Colorado Stream Lines

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER
COLORADO DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES

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Animas-La Plata: The Further Saga

Ken Beegles, Division Engineer, Water Division 7

1999 brought another chapter in the continuing project struggle by ALP Project proponents to become more than a set of plans in the files of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. After the supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was developed under what was called Animas – La Plata "Lite", then Governor Romer and Lieutenant Governor, Gail Schoettler, hosted a series of meetings between project developers and groups opposed. This Romer-Schoettler process failed over a year's time (1997) to come to terms with mutually accepted position. Project proponents were attempting to secure more funding for the continued process of addressing environmental issues brought under the Jeopardy Opinion of 1992. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt brought several agencies together in Washington. Out of this came a proposal to build a 90,000 acre-foot reservoir and supply the tribes with a cash settlement. This was later dubbed the ALP-Ultralite by locals. The tribes rejected this proposal as unsatisfactory in addressing the obligations of the Ute Tribal Settlement Agreement of 1986. The critical decision point will arrive before 2005, when the tribes may choose to return to court to sue for their reserved rights on the Animas and La Plata Rivers.

During Spring 1999, the Bureau was authorized to study 10 project alternatives. Some of these were non-structural and some involved reservoir storage in different places. A cash outlay to buy water or dry-up land was a key component to attempt to satisfy the tribal claims. The consultants were studying some very unusual and innovative ideas. However many solutions did not solve the problems or provide the Southern Ute or Ute Mountain Ute any real water development. Interstate transport is currently a prohibited "law of the River" and features of some of the alternatives would have required storage or delivery to another state. The preferred alternative was released early in January in another Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. The new Babbitt supported proposal now envisions a 120,000 acre foot reservoir which will serve as a recreational facility with a diversion of 280 cubic feet per second out of the Animas River. No irrigation is included nor will any water be delivered to the La Plata Drainage. There will, however, be several thousand acre-feet of municipal/industrial water available to district contractors in Colorado and New Mexico. About 20,000 acre-feet are available to each of the Ute Indian Tribes. The total of 57,100 acre-feet annual depletion is the Section Seven amount granted currently. However, this amount may not factor in return flows and reflects the diversion allowance. Additionally, a monetary payment of $40 million, as part of a tribal development fund, would be included. It would be used to purchase 13,000 acre-feet of senior water rights to be left in the stream as well as the land on which the water rights are being used.

The total cost of the project is then estimated to be $247 million with Alternative 4. This includes recreational features anticipating over 200,000 user-days at the Ridges Basin Reservoir. Comments regarding this 1999 Draft Supplemental EIS are to be received by March 17, 2000. Initial comments from leaders in the area currently display cautious support for the Administration proposal. Environmental groups are still opposing a storage facility being part of the project.

Irrigators are looking for ways to mitigate the impact on their supplies on the La Plata River by studying small storage project ideas as well as possibly bringing in a domestic water line for the many new residents which have moved into the general area around Fort Lewis Mesa. The next few months should establish whether this proposal will be the one settled upon for the direction of future of water development in southwestern Colorado.

Policies Concerning Wetland Vegetation

Richard L. Stenzel, Division Engineer, Water Division 1

Can Wetlands Plants be Irrigated with Existing Irrigation Water Rights?

History often repeats itself. In 1902, the State Engineer, Addison McCune, wrote in his Biennial Report the following: "Under the conditions existing at the time appropriations were being made for the early ditches, and extending even to the time of the decree, the water was used quite differently from what it is at present. The crops were all early maturing and requiring little water. Now, however, both early and late crops are raised, the result being that instead of little use for water after July, it is now demanded for August and September as well. Formerly water was run on the land perhaps one week in the month; now with ... more diversified crops, it is run every day in the month. This, then, is an increase in the length of the season and of use from an intermittent to continuous flow, with the result of a largely increased .... volume diverted though the number of cubic feet per second may be no greater." Downstream junior water rights at the time believed that the change in type of crops and the length of irrigation was an expanded use of the original water rights. Previous to this change in irrigation practices and crop types, the junior diverters were the benefactors of the intermittent diversions and they were experiencing less opportunities to divert water. They wanted this change in irrigation patterns and crop type to be viewed as a change that required the senior water appropriators to go into court to get new water rights. However, they were not successful in changing case law or water statutes.

