

Why SHOULDN'T the SADLH Land Grant get the Buffalo Strip? 6 Reasons



- 1)GAO Report
- 2) WHOA Mediation
- 3) Crest of Montezuma
- 4) San Felipe Negotiation
- 5) Placitas Area Plan
- 6) SADLH and Community

1) Government Accountability Report (GAO) - The U.S. Does Not Owe Land to the Land Grants

The SADLH Land Grant is currently trying to acquire half of the Buffalo Strip, 1500 acres of Federal lands. However their Land Grant boundaries have never included the Buffalo Strip, per the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Moreover, the 2004 Government Accountability (GAO) Report on Land Grants requested by Tom Udall, Jeff Bingaman, and Pete Domenici, found that the Land Grants are not owed any lands:

“ . . . the U.S. did not violate any fiduciary duty to non-Pueblo community grantees “. Spanish Land grants claimed they had lost 3 million acres in the confirmation process (in part by losing their community lands). However since then, it states that the Land Grants have lost another 5 million acres (of their own accord). Hence, the US maintains that it does not legally owe the Spanish Land Grants any lands.

2) WHOA Mediation 2008:

Though the GAO Report found that the U.S. did not owe any lands to the Spanish Land Grant heirs, WHOA in all due respect, worked with the SADLH Land Grant in hopes of a Win-Win solution for the horses and the community that respects them.

WHOA Respectful of SADLH Land Grant: In 2008 WHOA set-up a mediation with the SADLH Land Grant including: Senator Udall’s staff, Pathways, Las Placitas Association, and a state Spanish Land Grant representative. WHOA hired as mediator the Chair of the Hispano Round Table, a direct descendant of the conquistadors with no requirement to support WHOA. Regrettably, WHOA was unaware of the Puebloan plans regarding the BLM at that time.

WHOA’s Proposal: SADLH Land Grant would obtain the 500 acres they had requested of the BLM Buffalo Strip for housing for Land Grant heirs. The remaining 2,500 acres would remain as open space for the horses and the community.

The then president of the Land Grant ended the mediation with this question: “What about the people?” However, about half of the ~ 50 Land Grant people did approve and later wrote to the BLM that the rest of the BLM lands “SHOULD” rather than “COULD” remain as an open space, in contrast to the Land Grant Leader’s written statement. WHOA submitted a summary report to the BLM and to Sandoval County, to no avail. The Land Grant has since come up with proposals to obtain more and more of the Buffalo Strip without the horses, despite the 85.7% of Placitans in favor of the horses.

3) CREST OF MONTEZUMA (1000 acre BLM)-SADLH

In 2008 Pathways, Representative Heinrich, and others were working to protect the Crest of Montezuma, (contiguous with the Sandia Mts.), by having it transferred from BLM to Forest Service, as is the rest of Sandia. Pathways had been working with the SADLH Land Grant leadership for their inputs in community minded fashion! Representative Martin Heinrich and Pathways were also working to procure and preserve the adjacent private lands as part of the wildlife corridor.

However, not long before the protective federal bill and associated private lands appropriations would have passed the House, the SADLH Land Grant’s board asked Representative Heinrich, BEHIND THE SCENES, to pull the bill. Martin Heinrich forthwith, pulled the bill, without notifying Pathways. This was particularly detrimental because the Representative’s term was almost up. He was in a tight race and the House was shifting from one party to the other. Hence the window of passage for this environmentally protective bill then closed.

WHOA obtained both the unsigned written request from the Board and the signed confirmation from Representative Heinrich. These facts were, however, publically denied by the current SADLH president. However to his credit, the Representative Heinrich did not deny this in follow-up meetings with WHOA. However, the Crest remains unprotected.

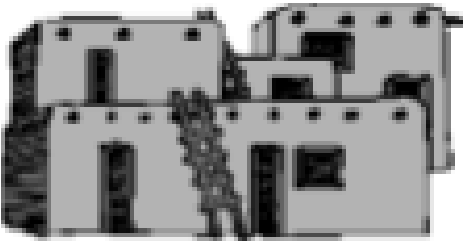
Additionally in these letters, the SADLH Land Grant Board asked to receive the private property procurement money instead of the Forest Service. This was so that the LAND GRANT could then trade this private acreage next to the Crest for the 500 acre BLM lands of the Buffalo Strip. Later the San Felipe Pueblo bought these private lands and offered them to the SADLH Land Grant. However, the SADLH Land Grant declined this kind offer, see below.

Though the SADLH Land Grant President stated on May 29th, 2008 to the BLM that: “There is a danger that with the lack of affordable land for future generations the Indo-Hispano community rooted in hundreds of years of existence will disappear from the area. . . Just look at Santa Fe and other areas where locals can no longer live.” The “SADLH Community is available, willing, and interested in working with BLM and others to reach creative solutions for the greatest benefits of all the citizens of these wonderful assets.” SADLH Leadership, however, has not followed through to date, on this declaration.

4) SAN FELIPE Mediation with SADLH Land Grant:

On June 26th 2014 the SADLH Land Grant reported again regarding “Disposition of the Buffalo tract of BLM land. . .” “The Land Grant would like to be able to construct homes on part of this property for descendants of the original Land Grant settlers.”, this despite the ~ 1000 acres of vacant lands the SADLH Land Grant owns in Placitas, much of it unused and vacant IN the historic village. The SADLH Land Grant leadership has not awarded these lands to the heirs.





San Felipe Community Mediation: In respectful community minded response, on July 7, 2014, the Pueblo of San Felipe reported mediations with “Wayne Sandoval, of the San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant, about giving the SADLH Land Grant approximately 200 acres for housing development...” near the beautiful Crest of Montezuma!

