior Hydrogeologist

Date: June 15, 2022

Subject: Water-level monitoring for the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC)

John Shomaker & Associates, Inc. (JSAI) was contracted to perform water-level monitoring for the Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC) starting in the winter of 2021-2022. Thus far, two monitoring rounds have been performed, and all monitoring data have been received from the prior consultant, HydroResolutions, LLC (HydroRes). HydroRes began the water-level monitoring in the Estancia Basin in 2007. JSAI monitoring events occurred on November 16, 2021 at 12 well sites, and on March 30, 2022 at 13 well sites; a total of 14 wells are currently part of the EBWPC monitoring network (Table 1). Figure 1 shows past and present EBWPC monitored wells with the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer (NMOSE) Estancia Basin Administrative Basin boundaries in Bernalillo, Santa Fe, and Torrance Counties, New Mexico. Cross-referenced names and GPS location data are provided as Appendix A.

monitored well name	casing diameter, in.	casing type	stick-up, ft agl	total depth, ft bgl	screen interval, ft bgl	status
Anaya-1	5.5	PVC	2.37	360	300-360	unequipped
Austin-1	6	steel	4.95	117	60-70; 85-95	unequipped
Bill Larson	-3		0.33	175	-	unequipped
Bozlan-1	5.5	steel	-0.75	143	-	unequipped
Brannon OS	4.5	PVC	2.06	500	460-500	monitoring
E-0050-S10	15	steel	1.81	315	-	unequipped
E-2034-S	16.5	steel	1.90	351	-	unequipped
Greene-1	7	steel	1.37	-	-	unequipped
Magnum Steel	5	PVC	2.35	-	-	domestic
Romero WM	5	steel	1.08	75?	35-75	unequipped
Shaw WM	6	steel	0.05	367	-	unequipped
Simmons ¹	6.5	steel	1.02/2.13	346/800	-	old/domestic
Smith-1	8.75	steel	2.20	249	-	unequipped
Swenka Expl.	-		1.67	380	-	unequipped

Table 1. Summary of Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC)	
monitoring network in Bernalillo, Santa Fe, and Torrance Counties, New Mexico	

¹ two wells located on-site during Nov. 16, 2021 visit: unequipped steel well/equipped PVC domestic well
 ft agl - feet above ground level
 OS - Open Space
 WM - windmill

November 16, 2021 Site Visits

The objectives of the well site visits were to determine access, current condition of the EBWPC monitoring network, and to collect water-level data. A summary of the site visits information, including water-level data collected, is included in Appendix B. The well visits occurred on a dry, cool day.

On November 16, 2021, 13 wells were visited (Appendix B), explanation of additional detail for selected wells is as follows:

- At the Simmons property (apparent NMOSE well file number E-2298), two wells exist at the HydroRes forwarded Google Earth pin location: a steel 6.5-in. diameter well with a total tagged depth of about 346 ft bgl, and an equipped 5.5-in. diameter PVC well 10 ft to the southeast with a total estimated depth of 800 ft. HydroRes notes list a total depth of 360 ft bgl; it is not clear which well was regularly monitored by HydroRes. Both wells have depths to water that are within 1.84 ft of another, which does not account for their elevation difference, and is likely negligeable.
- Well E-0050-S10 seems to only have a total depth of 73 ft, shallower than the reported depth on the NMOSE Well Record of 350 ft bgl.
- During the November 16, 2021 site visit, the Shaw WM Well lacked a well cover, as did the Bozlan-1 Well.
- During this site visit, the Swenka Expl. Well could not be accessed; as the access gate off NM-Highway 337 was locked, and the phone number listed for access was not answered.

March 30, 2022 Site Visits

The objective of the March 30 well site visits was to collect water-level data and visit the Bill Larsen well. Summary of the site visits information, including water-level data collected, is included in Appendix B. JSAI's second round of well visits occurred on an overcast day with light precipitation in the area.