Ultimately, the State Engineer's Office, over time, has supported the position that water right owners can change the type of crops that are grown by owners of irrigation water rights. The early irrigators changed the types of crops that were being grown from irrigated wheat and pasture grasses to corn, alfalfa, and sugar beets. As times have changed, we have seen irrigation water rights being used to irrigate sod farms, green belts, and golf courses. Now this office has been asked to consider whether a change of water rights is required if a water right owner wants to apply water to grow wetland plants. These plants sometimes are grown for resale to be used by others to establish wetland mitigation areas and in some situations the wetland plants being grown are used to attract wildlife.

Wetlands irrigation is recognized as a beneficial use as long as the water is diverted from a stream and applied for the purpose of the growth, irrigation, and maintenance of wetlands plants. The water courts have granted new irrigation water right decrees in recent years that claim wetlands as being the type of beneficial use that will occur. Case law has stated that irrigation occurs when there is a contribution to the growing of plants. If it is not contributing to the greening or growing of plants, then it is not considered irrigation. The State Engineer's Office has decided that it will not challenge the use of existing irrigation water rights to grow wetland species plants. The fact the water right holder is changing the types of crops historically grown under the irrigation water right is not viewed as a change of water rights. This is consistent with what has historically been decided by this office when irrigators have changed the type crops grown.

This office will not challenge the use of irrigation water rights to grow wetland plants as long as the following conditions are met.

1. The irrigated wetlands are grown on lands that were historically irrigated by the water rights in question.

2. Ground water will not be exposed as part of the construction of the wetlands or growing of the wetland plants.

3. The water that is applied to the wetland plants is diverted when the water right is in priority.

4. When irrigation water is applied to the plants, it should not result in the ponding of the delivery of water for more than 48 hours that was applied to flood the plants. Multiple applications of irrigation water could occur which might result in the continuous flooding of the plants during the irrigation season. In order for this to occur, under ditch systems that are otherwise considered water short, it is envisioned it would require the irrigator to reduce the number of acres that were historically irrigated.

(continued)

5. Irrigation water will not be applied when the plants no longer need water for growth or is necessary to sustain the plants.

Wetlands Mitigation Replacement

The EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers require the replacement of existing wetlands whenever wetlands are impacted by certain activities. The State Engineer's Office has not opposed the replacement of the wetlands as long as the wetland mitigation replacement sites meet the following conditions:

1. The wetlands mitigation areas are replaced on a one-for-one basis.

2. The new wetlands mitigation areas must not be relocated in such a way that it will result in injury to water rights that were not historically impacted by the original wetlands.

3. The new wetlands mitigation area cannot be constructed in such a manner that it will result in the exposure of ground water. The State Engineer's Office has not opposed the removal of overburden in such a manner that it results in the subirrigation of the wetlands mitigation area.

4. If a gravel pit is constructed in a wetlands area, no credit for historic phreatophyte evapotranspiration will be allowed if the Corps of Engineers require the gravel operator or land owner to construct new wetlands to replace those that were located in the gravel pit area.

5. If water is required to grow the wetlands plants, the water that is applied must either be decreed for irrigation purposes or, if no water right exists, water can only be used for irrigation purposes if it is diverted during a free river condition.

6. If the wetlands mitigation area does result in the injury to water rights that historically were not impacted by the original wetlands, the parties responsible for constructing the new wetlands must provide augmentation water to mitigate for any possible injury to vested water rights.

Rejuvenating WaterTalk and StreamFlow

Leah Lewis, IT Manager

The Division of Water Resources offers two services enabling the public to obtain water levels and flow for most reservoirs and rivers in Colorado. These services are known as WaterTalk and StreamFlow.

WaterTalk is a telephone system that allows a customer to retrieve information about a specific gage. StreamFlow is the web page (http://dwr.state.co.us) that enables a customer to search and retrieve digital information about a specific gage or groups of gages. Together these systems are known as the Satellite Monitoring System because the data are collected from gaging stations that transmit water level readings every 15 minutes to a satellite. That, in turn, sends the data to our receiver in Denver.

This system was more that 15 years old and in need of repair. The modernization effort began two years ago and continues today. We hope to achieve more reliability, increased functionality, and increased efficiency. Currently, our system is under construction. We have the web page and WaterTalk systems ready to go, but they are missing one primary component; discharge (cfs) values. These are the values that most of our constituency is accustomed to using. The raw data that we receive is purely a value representing stage. This value is used in complex functions to calculate the flow (cfs) according to the current conditions of the river. Shifting sands or eroding banks, can change the value, and are periodically updated. There are over 450 gaging stations in Colorado, and the painstaking effort to perform calculations on each is time-consuming. Both WaterTalk and the web page should be fully functional by April 1, 2000, in time for runoff.

