

Unser Chama River Ranch

118.2± acres | \$6,300,000 | Chama, New Mexico | Rio Arriba County



Chas. S. Middleton
— AND SON —

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Est. 1920

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Unser Chama River Ranch

Ranch History

Nestled just south of the Colorado border near the town of Chama, NM, the Unser Chama River Ranch presents a rare opportunity to own a property defined by history, river frontage, natural beauty, and legacy ownership. The Unser Family name is woven into the fabric of American motorsports history. The brothers and Al Sr's son racked up 9 wins at the Indianapolis 500 and multiple wins at the International Pikes Peak Hill Climb. The Unser family has strong ties to Albuquerque, Chama and Northern New Mexico's vast recreational amenities.

Ownership of the Unser Chama River Ranch represents more than acreage alone. It is an opportunity to carry forward a unique New Mexico legacy, rooted in family, recreation, and stewardship. Four-time Indianapolis winner Al Unser Sr. was born in Albuquerque, NM in 1939. He won the Pikes Peak Hill Climb in 1964 and 1965. Al raced in many different categories, won many different racing events in his career, and ranked amongst the best of the best in the industry. He had tremendous passion for racing but also loved Northern New Mexico where he had homes and land along the river at Chama.

Wintertime was spent on powerful snowmachines traversing the high mountain area surrounding Chama and the San Juan Mountains.

Al passed away in December 2021 with his wife Susan at his side. Susan continues to operate the ranch caring for her Alpacas and creating beautiful artwork out of the Alpaca fleece. Now, the time has come to transfer the ranch and its legacy on to someone else to continue the story on their beautiful river front ranch.



Property Overview

Spanning approximately 120± deeded acres, this legacy property is positioned in the Chama River Valley approximately 4 miles south of town. The centerpiece of the ranch is approximately ½ mile of Chama River frontage.

A private coded gated access takes you from the highway down to the headquarters area, past Al's shop and Susan's Alpaca barn, and on to their beautiful home that sits right above the Chama River. Al and Susan's home overlooks the river where sounds of the water moving downstream calm all of life's challenges. The home has high quality construction and includes beautiful pecan wood floors, two covered porches, one overlooking the river, perfect for morning coffee and barbequing, and a gorgeous patio with petrified wood fire pit and hot tub that overlooks the river. Starlink internet is on site along with six security cameras overlooking the property. An all-weather driveway takes you to the well-appointed guesthouse, Susan's studio, and a large steel framed and sided equipment shed, located 100 yards away from the main house. An improved two track road takes you to an attractive steel bridge river crossing that leads to an outdoor pavilion with two bunkhouses and recreation area. Complementing the property are ponds that are stocked with Brown and Cutthroat Trout for the fishing enthusiast.















This legacy property is a four-season wonderland. In summer, cool temperatures invite you to explore the river bottom, watch bald eagles nest in the nearby cottonwoods, see ducks and geese guide their young across the ponds, and hike in the surrounding mountains. Fall brings bugling elk, vivid color along the river bottom, and crisp mornings that signal winter's approach. Winter offers snowstorms, skiing at nearby Wolf Creek, and snowmobiling in the Brazos. Holidays at the ranch are especially enchanting with snow-covered cottonwoods, endless opportunities for outdoor recreation, and plenty of memories to be made with the whole family. Spring brings the thaw and new life as flowers appear, green grass sprouts, leaves appear, and the eagles come back to raise new babies.

Approximately one-half mile of private Chama River frontage is an exceptionally rare feature in Northern New Mexico, offering the sound, movement, and year-round beauty of living water directly outside the ranch headquarters.

Whether you are seeking a personal recreation retreat, a long-term investment, or a legacy ranch for future generations, the Unser Chama River Ranch offers all three.



Property Highlights

Total Acreage

Approximately 118.2 ± acres with 5.8 acres of Water Rights.

River Frontage

Approximately 2,600 linear feet with approximately 1,600 linear feet on both sides.