- The gate off NM-Highway 285 to the Bozlan-1 site was locked, so that well was not accessed.
- The Swenka property was accessed during this site visit with a gate code provided by Mr. Bill Larson.
- Mr. Larson also made available one of his domestic wells (Bill Larson Well), off Adams Lane between McIntosh and Moriarty. It likely has NMOSE file number E-0427-POD2 and a total depth of 175 ft bgl.
- The Romero WM Well was found dry at a depth of 72.97 ft bgl.
- During this round of monitoring, protective well cap plugs were installed in the Shaw WM Well and the Swenka Expl. Well, which will prevent entry of unwanted items into the well, securing these two wellheads.
- JSAI downloaded a transducer dataset from Well E-2034-S; computer battery issues prevented a download at Austin-1.

Data and Property Transfer

Water-level data were transferred by HydroRes starting on February 23, 2022 and completed on March 7, 2022. The scanned field books were received via emailed on April 22, 2022. Nine locks were replaced on November 16, and March 30, 2022, and returned to HydroRes by U.S. Mail on April 22, 2022 with delivery confirmation on April 26, 2022. All the data were in separate data files for each location; a few of the files for each location were in individual data packets, yet to be combined. No hydrographs were transferred. JSAI organized all data in master tables so all hydrographs could be plotted. Hand-measured data were organized to be viewed in one worksheet ready for addition future data. Two issues with the data were noted, which are listed in Table 2, and noted below:

- 1. The plotted data use GPS elevations and not surveyed elevations, and thus the HydroRes data likely have errors of at least 13 vertical feet, and likely more.
- 2. The water-level measurements reflect their depth below the top of the casing, which does not take into account the stick-up of the casing above ground level. A measurement below ground level (bgl) gives a measurement that is more relevant, and is the method employed by the USGS (Cunningham and Schalk, 2011).

monitored well name	period of record	HydroRes measuring point, ft amsl	U.S. topoBuilder elevations, ft amsl ¹	elevation difference, ft
Anaya-1	4/2015 to 3/2022	6,598	$6,506.52 \pm 5.10$	91.48
Austin-1	1/2018 to 3/2022	6,260	6,252.70±3.67	7.30
Bill Larson	3/2022 2	-	6,319.91	-
Bozlan-1	8/2007 to 12/2021	6,744	6,752.69 ±3.78	8.69
Brannon OS	10/2010 to 3/2022	7,189	7,195.08±9.70	6.08
E-0050-S10	7/2020 to 3/2022	6,161	6,162.82±1.25	1.82
E-2034	11/2008 to 3/2022	6,266	6,268.41±5.22	2.41
Greene-1	10/2008 to 3/2022	6,480	6,480.73±4.10	0.73
Magnum Steel	7/2009 to 3/2022	6,273	$6,270.47 \pm 4.04$	2.53
Romero WM	11/2009 to 3/2022	6,630	6,638.72±6.94	8.72
Shaw WM	8/2007 to 3/2022	6,329	6,329.75±7.30	0.75
Simmons ³	7/2010 to 3/2022	7,042	7,037.77 ±2.33	4.23
Smith-1	8/2009 to 3/2022	6,489	6,490.70±5.39	1.70
Swenka Expl.	4/2009 to 3/2022	6,669.62	6,697.35±7.33	27.73

Table 2. Summary of the data irregularities, HydroRes water-level elevation data, Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC), New Mexico

¹ error is standard deviation of Google EARTH, U.S. topographic map, and GPS elevation (JSAI and prior data)

² possible USGS well 345540106060601

³ PVC domestic well, also unequipped steel cased well on-site

bold indicates greater than 13-ft difference in HydroResolutions measuring point

ft amsl - feet above mean sea level

Transducer Drift Issue

During the transducer data review, a problem was noted with the data, when compared to handmeasured data. Drift was noted in certain reviewed transducer records that is not reproducible in the hand-measured data. Well E-2034-S transducer data from 5/8/2021 to 3/30/2022 recorded a water-level decline of 2.78 ft, whereas the hand-measurements indicated a water-level decline of 5.00 ft. This suggests that transducer reliability has deteriorated to the point that the data are unreliable, and should not be reported. Instrument drift is generally large in instruments that are past their manufacturers' warrantee, or just old. Imprecise measurements were also noted in older transducer data for Well E-2034-S, where transducer data underreported water-level declines by a factor of 2 between 2008 and 2021.

