

in a high plains desert region. Duthie also discussed how fixed operating costs that the district must pay for, regardless of the highly variable amount of actual monthly water production, are apportioned to district customers.

The drought has limited the amount of water that Donala has been able to use from its Willow Creek Ranch—only 180 to 200 acre-feet of its total allocation of 280 acre-feet of renewable surface water. An acre-foot is 326,851 gallons. Duthie also reviewed local management issues for the ranch, including water flow measurement repairs and various legal and environmental issues that have been brought up by neighboring ranch owners and

regulatory agencies.

Duthie noted that Donala’s participation in the Transit Loss Model remains expensive—\$13,000 per year. The model is used, in part, in the Fountain Creek watershed to measure the amount of water rights that water owners use for their own needs or sell to others. The model is showing a 48 percent evaporative loss between Donala’s renewable water assets and the locations of water users who might want to buy Donala’s unused instream water.

The high evaporative loss during this drought season and the recently increased requirement to measure and report flows on a daily, rather than a monthly, basis are greatly reducing the economic benefit of downstream water sales at the current rate of about \$100 per acre-foot. However, Donala is still moving forward with a lease contract with the Arkansas Groundwater Users Association that will yield \$35,000.

Monument Creek standards

Duthie briefed the board on the progress of establishing a Monument/Fountain Creek watershed monitoring group. He also noted the emergence of a new very restrictive arsenic limit for drinking water plants and a separate new “hybrid” arsenic limit for wastewater treatment plants. Arsenic is a prevalent element that naturally leaches from the soil in many parts of Colorado, particularly in deep wells, and it is sometimes present in backwash water from these wells.

The new proposed hybrid limit on wastewater plants includes a human contact standard of 0.02 micrograms per liter (20 parts per trillion) plus a separate instream limit of 2 micrograms per liter to limit the amount of arsenic ingested by fish and retained in their fish flesh, which may be subsequently consumed by humans.

Director Bill Nance asked, “How do we monitor how much fish our customers eat?” Duthie said this would be a “worst-case standard.”

Duthie noted a person would have to drink 100 gallons of water treated to the new arsenic standard every day for 100 days (10,000 gallons) before showing any

ill effects such as skin lesions, circulatory problems, or cancer. Either component of the proposed hybrid standard could be applied by the state Water Quality Control Division to municipal or special district water/wastewater utilities.

Technology only exists for treating already very clean drinking water. No technology or chemical process has been proposed for removing arsenic in wastewater that contains many components that prevent arsenic removal and are not present in significant amounts in even the raw water that enters a drinking water treatment plant.

Wastewater discharge permit standards for arsenic and heavy metals like copper are from 100 to 1,000 times more restrictive than the corresponding drinking water limits for human consumption.

Duthie noted that all districts will have to spend a great deal of money in the short term for consultants for preliminary studies on how to start responding to the new nutrient and arsenic limits. Donala’s engineer, Roger Sams of GMS Inc., was preparing a comment letter objecting to these new costs and requirements for Donala, Triview, and Forest Lakes to sign and send to the Water Quality Control Commission by Aug. 27.

Duthie added that the district would have to have environmental attorney Tad Foster represent Donala and help form a new statewide coalition as he did in helping form the Colorado Nutrient Coalition.

Note: For more information on the new watershed monitoring group, the new “water plus fish” hybrid standards for arsenic, the lack of technology to remove arsenic from wastewater, and the very high cost for arsenic treatment, see the JUC article on page 7.

Triview tour

Duthie said the new Triview district manager, Valerie Remington, would help him arrange a joint meeting of the Donala and Triview boards at the Upper Monument wastewater facility for a tour of the plant. He noted that Remington has already toured the Upper Monument plant, though several Triview board members have never toured it.

Infrastructure upgrades

Some of the items Duthie noted regarding the infrastructure upgrades needed to transport larger amounts of renewable water from the southern part of the district to the northern parts were:

- Global Underground Corp. was scheduled to begin construction Aug. 20 of the Baptist Road pipeline that will help move Donala’s renewable water transported by Colorado Springs Utilities and supplementary water purchased from Utilities from Northgate Road to the water treatment plant in the district’s Holbein Drive office building and then to the adjacent district water tanks.
- The blowers at the Upper Monument plant are still dropping offline when, under a cost-saving agreement signed with Mountain View Electric, utility power to the plant is shut off during periods of high demand and the plant’s standby generators pick up the electrical load. Sams will arrange a meeting between GMS engineers, the contract electrician that installed the transfer system, and a representative of the standby generator manufacturer to analyze and solve the problem.
- A separate study is underway for improving the power factor by adding power conditioning equipment for the electricity provided by Mountain View to improve the efficiency of all the district’s electric devices that are used for water production and treatment.
- The parts needed for the Latrobe and Jessie pump upgrades at the south end of the district for pumping more water uphill to the Holbein treatment plant are still on order.
- The purchase of a mobile backup generator that can be used for both the Latrobe and Jessie booster stations is being re-bid.

In other matters:

- Extension of the dewatering sludge press at the Upper Monument facility is still on indefinite hold due to high bids.
 - The well 3A pump was pulled and cleaned and the well casing inspected by TV camera. The pump was to be reinstalled by Aug. 24. Typically inner well casings fail before the outer stainless steel casings.
 - A lightning strike to well 8 in late July damaged a circuit board. Repairs have been completed and well 8 is up and running again.
- The board went into executive session at 3:40 to discuss negotiating strategies and personnel.



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