

NEW CENICERO DITCH COMPANY

Cole Bedford, PE

Colorado Water Conservation Board

1313 Sherman Street, Room 718

Denver, CO 80203

Re: Diversion Dam Headgate and Bank Stabilization Project: CWCB WSRF Grant Contract Number CTGG1 2021-3221

Cole,

This project was a success, on April 16, 2021, we had a ribbon cutting to celebrate the great work accomplished and was only possible by the assistance of the CWCB WSRF Grant and NRCS Grant along with the Shareholders of the New Cenicero Ditch Company. All who contributed were recognized at the ribbon cutting.

The project as can be seen in the attached photos shows the diversion dam and the bank restoration. This dam was constructed in time to deliver water at the beginning of this irrigation season and never in the history of this ditch have we been able to deliver the consistent CFS that is adjudicated to this ditch.

Also, an important inclusion was the fish ladder that was built into the diversion dam that accommodates all species of fish that include the native fish of the San Antonio River which was one the requirements brought up by the Roundtable. The Project met all the objectives and requirements discussed and approved by CWCB WSRF and NRCS.

Sincerely,

Elliott Salazar

President, New Cenicero Ditch Company







New Cenicero Ditch Company upgrades diversion structure



📷 Courier photo by Stephen Jiron At the opening of the new diversion dam were plenty who helped the dam become a reality, from left, Natural Resources Conservation Service Engineer Rod Clark, New Cenicero Ditch Company President Elliot Salazar, Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Chair Nathan Coombs, Adam Robins of Robins Construction and from the Colorado Division of Water Resources, District 33 Water Commissioner Aaron Holman and Staff Engineer Pat McDermott.

By: Stephen Jiron - Updated: 2 weeks ago

Posted Apr 19, 2021

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ANTONITO — On a crisp Friday morning the New Cenicero Ditch Company (NCDC) celebrated the newly completed renovation of their diversion dam. As the Rio San Antonio, a tributary of the Conejos River, makes its way through the lower San Luis Valley it cuts right through Antonito feeding a number of diversion ditches. Built on the Los Coyotes Ranch belonging formerly to the late Aniceto Lucero, a beloved valley

native, the Cenicero Ditch was adjudicated in 1856 and incorporated in 1904 to 16 shareholders in the area and served an allocated 1,500 shares. Things have changed plenty as in the century past the ditch has grown from 16 shareholders to 42 and the technology has grown with it, from a pile of rocks to a multifunctional dam.

When it came time to start moving earth, the NCDC had strict criteria for the parameters of the job, whoever took the contract needed to be able to finish before the irrigation season and they needed to have prior experience so they chose Robins Construction of Antonito.

Boasting a \$1.66 million price point, the new dam is chock full of intuitive design.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Engineer Rod Clark spoke on fitting form to function,

“We’ve got to realize we’re still on a river and a river has to do what a river is supposed to do, and that’s carry sediment.”

The dam features two pneumatic lift gates that can operate independently and are fed by an above-ground Schrader valve which is functional on as little as 10 pounds per square inch (psi). With the gates up it ensures the NCDC shareholders see their allotment and with the gates down the river is allowed to flow freely removing sediment and debris.


The diversion dam also has a built-in fish ladder, a sloping channel with small pools to allow fish to pass freely from one side of the dam to the other, which is specified to be friendly to all species. The gates are currently manually operated but management hopes to automate the process soon.

Funding was provided in large part by the NRCS who kicked in just under two-thirds of the total. Roughly another third was provided by the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable and the rest came from the New Cenicero Ditch Company.

Many were excited to see new development propelling Colorado agriculture into the future,

“One of the challenges we’re facing in Colorado a lot of it is aging infrastructure all of our ditches, headgates, dams, canals and our pipelines are aging out, they’re 100 years old or more..” said Colorado Division of Water Resources Staff Engineer Pat McDermott.

“This is the kind of structure we need for the future.”

 **ALAMOSANA NEWS (/)** The new diversion ditch is important to all the current shareholders as it will give them the chance to fully regulate the Cenicero’s allocation of 18.3 cubic feet per second (cfs) flow from the Rio San Antonio making flow much more consistent.

“Things can always get better, they should progress not regress,” said NCDC President Elliot Salazar.

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