Currently, only three transducers remain in EBWPC monitored wells, Austin-1, Bozlan-1, and E-2034-S. Water-level data for discontinued monitored wells indicating some transducer drift are given in Table 3.

monitor well name (discontinued)	period of record	measuring point, ft amsl	manual data water-level changes, ft/yr	transducer water-level changes, ft/yr
E-50-1	2009 to 2014	6,615	-	-4.46
E-6385	2/2009 to 8/2017	6,243	-2.64	-
E-9407	9/2012 to 12/2014	-	-0.44	0.95 ²
Greene-4	3/2009 to 9/2016	6,442	8.50	2.79 ¹
Hagerman HQ	8/2007 to 7/2018	6,746	-0.03	-
Lujan-1	8/2007 to 9/2012	-	-	0.24
Ruby Shaw WM	4/2011 to 5/2014	6,645	0.23	-

Table 3. Summary of the discontinued monitored well data indicating difference in water-
level changes based on data gathering differences, EBWPC, New Mexico

¹ partial period of record for transducer

² likely collapsed; transducer buried by mud

ft amsl - feet above mean sea level

Water-Levels Trends (Discontinued Wells)

Discontinued data series include all the data series where monitoring is currently not occurring, due to various issues (well collapse, ownership change, or other reasons).

Hydrographs for the archived Estancia Basin wells (seven wells) are organized in two arbitrary categories, shallow (about 40 to 200 ft bgl water depth), and deep (deeper than 200 ft bgl water depth) for data management. Archived data of wells discontinued from the EBWPC monitoring network show variable water-level trends (Table 3 and Figs. 2 and 3). Three wells (Lujan-1, E-9407, and Ruby Shaw WM) show relatively flat water-level trends with very little change (less than 2 ft over the period of record) in water levels.

Two wells (E-50-1 and E-6385) show a general water-level decline of between 24 and 26 ft between 2008 and 2014 and 2008 and 2017, respectively. These two wells also show a seasonal variation of between 8 to 26 ft, higher water levels in winter, and correspondingly lower in summer. For E-50-1, the summer water levels are stable, and define a non-declining water level of 199 ft bgl, whereas the winter water levels show a 26-ft decline over six winters (2009 to 2013-2014) to a final water level of about 193 ft bgl. For E-6385, both summer and winter water levels trend irregularly downward. Both E-50-1 and E-6385 are completed in alluvium of the Estancia Basin, very close to the geographic center of the basin; summer-winter water levels likely reflect nearby agricultural pumping during the growing season.

The final two wells (Hagerman HQ and Greene-4) show a variable water level with both increases and declines of between 5 and 15 ft on a yearly and monthly basis from 2007 to 2018 and 2008 to 2011 respectively, with both trends ending at nearly the same water level as the initial water level. For the Greene-4 Well, a final datapoint in 2016 shows a water level increase of 60 ft from 2011 water levels. Both wells with highly variable water levels (5 to 15 ft monthly variation) are completed in the Triassic and Permian-sedimentary units at the basin edges, where highly variable water levels could be associated with variable recharge and a local presence/lack of winter precipitation. USGS studies suggest that residence times for groundwater samples from the Tijeras area (measured with stable isotopes) are between 1 month to 4 months, and dependent mostly on mountain snowpack (McCoy and Blanchard, 2008). Water-level trends are summarized in Table 4.

Water-Level Trends

Hydrographs for the actively monitored Estancia Basin wells show variable trends similar to those described for the wells where monitoring was discontinued (Table 4 and Figs. 4 and 5). Four wells (Austin-1, Smith-1, Shaw WM, and Greene-1, all in the southern Estancia Basin) show relatively flat trends with little change in water levels. Four wells (E-2034-S, E-0050-S10, Magnum Steel, and Anaya-1) show a decline of between 10 to 22 ft from 2008-2009 and 2015 to present, and averaging 18 ft over the period of record (and 1.95 ft/yr). All four show either a strong or weak seasonal variation; all are completed in alluvium near the basin center (McIntosh to Moriarty to Edgewood area).