Snowpack!! Should We Be Worrying Yet?

Dave Dzurovchin, Hydrographic Branch, Denver

It seems as if Mother Nature enjoys playing tricks on us and making us wonder if She will make everything alright or not. This year, like last, has everyone wondering again if we will have enough snowfall, primarily in the mountains, to give us sufficient runoff for an "average" irrigation season and enough snow depth for another banner ski season. Both industries are very dependent on snow fall. Long range forecasters have predicted all along that it would be a dry winter for the southern mountains and Four-Corners area. The thing we must remember is that conditions can change rapidly. Those of us that have lived in Colorado for a number of years can attest to that fact.

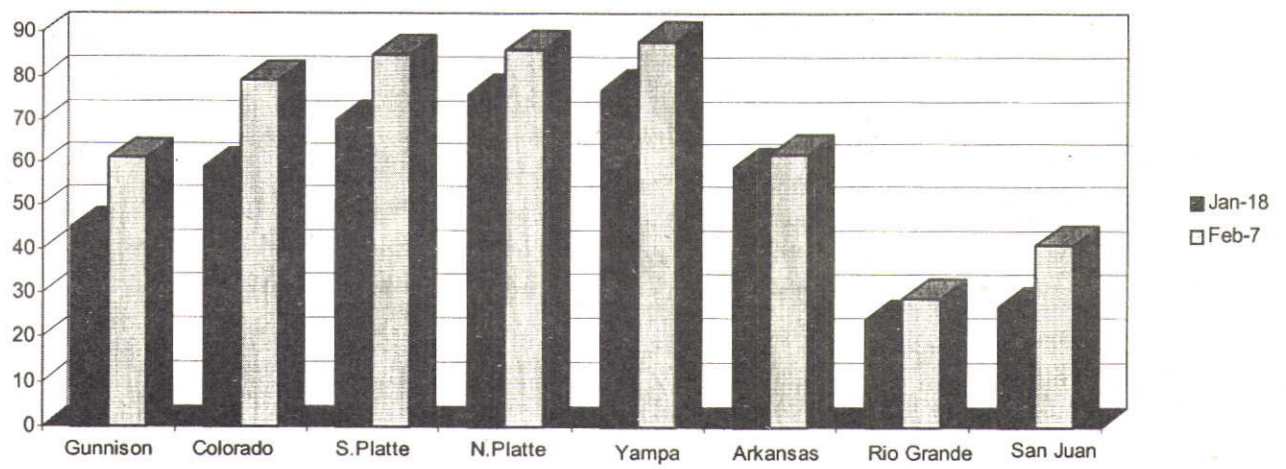
Through December 1999, anything south of I-70 was a disaster, with percentages ranging in the teens, and 20's being the norm. The Upper Rio Grande, San Luis Valley, was, and still is, the hardest hit. Steve Vandiver, Division Engineer, in Alamosa indicated that some of the snow courses that are manually checked by Division of Water Resources personnel had little if any snow at all. The Durango area is not far behind the Rio Grande drainage. The Gunnison and Arkansas drainages pick up a little more towards the north. From I-70 and north, the situation was much improved. The Steamboat Springs area, on the White and Yampa River drainage, is fairing the best of any in the state this year, with the North Platte, South Platte, and Upper Colorado River basins pretty close behind.

The month of January helped considerably, especially in the northern half of the state. The Natural Resources Conservation Service percentages showed a statewide increase of from 45% to 67%. The problem is that the snow is still staying to the north.

Following are the river basin percentages as of the first week of February, including the manual sites to go along with the electronic data collection sites: Yampa and White River Basin, 88%; North Platte River Basin, 86%; South Platte River Basin, 85%; Upper Colorado River Basin, 79%; Arkansas River Basin, 62%; Gunnison River Basin, 61%; San Miguel, Dolores, Animas and San Juan River Basins, 41%; Upper Rio Grande River Basin, 29%. As you can see, these numbers are very discouraging for our Divisions to the south. All indications are that the current snow pattern will continue for the remainder of the winter. An underlying factor complicating things is the fact that we had no early snow in most areas of the state either. This early snow generally is wetter and has a tendency to saturate the ground and melt down and form ice. When this happens it tends to prolong the runoff in the spring as the ice is slower to melt and this keeps natural water in the river longer and allows reservoir water to be used later into the summer months.

