

Donala Water and Sanitation District, April 16

# Board briefed on basin water issues

By Jim Kendrick

On April 16, General Manager Kip Petersen briefed the Donala Water and Sanitation District board on his April 8 presentation to the monthly Arkansas River Basin Roundtable in Pueblo regarding Donala being part of the solution to basin water problems. Petersen also introduced Donala President Bill George and Vice President Dave Powell to those in attendance at the April 8 roundtable session. Local water consultant Gary Barber briefed the board in executive session on a Fountain Creek water right that has been offered for sale to Donala.

The April 16 board meeting was presided over by Powell due to the unanimously excused out-of-state ab-

sence of George.

Petersen said the focus of the April 8 roundtable session was the basin implementation portion of the statewide water plan. Petersen noted that there is quite a difference between the uses of the name "Arkansas River basin," a watershed term, and the more political term "Arkansas valley" which more narrowly refers to agricultural areas adjacent to the main stem of the Arkansas River where there is the most concern about renewable water being transported to El Paso County. Barber concurred with Petersen, stating that Donala needs to spread an understanding that Donala is not expropriating agricultural water out of the Pueblo Valley like Aurora. Director Ken Judd will attend the May 13 roundtable meeting with Petersen.

Petersen also said he and the board would also attend the dinner on April 21 that kicks off the two-day Arkansas River Basin Forum sessions to be held on the next two days. He added that on April 14 he attended the inaugural meeting of the Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative, which has a focus on watershed-wide issues that affect the entire Arkansas River basin, particularly the upper end of the Arkansas River that includes Donala's Willow Creek Ranch. About 80 people attended, he said. Petersen will also attend a headwaters watershed group meeting in Leadville on May 15.

### Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority

Petersen noted that Director Bob Denny attended the April 1 authority meeting with him. The main topic of the meeting was a review of all the pending bills and other actions of this year's state Legislature session to date. Petersen said the district's water attorney, Rick Fendel, has been "instrumental" in leading an ad hoc group that is lobbying elected officials and their staffs regarding Senate Bill 15-183. This bill would affect the issue of how the

state water engineer calculates historic consumptive use for water rights and when the state can recalculate them if not fully used. As of April 16, this bill had passed its second reading in the state House of Representatives with no amendments, particularly any which might limit or eliminate the bill's application to current water court cases. He said a third reading was scheduled for April 20. If passed, the bill will then go to the governor for signature.

For more information see <http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2015A/csl.nsf/BillFoldersSenate?OpenFrameSet>. Use the dropdown window to the left of the "Go" button at the top of the page to select the correct numerical sub-list of bills to find this bill.

Another bill Petersen discussed was House Bill 15-1259, which would allow the use of two 55-gallon barrels to collect rain water coming off the roof of a single-family dwelling. He noted that a study presented to the Legislature shows that only about 3 percent of the water that falls on rooftops makes it to a state watercourse. Evaporation and absorption into the ground account for the other 97 percent that does not reach a stream much less a potential downstream water rights user. Powell noted that some homeowners association covenants may require prior approval of installing a rain barrel.

For more information see [www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2015A/csl.nsf/BillFoldersHouse?OpenFrameSet](http://www.leg.state.co.us/CLICS/CLICS2015A/csl.nsf/BillFoldersHouse?OpenFrameSet) and follow the same procedure noted above.

### 1041 permit response submitted

Petersen noted that he had provided each board member with a final copy of the response he would submit on April 17 to questions from Pueblo County regarding that county's consideration of Donala's 1041 permit application for future transport of its renewable Willow Creek Ranch surface water through Pueblo County via the new Colorado Springs Utilities Southern Delivery System pipeline. The response included pictures of some stormwater infrastructure within the Donala service area.

### Mountain View Electric Association rate increases 9 percent

Petersen advised the board that Donala's commercial electric utility rate would increase 9 percent on July 1 and again by another 9 percent on Jan. 1. He noted that during 2015 budget preparation last fall, Mountain View Electric had advised Donala that it hoped that there would be no increase, but Donala should include a 5 percent increase to be "safe." Electric utility costs comprise the largest share of Donala's total operating cost. Petersen said the average rate for the year would be about 5 percent more, or \$40,000, the amount he budgeted.

### Status of Operations

Petersen reported that the annual rehabilitation of the Robert Hull Water Treatment Plant was nearing completion and that all the district's wells are operational. Easements are being obtained in Sun Hills for the placement of a new 12-inch water main from the Latrobe Court tank to the Holbein Drive tanks. Norvell Construction has begun work on the 45-day project of repainting the interior of the district's Fox Run water tank, located on the north side of the east end of Baptist Road.

The ongoing Microthrix parvicella filamentous bacteria contamination problem at the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility is being slowly but successfully rectified. The bacterial foam thickness continues to be steadily reduced and the water quality of the treated effluent, which has always met state standards, is showing good improvement. A failed bearing on one of the facility's several aeration blower motors

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