Five wells Swenka Expl., Romero WM, Bozlan-1, Simmons, and E-9673) show a variable water level with both increases and declines of between 5 and 15 ft on a monthly and yearly basis, with water levels today very similar to initial water levels at the start of the EBWPC monitoring network. All these wells are at the basin edges (see above) and the dominant aquifer for these wells is the Madera Limestone.

Table 4. Summary of water-level trends in EBWPC monitored wells in the Estancia Basinin Bernalillo Santa Fe, and Torrance Counties, New Mexico

monitored well name	period of record	current monitoring activity	current measurement record	annual water- level decline or rise, ft/yr	likely aquifer	general trend
monitored wells cu	rrently in EBWP	C monitoring	g network			
Anaya-1	to present	active	logs to 2020	-2.89	alluvium	decline
Austin-1	to present	active	logs	-0.24	alluvium	flat
Bill Larson	2022 to present	active	manual	-	alluvium	-
Bozlan-1	to present	active	logs	-0.28	Chinle Fm.	variable
Brannon OS	to present	active	logs to 2020	2.75	Madera Fm.	variable
E-0050-S10	to present	active	logs to 2018	-2.61	alluvium	decline
E-2034-S	to present	active	logs	-1.50	alluvium	decline
Greene-1	to present	active	logs to 2018	-0.02	San Andres Fm.	flat
Magnum Steel	to present	active	manual	-0.79	alluvium	decline
Romero WM	to present	active	logs to 2018	1.23	alluvium/Madera	variable
Shaw WM	to present	active	manual	0.02	alluvium/Yeso	flat
Simmons	to present	active	logs to 2021	0.62	alluvium/Madera	variable
Smith-1	to present	active	logs to 2020	0.00	Yeso Fm.	flat
Swenka Expl.	to present	active	logs to 2020	0.83	Madera Fm.	variable
wells discontinued (no longer in current EBWPC monitoring network)						
E-50-1	2009 to 2014	none	logs to 2014	-4.46	alluvium	decline
E-6385	2009 to 2017	none	manual	-2.64	alluvium	decline
E-9407	2012 to 2014	none	logs to 2014	0.95	granite	flat
Greene-4	2008 to 2011 (2016)	none	logs to 2020	-1.09	San Andres Fm.	variable
Hagerman HQ	2007 to 2018	none	manual	-0.03	Chinle Fm.	variable
Lujan-1	2011 to 2012	none	logs to 2012	0.23	-	flat
Ruby Shaw WM	2011 to 2014	none	manual	0.23	Yeso Fm.	flat
				-0.49		

Fm.-Formation

logs – transducer recorder data available

Conclusions

This Technical Memo is a preliminary reporting of time-series water-level data, and current data collected by JSAI. Some data in the tables still need to be verified, with tables improving for future EBWPC monitoring network reports. The EBWPC water-level monitoring data are a premier data set, that will serve not only the communities of the Estancia Basin, but potentially also water resources managers statewide. These data show that water levels in the alluvium and the center of the basin are declining, but at the edges of the basin water levels are either flat, or very susceptible to changes in recharge from nearby mountains, or upland areas. These data could be used to delineate recharge protection areas in those areas where recharge and water quality are exemplary. Some problems with data integration and reporting will need to be solved before these data can be shared with the public.

Recommendations

- 1. Obtain location and stick-up data for the archived (discontinued) monitored wells in Table 3.
- 2. Measure total well depths for all monitored wells with a steel tape.
- 3. Obtain well records for all monitored wells (Table 1), including screened intervals if available, and determine likely formations completed in.
- 4. Discard the remaining transducers installed in the Bozlan-1, E-2034-S, and Austin-1 Wells.
- 5. Decide on long-term viable new transducers for the EBWPC monitoring network due to drift issues.
- 6. Identify areas of the Estancia Basin where water-level monitoring is beneficial, but data gaps exist.
- 7. Transfer all data to the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources Healy Groundwater monitoring program for sharing after solving data integration problems and deciding on reporting guidelines (Standard Operating Procedures).

