



Fall 2007

Introduction

G. Emlen Hall

Recommended Citation

G. Emlen Hall, *Introduction*, 47 NAT. RES. J. vii (2007).
Available at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nrj/vol47/iss4/1>

This Front Matter is brought to you for free and open access by the Law Journals at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Natural Resources Journal by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

INTRODUCTION

This last issue of the *Natural Resources Journal* for 2007 runs the usual gamut of diverse articles by diverse authors writing on diverse subjects in diverse ways. But to catch the real flavor of the *Journal* you need look no farther than the author of this issue's opening essay, John Shomaker.

A widely respected consulting geohydrologist, Shomaker is a wonderfully cultivated man whose breadth of education is matched by the depth of his curiosity. One measure of those qualities: Late in his career and for no other reason than personal interest, Shomaker enrolled in the St. John's College master's degree summer program and immersed himself in the college's Great Books program. Another measure of those qualities: this essay reconsidering the relationship between the surface flows of the Rio Grande and ground water in storage in the aquifers surrounding it.

More than 50 years ago, New Mexico led the rest of the nation in recognizing the relationship between ground water and surface water and in establishing legal controls based on that relationship. That recognition sharply limited the amount of ground water that could be removed because of the effect of that removal on already committed surface-water flows. The limitation became part of the gospel of New Mexico conjunctive management of surface-water and groundwater management in the Rio Grande Basin. Now, in this heretical new essay, Shomaker suggests that alternatives to that limitation may exist and that choosing one of those alternatives would allow the use of the huge amount of ground water in storage and presently inaccessible under the current paradigm.

In his essay, Shomaker outlines how this might happen, but that's not the point. Instead, in his inimitable fashion, Shomaker is really only examining what any person truly interested in resource management would consider: how does the policy relate to the resource, what are the alternative relationships, and what are the benefits and costs of each alternative?

The benefits of this essay to the true job of the *Natural Resources Journal* are clear. The costs involved a couple of lunches at an Albuquerque hash house, where I listened to the soft spoken, humorous, careful Shomaker talk about his ideas, and where he listened as I kidded and cajoled him and finally got him to agree to write the essay you now hold. We all won in that process.

Em Hall