Fishing Ponds

5 ponds perfect for family and friends trout fishing.

Topography

River bottom with transition to highway.

Vegetation

Mature cottonwoods and native grasses.

Wildlife

Elk, mule deer, waterfowl, eagles, osprey, fox, and fish.

Improvements

Owner's home and guest residence, Alpaca barn, 2 large shops, 2 equipment sheds, and a beautiful studio/office retreat. High quality owner's home includes porches and patio overlooking the Chama River, petrified wood fire pit, and hot tub overlooking the Chama River. The pavilion area includes 2 bunkhouses for 12 additional guests, fisherman, or hunters.

Access

Private gated access from US Highway 84/64.

Elevation

7,600 ft to 7,637 ft

Price

\$6,300,000



Land • Vegetation

The terrain ranges from 7,600 feet to 7,637 feet in elevation. Cottonwood river bottom transitions to gently rolling meadow hills up to the east boundary along US 84/64. Vegetation includes native meadow grasses, mature cottonwoods, ponderosa pine, pinon juniper, and pockets of big sagebrush. Several varieties of wildflowers dot the landscape throughout the property.











Wildlife • Fishing

Fly fishing is the main attraction via the river or ponds. Located in Game Management Unit 4, the ranch does have elk and mule deer traversing the property annually. Several species of wild birds call the Unser Chama River Ranch home. A bald eagle's nest located near the river pavilion has become a seasonal centerpiece of the ranch, with returning eagles raising their young along the river each spring. Many other small game species walk the river bottom including fox, coyote, and bobcat.







Infrastructure • Water Assets

Fencing

Fencing is found on all perimeter boundaries of the ranch.

Water Systems

Reliable water access is one of the ranch's strongest assets.

2 Water wells: (depth and GPM unknown) Potable water at homes.

Pipelines provide water to the homes and AI's shop.

3 septic systems

Power Backup

Generac system to power entire parcel in the event of outage.

Road Access

Primary private gate coded access from US 84/64 with two-track gravel roads to improved sites.





Location • Lifestyle

Located in Rio Arriba County near the four-season mountain town of Chama, this ranch offers natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and access to nearby services. Whether envisioned as a private fishing retreat, seasonal family compound, or long-term legacy holding, the Unser Chama River Ranch offers an increasingly rare combination of privacy, water, recreation, and authentic Northern New Mexico character.

Nearby Communities • Services

Chama (4 mi):

Elementary school, grocery, fuel, restaurants, clinic, pharmacy, middle school and high school are in Tierra Amarilla.

Pagosa Springs (48 mi):

Retail, dining, medical care, regional airport with private service.

Albuquerque and Santa Fe (106 mi-169 mi):

Full services, higher education, and international airports.

Electric and Propane: NORA and Ferrellgas

Recreation

Fishing and hunting on the ranch, public lakes, and nearby large ranch properties. The Lodge at Chama, owned by the Jicarilla Tribe is directly across the highway from the ranch and the large Jicarilla Reservation adjoins the SW corner of the ranch.

Chama: Cumbres and Toltec Railroad, Western Heritage Days, Art Tour, Chama Days, Fireworks, and Balloon Rally.

Snow skiing and snowmobiling.

Golf course and Hot Springs at Pagosa Springs.

Hiking, horseback riding, ATV use, and stargazing.



Climate

Average January Temperatures
7°F low/8°F high.

Average July Temperatures
45°F low /81°F high.

Average Annual Rainfall
23 inches.

Average Annual Snowfall
82 inches.

Approximately 147 sunny days annually.



Price • Remarks

Offered at: \$6,300,000.

Included with the sale are all owned mineral, water, wind energy,
and solar energy rights.