Enc: Figures 1 thru 5 Appendices A and B

References

- Cunningham, W.L., and Schalk, C.W., compilers, 2011, Groundwater Technical Procedures of the U.S. Geological Survey: USGS Techniques and Methods 1-A1, 151 p.
- EBWPC, 2021, Evaluation of Groundwater Level Data from Estancia Basin Monitoring Wells; consultant's report (HydroResolutions, LLC.) to the East Torrance Soil & Water Conservation District, 17 p.
- McCoy, K.J., and Blanchard, P.J., 2008, Precipitation, Ground-water Hydrology, and Recharge along the Eastern Slopes of the Sandia Mountains, Bernalillo County, New Mexico: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2008-5179, 33 p.
- [NMBGMR] New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, 2022, Healy Collaborative Groundwater Monitoring Network: public groundwater level data of the Aquifer Mapping Program and water users, <u>https://geoinfo.nmt.edu/resources/water/cgmn/home.cfml</u>
- [USGS] U.S. Geological Survey, 2022, National Water Information System (NWIS) the internet interface of the USGS Water Resources Division, [water levels in wells] <u>https://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis</u>
- [USGS] U.S. Geological Survey, 2022, The National Map (topoBuilder) the internet interface of the USGS Topographic map, <u>apps.nationalmap.gov/viewer</u>

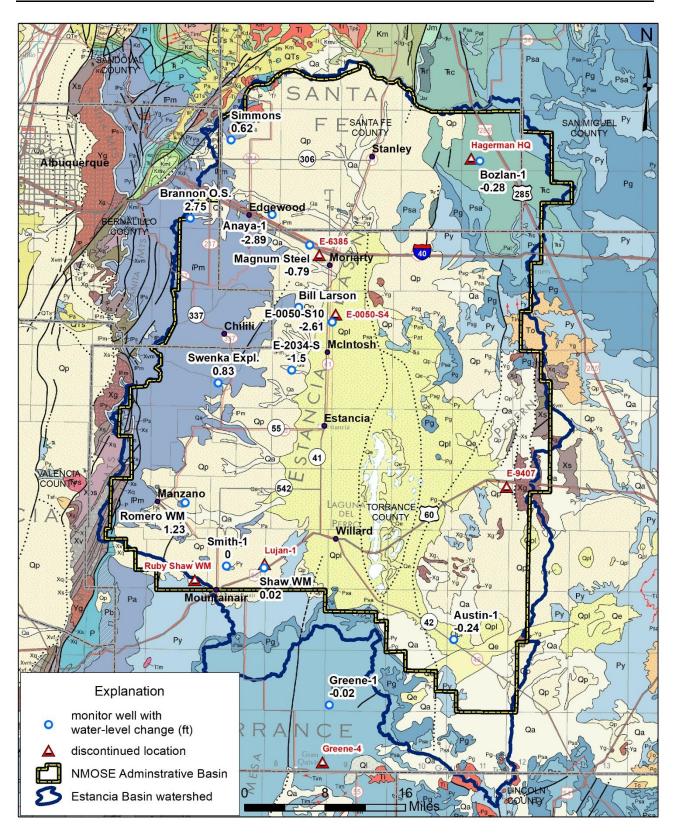
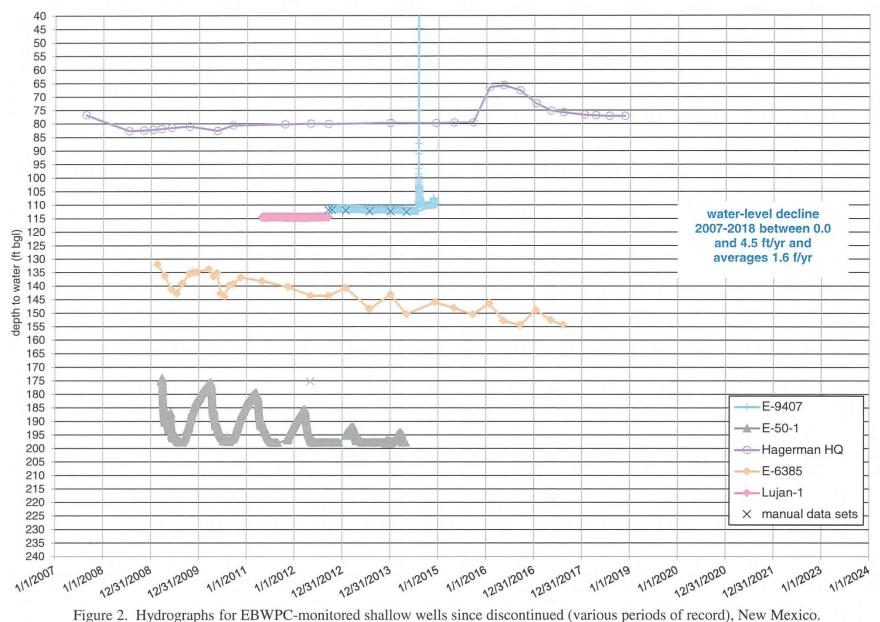