This was an attempt to bring the community together, while preserving the 3000 acre BLM lands for: the wild horses, the wildlife corridor, and for the benefit of the overwhelming majority of Placitans. All this negotiation and sharing was proposed to help the SADLH Land Grant, despite the GAO Report ruling that SADLH Land Grant was not owed any lands.

Rather than accept this kind offer, the SADLH Land Grant, who had originally asked the BLM for 500 acres for “ a green housing development”, NOW requested 1500 acres of the BLM for non-housing, redundant museum, and a solar farm presumably as payback for this land. This, however, would spoil Placitas for most of the community’s stake holders and their documented desires for open spaces and wild horses. This would also threaten Placitans with a highway pre-cursor through the Buffalo Strip which 87% of Placitans strongly oppose.

SADLH Land Grant and wild horses: The SADLH Land Grant leadership, like the BLM and federal representatives (so far!), does not consider the law, the science, or the community, though the entire Placitas community has gone out of their way repeatedly to help the SADLH Land Grant, as shown again in the Placitas Area plan below. Moreover, the SADLH leadership deems the horses as “feral”, livestock, or, “beasts of burden”. This is both legally and biologically incorrect.

5) Placitas Area Plan 2008/9 & SADLH

Sandoval County started their Placitas Area Planning process with a written plan to KICK the western half of Placitans (Sun Dance, La Mesa, and Los Ranchos subdivisions) OUT of Placitas, this by re-naming their communities as “Bernalillo Heights”. WHOA’s investigation uncovered that the then president of the SADLH Land Grant complained at legislature in the Land Grant Interim committee on 7/31/2006 of “identity theft”, since these subdivisions were not part of the Historic Land Grant of Placitas; however, importantly, neither was the Buffalo Strip.

Land Grant fears stated as “the Anglo population aims to further erode what is left of the traditional power base” was not communicated by Sandoval County to Placitans, as neither was the source of the eviction from Placitas to “Bernalillo Heights”. Sandoval County had, however, hired a renowned Land Grant activist to accomplish the Placitas Area Plan.

“Bernalillo Heights” was soundly and VOCIFEROUSLY rejected by both ends of Placitas in a standing room only meeting, with people sitting on the floor, in the aisles, and more literally stacked up outside the open windows.

However, ALL participating Placitans SINCERELY and RESPECTFULLY supported the Land Grants desires through the Placitas Area Plan to have separate legal zoning requirements for the historic Village of Placitas, per their heartfelt request. To help further understand the SADLH Land Grant’s role or reasoning in all this, WHOA researched and is providing some of the historical background below from two recent anthropological papers.

6) SADLH Land Grant and Community

The “Huertanos” were “landless families” who petitioned Spain successfully for use of lands near Diamond Tail/ Placitas as farmland in 1765 but were ordered to leave this settlement called San Jose de Las Huertas, by the Mexican government in 1826. Approximately 10 yrs. later, it is stated that some of these Huertanos returned to found Placitas.

In the two anthropological papers about these communities, Rothchild, of Columbia University, examines the strong social identity and kinship of both communities. As border communities based on subsistence farming, the close knit community bonds are shown to have been forged by fire through constant threats. They were allowed to settle here in order to provide protection for Santa Fe.

These papers also show a strong resistance to others, or outsiders. This is somewhat understandable, but also show a strongly xenophobic society. They are described in terms of their resistance to: “foreign influx” and “Anglo immigrants”, etc. This resistance is shown to have survived to this day. However, most “newcomers” are happily unaware of this. This particular resistance, though understandable, is found beyond Placitas and throughout New Mexico.

This resistance is more aptly discussed in these papers as a resistance to “modern” society, “material culture” and the “endless cycle of acquisition”, “relative to, “their pobre legacy”. . . referring to poor, rural, traditionally-Catholic Hispanics in New Mexico. . .” Moreover, here is some legal basis for this resistance to others in light of the “casta” system described. There were over 20 hierarchical tiers based on races and their mixes, imposed by Spanish rule of law. First Americans were not included unless in a mix. This was upheld and administrated through the Catholic Church.

The SADLH Land Grant currently stated on 6/26/14 that they have “approximately 1000 acres” and WHOA has verified this. Why are not these lands being used for a Museum and a solar farm or better yet housing? One of these properties is over 200 acres with open southern exposure and would be perfect for a solar farm. The other large tracts of SADLH lands are IN the historic village of Placitas, a perfect place for the “MUSEUM” and housing.

BLM ISSUES OVERVIEW

Currently, the SADLH Land Grant and the Santa Ana Pueblo with ~1000 people and ~ 50 people respectively are clearly favored by the BLM and our federal representatives. The representatives alone make the final determination of who obtains the Buffalo Strip with inclusion of Mining and highway, VERSUS the 6000 Placitans and 3000 San Felipe Pueblos who want a wildlife corridor, wild horses, no mining, and no highway. One example of “favor”:

On 5/12/11 the BLM Realtor met with the Santa Ana Pueblo. Meeting minutes written by the BLM Realtor state:

“BLM is interested in disposing of this because of horse, boundary, ROW and local resident issues we deal with daily. Tom suggested that Santa Ana mention this to Heinrich when they meet with him.”

WHOA has strong evidence showing **continuous back room deals** by this federal agency who would like to “dispose” the Placitas BLM lands to the Santa Ana Pueblo and the SADLH Land Grant, as both are on record of not allowing the horses to remain:

This is in blatant disregard of what the overwhelming majority of the people want, the rightful aboriginal claim by the honorable San Felipe Pueblo, and the rule of law in many areas including the BLM’s plan to use the Recreation Parks and Public Purposes Act in an illegal manner to disenfranchise First Americans from First American lands.

SEE PAGE 7B for WHAT YOU CAN DO!

