

# On the WATER Front

A Message from Ed Archuleta, P.E., President/CEO

February 2010



## Preserving El Paso's Open Spaces

The Public Service Board has purchased Palisades Canyon - 200 beautiful acres at the tip of the Franklin Mountains. The Palisades is located near Robinson Avenue in the Kern Place area. It's a gateway to the Franklin Mountains State Park for El Pasoans who use its trails for mountain biking and hiking.

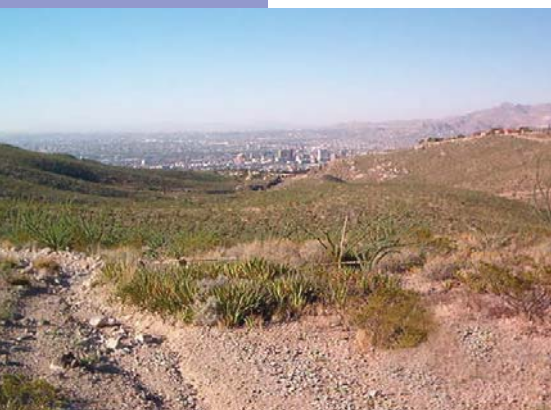
You might be surprised to learn that the Palisades previously belonged to the private sector. It was previously placed on the market and development might have occurred. Development in the arroyos that channel water through this area would increase downstream flooding. And the cost of building water and sewer systems to serve this mountain-side area would be enormous.

As required by City Council ordinance, ten percent of the stormwater fee you pay each month is earmarked for open space projects - green projects that serve a dual purpose. They must serve a stormwater function and preserve open spaces and wilderness areas in their natural state. The \$2.5 million Palisades purchase will be the first from our open space fund.

### Win-Win-Win

The land will not be developed, so there will be no need to extend infrastructure into the area, which saves many millions of dollars for ratepayers. We'll upgrade culverts that channel stormwater and remove rocks and debris that have been swept downstream. This improves flood control in nearby neighborhoods.

We will work with the City Parks Department and other interested parties to plan improvements to the trails and provide better access to the Palisades. In the future, it might be transferred to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and incorporated into the Franklin Mountains State Park. But for now, it's in public hands for El Pasoans to use and enjoy.



Palisades Canyon