Figure 1. Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC) monitored wells, NMOSE Estancia Basin Administrative model boundary and watershed, Bernalillo, Santa Fe, and Torrance Counties, New Mexico.



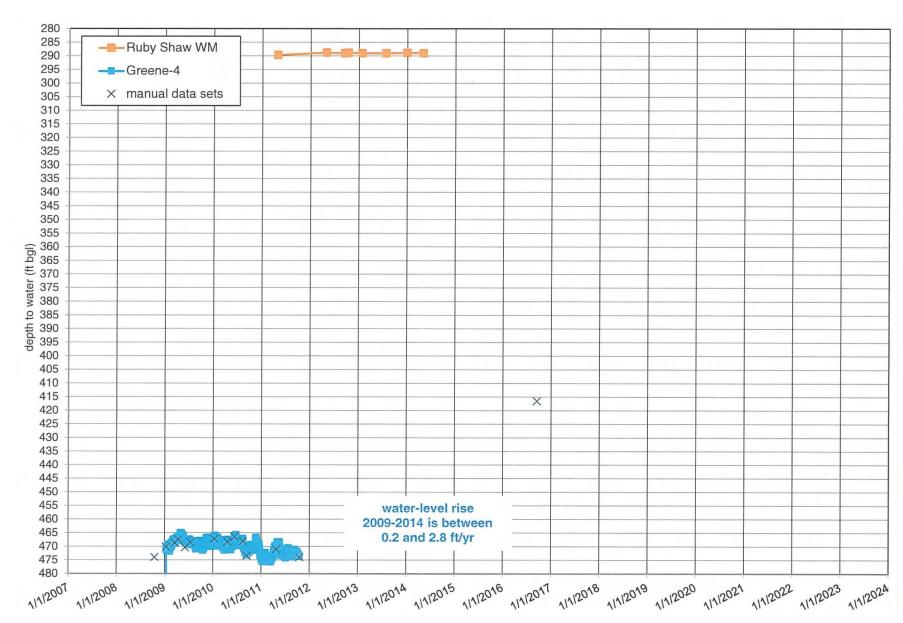


Figure 3. Hydrographs for EBWPC-monitored deep wells since discontinued (various period of record), New Mexico.

