

Fort Collins Water Board 2007 Annual Report

Following is a summary of the 2007 activities of the Fort Collins Water Board. The report focuses on topics addressed during the year plus actions taken on the 2007 Work Plan.

Water Board Members

Doug Yadon, Chairperson
Gina Janett, Vice Chairperson
John Bartholow
Steve Balderson
Mike Connor
Eileen Dornfest

Johannes Gessler
Phil Phelan
Dave Pillard
Reagan Waskom
Gary Wockner

Action Items

Raw Water Rental Rates and Delivery Charges

Each year prior to the irrigation season and after the irrigation companies have established their annual assessments for water shares, the City sets water rental rates and delivery charges for use of the City's raw water. These uses include rental to agricultural users, meeting certain raw water delivery obligations and use by other City departments.

Consistent with the last few years, staff is again proposing two separate categories for raw water rates and charges. The first category includes only those sources for which an active rental market exists. The second category includes sources with a limited rental market or those used primarily to irrigate City facilities (parks, golf courses, etc.).

The City will continue to monitor its supply when making surplus raw water available for rental this year. The first priority will be to ensure that adequate supplies will be carried over into 2008, although current projections indicate that the City will have ample surplus supplies available for rental this year.

The Board approved staff's recommendation to City Council the proposed raw water rental rates and delivery charges for the 2007 season.

Floodplain Variance for 132 West Willox Lane

The Board approved staff's recommendation to grant the variance request to allow the structure to be built at the FEMA flood elevation of 4984.1, thus eliminating the freeboard requirement and the need for flood proofing the structure. The primary reason for approving the request was that the property at issue lies in an area from which the floodplain has been removed by the Utilities which was recently completed by the Dry Creek Basin Drainage Improvement Project.

Floodplain Variance for Team Petroleum, 105 East Lincoln Avenue

The Board unanimously approved the variance request to have the lowest floor elevation at 4946.18, which is 0.22 feet below the regulatory flood protection elevation. The new addition is about an 18 percent addition to the existing building square footage. The construction to the existing building will mean that all grandfathered "floatable materials" must be cleaned up. Cleaning up floatable materials will be a major improvement in flood safety, as well as aesthetics along the river corridor.

Groundwater Monitoring Project

The Water Board recommended granting the Colorado Department of Agriculture access to a number of parcels owned by the City of Fort Collins, including four natural areas, eight City parks and one City golf course, where monitoring wells would be installed to conduct groundwater testing for a long-term testing program. The data that will be collected would be in their annual reports, data reports and in a fact sheet. There is an online water quality database where the information would be kept at no cost to the City.

2008 – 2009 Budget

After a long discussion, the Board recommended approving the Water, Wastewater and Stormwater 2008-2009 budget and rating increases but they encourage City Council to adjust the allocation for water conservation by a significant amount. The only proposed change was the Wastewater monthly rate at 12 percent.

100-year Design Rainfall Study

A presentation was given on the 100-year Rainfall Design Standard. It was explained that City Council was concerned that the design standard was adopted during a period of high emotion following the flood of 1997. After a lengthy discussion, the Water Board supported the rainfall standard as currently crafted for the foreseeable future.

Canal Importation and Ponds Outfall Stormwater Project

The Board recommended proceeding with the construction of the Canal Importation Ponds and Outfall and the Red Fox Meadows Restoration. The project will result in improved flood protection, better water quality and increased wildlife habitat.

Floodplain Variance for Advance Auto Parts

The variance was approved by the Water Board and will allow construction of the lowest floor of the building to 12 inches above the 100-year water surface, rather than the required 18 inches. They will allow Advance Auto Parts to maintain reasonable grades in the parking area without a step up to the building floor.

Larimer No. 2 Easement

The Board unanimously recommended the granting of the easement to the Larimer County Canal No. 2 Irrigating Company across the City's Old Water Works property. This easement will simplify the issue of a lease and ensure the City using the canal for its purposes in case the property is ever sold.

Presentations

The following presentations were discussed during the year:

- Treated Water Production Summary & Water Supply Outlook – monthly updates on snow pack and water supply.
- Halligan Reservoir Updates – quarterly updates on the progress of the Halligan Reservoir project.
- Consumer Confidence Report – Explanation of the drinking water quality brochure that all City water customers received. It was noted that the water utility surpassed all state and federal health standards for drinking water.
- 2006 Drinking Water Quality Policy Annual Report – This was the 13th annual water quality report since Council adopted a drinking water policy in 1993. The purpose of the policy is to ensure the continuous delivery of high-quality drinking water to the City's customers. The report provided an update on the goals and strategies included in the policy.
- Water Conservation Annual Update – Staff summarized various water conservation programs and activities that took place during the year.
- Stormwater Quality Annual Report - A review of the stormwater program as part of the requirements of the City's General MS4 Phase II Permit and related construction activities and construction dewatering permits. This included how the required six minimum control measures of the MS4 permit were addressed during 2007 and future goals for the stormwater permits compliance program.
- NPDES Permit Renewal Process for Water Reclamation Facilities – The presentation included a summary of special studies conducted to support an application for a site specific limit for copper in the plant effluent. The specific standard will set a limit that is fully protective of water quality in the Poudre River, the receiving stream. Without this site specific limit, the Utilities would have to attain the more restrictive "default" limit at a cost to the rate payers that would not provide a commensurate benefit.
- Watershed Monitoring Program – The City of Fort Collins is working with the City of Greeley and Tri-District's staff on watershed programs for the Colorado Big Thompson (CBT) and Cache la Poudre (CLP) supplies. The focus is on the monitoring of our drinking water supplies. Fort Collins Utilities has a water quality that most utilities would love to have and by participating in these programs, hope to keep the water quality very high.
- 10th Anniversary Commemoration of the Fort Collins Flood of 1997 – A memo was handed out explaining the events that were to take place on July 28, 2007.
- Customer survey – Systematic sampling of Fort Collins Utilities' database of current residential customers was done via a telephone survey. A series of questions was asked of 402 residential and 400 general business and commercial customers.
- Benchmarking – The Fort Collins Utilities wants to benchmark best practices in marketing and customer service to be in a position for continued excellence. Benchmarking is of great interest in high-performing utilities. Staffing ratios show that the Fort Collins Utilities is outperforming its peers.
- Instream Flows – In Colorado, water is a scarce resource with numerous competing demands placed on it by an ever-growing population. Balancing the rights of people to

divert and use water with the responsibility to provide a reasonable level of protection for the natural environment is one of the most important challenges of today. This introduction will provide a starting point in the Water Board's consideration of this topic as part of the new special committee on Poudre River issues. The Board anticipates learning more about Instream Flow Rights and their potential application to Fort Collins.

- Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District Updates
- Big Thompson Watershed Forum Update
- Poudre River Floodplain Regulations
- Legislative, Finance, Liaison Committee Updates
- Conservation & Public Education Committee Updates
- Engineering Committee Updates
- Water Supply Committee Updates