NAMBE: Nambe is about 7 leagues from Santa Fe and lies north quarter north-northeast from it…They have almost as much land above the pueblo as below it…They irrigate the upper lands with a mother ditch from well upriver, and they take water for the lower lands from the same ditch a little before the said arroyo empties into the river. The lands are fairly fertile and everything sown in them yields a crop, with a sufficient harvest of everything…The natives of this pueblo are Teguas…Some ranchos of citizens are attached to this mission for spiritual administration. They comprise two very small branches called Cundiyó and Pjoaque. In relation to the pueblo, the first [rancho] is up east-northeast at the foot of the aforementioned sierra in a small cañada which runs from south to north there with a rapid little river through the center. The water is crystalline and good and there is trout fishing. It has sufficient farmlands for the number of inhabitants. They are fairly good, are irrigated by the said river, and…there is a fairly good harvest of all that is sown in them…

SAN ILDEFONSO: Said pueblo is in the form of a very large plaza, clean and without any impediments. It consists of four tenements with three large passageways to the east, south, and north at their respective corners, and a small one to the west to lead to the church…Around the plaza at proportionate distances re the corrals, ovens, and henhouses…The Indians of this pueblo have lands in all four directions, but not divided equally, for the east, north, and south there are a little less than three-quarters of a league. To the west, indeed, they have even more than a league, occupying both banks of the Río del Norte, since it runs through them. Those on the west side of the river are irrigated from this very river through adequate ditches taken from it where necessary. Some of those on the east side, where the pueblo is, are irrigated from the river, and others from the spring in the little swamp I mentioned when I was speaking of the convent lands. Still others are irrigated from the Nambe River, which is very scanty by the time it reaches these parts, because everyone located beyond Nambe bleeds it, as is understood, and when it dries up, there are hardships for those of these lands…
TRUCHAS: Truchas, much higher up the cañada than Chimayó, is to the east-northeast in relation to the above villa and about 4 leagues from it. This settlement is on a high level site provided by a ridge of the aforesaid sierra, with very good lands, although there is no river. But since the Almighty gave man what he needs, those interested in these lands, with prodigious labor, dammed up in a small canyon the water of a little rivulet that came through it, which arises in the east in the sierra itself. By making it rise in the dam to a height of 60 or more varas, they succeeded in using it very freely for irrigation by means of a good ditch (which must be a league from the settlement). They have a copious harvest of good wheat and legumes... This settlement is not of ranchos, but around two plazas because Governor Vélez Cachupín issued orders to this effect since they are almost on the borders of the Comanche tribe, whose people make incursions from that vicinity.

Notes: Eleanor B. Adams and Fray Angélico Chávez translated and annotated the observations of Fray Francisco Atanacio Domínguez when he was sent to New Mexico in 1776 on a special visitation. According to Adams and Chávez, Fray Domínguez had been charged by the Mexican Province of the Holy Gospel to document the spiritual and economic status of the missions. This broad mandate entailed the gathering of much geographical and ethnological data, providing a rich source of information regarding the social ecology of the dozens of ranchos, plazas, and Indian pueblos extant at the time. As such, the Domínguez descriptions are probably the earliest records of land-use and irrigation practices evident in colonial Nuevo México. By the time of the visit, both the Spanish and the Pueblo Indian communities had developed relatively sophisticated irrigation systems, diverting water from large and small streams alike, by constructing dams upstream from their villages or, as in the case of Truchas, literally creating a stream source by damming up a small canyon at some distance from any river. For the description of all the missions visited by Fray Domínguez, see The Missions of New Mexico, 1776: A Description by Fray Francisco Atanasio Domínguez, translated and annotated By Eleanor B. Adams and Fray Angélico Chávez (University of New Mexico Press, 1956).