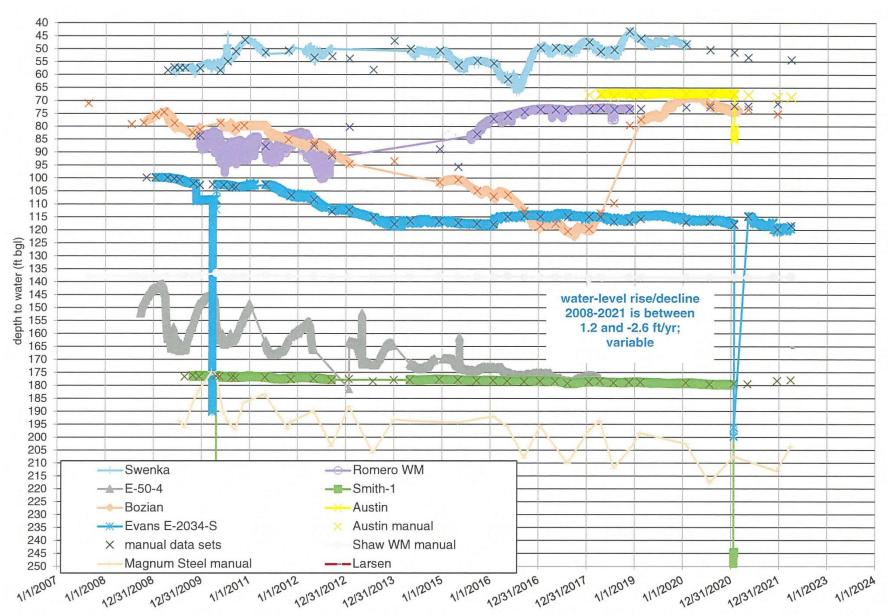


Figure 4. Hydrographs for EBWPC-currently monitored shallow wells (HydroResolutions transducer data), New Mexico.

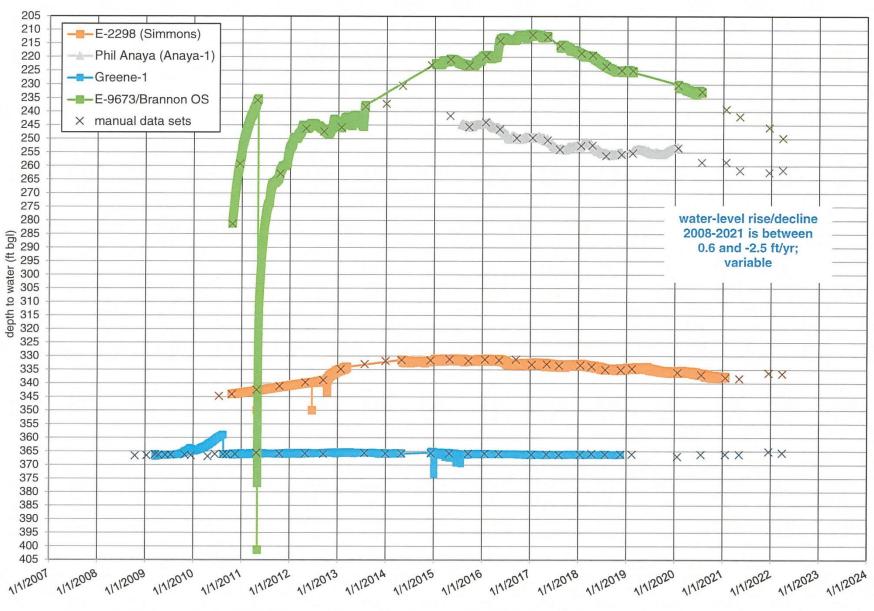


Figure 5. Hydrographs for EBWPC-currently monitored deep wells (HydroResolutions transducer data), New Mexico.

APPENDIX A.

Table A1. Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC)well names cross-reference, and well locations, New Mexico