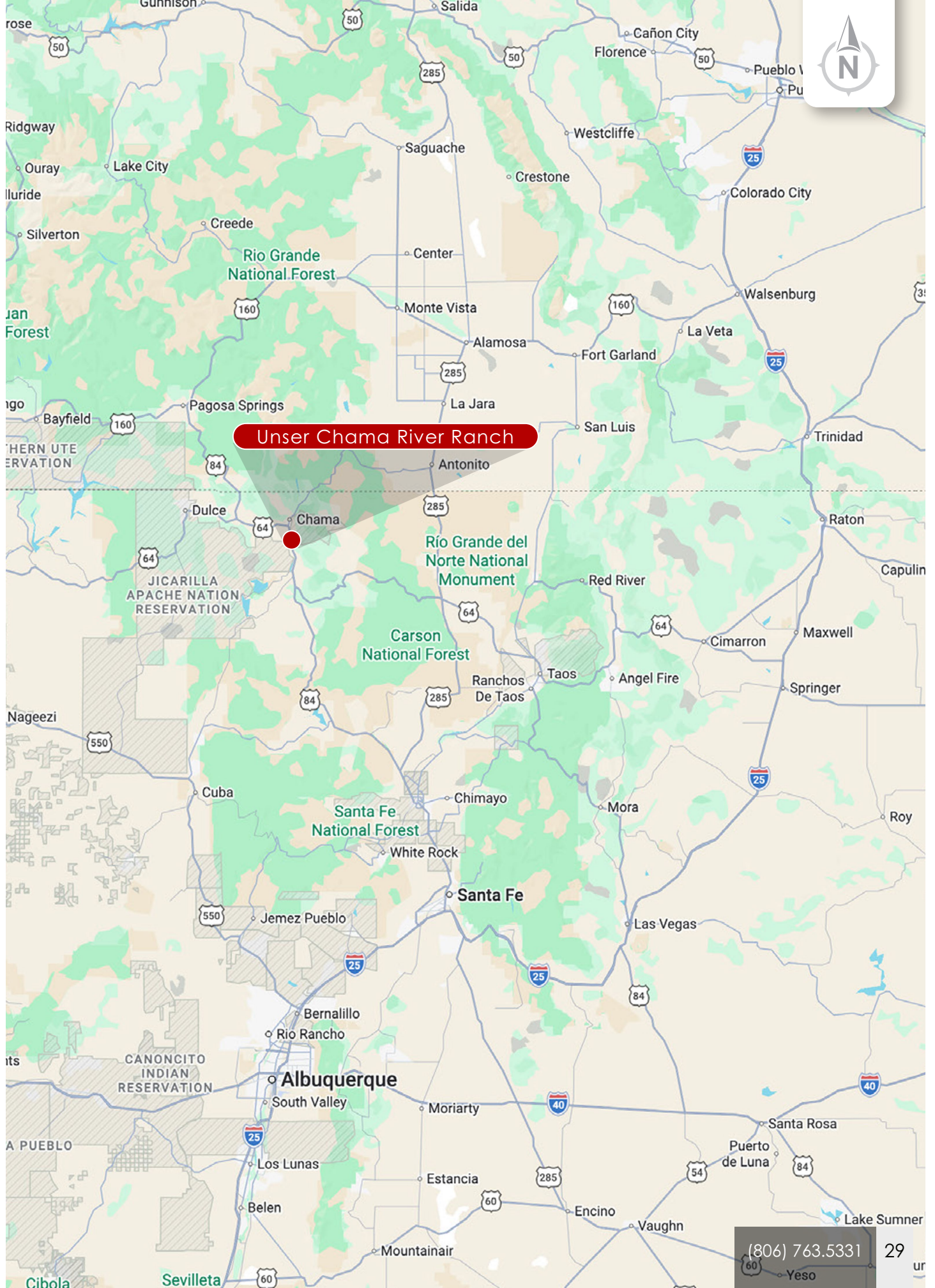
2026 Property Taxes: \$6,927.90.

Legacy, landscape, and location blended together in a way few
properties can offer. More than an investment, this is an opportunity
to become part of a longstanding Northern New Mexico story shaped
by family recreation, and the enduring beauty of the Chama Valley.

For more information or to schedule a private showing,
please contact Jim Welles at 505.967-6562







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