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## Flood Control Projects, Officials on Nov. Ballot

By Dan McKay

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A \$20 million bond proposal on the Nov. 2 ballot would fund diversion channels, pollution safeguards and other flood-control projects.

Approval of the bonds wouldn't result in a tax increase, officials say, because old bonds are paid off as new ones are issued. The property tax rate would start to decline slowly if the bonds are rejected.

The funding request comes from the Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority, which owns and operates a network of channels and dams. The agency, known as AMAFCA, covers most of the developed parts of Bernalillo County, except for the East Mountains.

It typically seeks voter approval for bonds every two years.

Also on the ballot this year is a race to represent the southeast part of town on the authority's board of directors. Incumbent Janet Saiers is stepping down at the end of the year.

Seeking to replace her are John Doran, a Democratic Party ward chairman, and Bruce Thomson, a civil engineering professor and director of the University of New Mexico's Water Resources Program.

Doran said he would bring good organizational skills to the board. He is a retired systems analyst for the state Labor Department.

"I was a computer wizard and a half," Doran said in an interview. "I was really good at juggling a massive number of little projects and minutia and keeping the end product in mind."

Thomson said his background in water resources is a natural fit for AMAFCA — which, in recent years, has been increasingly focused on environmental protection and recreation, not just combating floods.

Stormwater is a major contributor to water-quality problems in the Rio Grande, he said, something his expertise could help address. Thomson is also interested in AMAFCA's efforts to provide hiking and biking trails on its property.

"I've spent a career working on water issues," Thomson said, "and I think I have a lot of to offer — both from a technical perspective, as well as from a policy and management perspective."

The flood-control projects proposed for bond funding touch all corners of the agency's territory. The authority says it usually works with other

governments on each project to pool resources and make sure public money is spent efficiently.

Some local arroyos are in dire need of repairs, the agency says. Other projects are new and expected to help head off flooding in the South Valley or other areas.

The agency also works to ensure that rainwater discharged back to the river is cleaned of trash or other pollutants that can harm the environment.

One particularly interesting project focuses on the Hahn Arroyo in Northeast Albuquerque, where officials hope to install a "water harvesting" system to help native plants and vegetation at Montgomery Park.

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