JSAI name	HydroRes ¹ name	likely NMOSE File No./ USGS Name	UTM, m E (NAD83, zone 13) ¹	UTM, m N (NAD83, zone 13) ¹		
wells in current EB	SWPC monitoring network					
Anaya-1	Anaya/Phil Anaya	E-9272-POD1	395,066	3,880,536		
Austin-1	Austin #1	E-1638-POD1	424,100	3,812,580		
Bill Larson	-	E-0427-POD2/ 3455401060606001	399,315	3,865,705		
Bozlan-1	Bozlan-1	-/nl	428,285	3,889,072		
Brannon OS	E-9673 (Bernalillo County)	E-9673	381,975	3,879,951		
E-0050-S10	E-50-4 (Schwebach 4)	E-50-S10	404,660	3,863,338		
E-2034-S	E-2034-S (Evans)	E-2034-S	398,176	3,855,674		
Greene-1	Greene-1	T-6363-POD1	404,197	3,802,110		
Magnum Steel	Magnum Steel (Trixier)	-	401,055	3,875,642		
Romero WM	E.B. Romero WM/Romero Windmill	E-8184-POD1	381,162	3,834,482		
Shaw WM	Shaw WM/Shaw Windmill	-	393,754	3,824,033		
Simmons	E-2298 (Simmons)	E-2298-S2/nl	388,505	3,892,477		
Smith-1	Smith-1	-	387,742	3,824,322		
Swenka Expl.	Swenka Exploratory	E-3867-S3	386,426	3,853,603		
wells discontinued (no longer in current EBWPC monitoring network)						
E-0050-S4	E-50-1 (Schwebach 1)					
E-6385	E-6385 (Carol Bowman)					
E-9407	E-9407 (Wetterman)					
Greene-4	Greene-4					
Hagerman HQ	Hagerman Headquarters					
Lujan-1	Lujan-1/Cheri Lujan					
Ruby Shaw WM	Ruby Shaw Windmill					

¹ data from HydroResolutions, LLC (HydroRes); however, wells need to be surveyed USGS - U.S. Geological Survey

nl - not listed

APPENDIX B.

Table B1. Summary of collected water-level data, including site visits information for Estancia Basin Water Planning Committee (EBWPC) monitoring network in Bernalillo, Santa Fe, and Torrance Counties, New Mexico

monitored well name	stick-up, ft agl	date	depth to water, ft bgl	entire record water-level change, ft/yr	comment
Anaya-1	2.37	11/16/21	262.35		no comment
		03/30/2022	261.53	-2.89	no comment
Austin-1 ^T	4.95	11/16/21	68.56		no comment
		03/30/2022	68.53	-0.21	computer battery dead; transducer not read
Bill Larson	0.33	11/16/21	-		[not visited]
		03/30/2022	165.31	-	under tarp, which also covers pile of used tires
Bozlan-1 ^T	-0.75	11/16/21	75.12	-0.28	well in vault, no cover – rock on casing
		03/30/2022	-	-	access gate on NM-285 locked
Brannon OS	2.06	11/16/21	245.79		locking cover not locked
		03/30/2022	249.70	2.76	well combo lock 1578
E-0050-S10	1.81	11/16/21	67.80		northwest-most well of two; tagged at 73 ft total depth
		03/30/2022	68.84	3.44	no comment
E-2034-S ^T	1.90	11/16/21	119.67		casing severely dented
		03/30/2022	118.29	-1.25	transducer read
Greene-1	1.37	11/16/21	364.97		sand at end of sounder; water level near total depth
		03/30/2022	365.47	0.08	no comment
Magnum Steel	2.35	11/16/21	212.94		equipped
		03/30/2022	203.50	-0.79	no comment
Romero WM	1.08	11/16/21	71.09		no comment
		03/30/2022	dry at 72.97	1.56	dry at a depth of 72.97 ft bgl
Shaw WM	0.05	11/16/21	138.17		no well cover; windmill rickety and dangerous
		03/30/2022	138.02	-0.02	added protective well-cap plug
Simmons ¹	1.02/2.13	11/16/21	338.00/336.16		both wells measured
		03/30/2022	336.39	0.71	PVC domestic well measured
Smith-1	2.20	11/16/21	178.15		no comment
		03/30/2022	177.88	-0.10	no comment
Swenka Expl.	1.67	11/16/21	-		entrance gate locked, no access and not monitored
		03/30/2022	54.28	0.31	added protective well-cap plug

¹ two wells were located on-site during Nov. 16, 2021 visit: PVC domestic well is equipped; steel well is 346 ft in total depth and unequipped transducer in monitored well Т

ft amsl - feet above mean sea level

ft agl - feet above ground level ft bgl - feet below ground level