We can only hope that things will change as we get closer to Spring. Numerous small municipalities as well as farmers depend on the snow runoff. Thankfully, reservoir storage is good in most areas. A couple of weeks of good snowfall would certainly benefit the water community.

Electronic Percentages of Snowpack for 2000



15-Mile Reach Programmatic Biological Opinion

Orlyn Bell, Division Engineer, Water Division 5

With the enactment of the Environmental Species Act (ESA) and the listing of four endangered fish in the Upper Colorado River Basin, implementation of a recovery program has been pursued. The Secretary of the Interior, Administrator of Western Area Power Administration, and the governors of Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah signed the basic Recovery Program agreement in 1988. The goals of the Recovery Program are simple: provide a programmatic approach to recovering native Colorado River fishes listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA while allowing the Upper Basin states (Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah) to develop their compact entitlements.

While the goals of the Recovery Program are to recover fish while developing compact entitlements, the practical objective of water users is to utilize the program to obtain federal permits. Under Section 7 of the ESA, most federal actions require consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildife Service. Almost all new water projects and many existing water projects require federal actions such as 404 permits, BLM and Forest Service permits and rights-of-way, federal loans, etc. Federal projects, e.g., Green Mountain, Ruedi and Aspinall Reservoirs, are especially vulnerable as they are under the continuing jurisdiction or management of a federal agency.

If the program works as designed, the Recovery Program is the "reasonable and prudent alternative" to offset jeopardy and adverse modifications to critical habitat under Section 7 of the ESA.

Since 1988, it's been more or less year-to-year with a few large projects undergoing consultations and many specific efforts (not listed here) for recovery enhancement occurring but lacking any certainty. The completion of the 15-Mile Reach Programmatic Biological Opinion was a significant accomplishment within the Program. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued the final opinion on December 18, 1999. Basically, it will cover all existing depletions including five USBR projects and up to another 120,000 acre-feet of future depletions within Water Division 5. The conservation measures include a number of very significant actions:

- The water users will provide 10,825 acre-feet of permanent water for delivery to the 15-Mile Reach. The water users have agreed to split this equally between the East Slope and the West Slope.
- Ruedi Reservoir will provide another 10,825 acre-feet of interim water (for a 15-year period).
- Wolford will continue to provide 6,000 acre-feet of capacity as provided for in the Wolford Enlargement Biological Opinion.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, water users, CWCB and environmental community are cooperating on an expanded coordinated facilities study (16,000 to 20,000 acre-feet initially without storage releases).
- The Green Mountain check case surplus water will be delivered to the 15-Mile Reach pursuant to a contract recently agreed to by the parties (16,000 to 65,000 acre-feet).
- The Grand Valley Improvement Project will be constructed (28,400 acre-feet conserved plus 9,000 acre-feet at Palisade).
- Green Mountain "excess" surplus water will be delivered to the 15-Mile Reach.
- The proposed funding legislation for federal involvement in the above will need to pass Congress.
- Beneficiaries of the 15-Mile Reach Programmatic Biological Opinion will be required to sign recovery agreements. The intent of the recovery agreement is to commit the Biological Opinion beneficiaries not to "sabotage" efforts to complete the required conservation measures. (There are water right priorities, refills, and water administration issues to resolve.)

Even with the above permitting, "certainty" will not be absolute because of the potential for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to "re-open" project approvals if the fishes' status does not improve.

Yampa River Basin Programmatic Biological Opinion Underway

Robert Plaska, Division Engineer, Water Division 6

Since August of 1999, meetings have been held to discuss the development of a programmatic biological opinion under the Federal Endangered Species Act for the Yampa River Basin. Participants in the process include agencies of the federal and state governments, local water conservancy and conservation districts, the Yampa River Basin Partnership, and other local interest groups. Dan McAuliffe, Deputy Director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, is chairing these meetings.

The participants have been working to develop a management plan for the Yampa River basin that identifies future water needs in the basin, and the specific measures that would be taken by the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fishes Recovery Program to provide ESA compliance for those depletions. The plan would serve to identify actions to be taken to support recovery of the species and at the same time allow for future depletion in the basin. The plan will cover the Yampa River mainstem and also the Little Snake River in both Colorado and Wyoming. The four fish species that would be covered by the plan are the Colorado pikeminnow, humpback chub, bonytail and razorback sucker.

Some of the major issues being discussed in the development of the management plan are discussed below:

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has recommended that Yampa River flows at the Maybell gage during the months of August through October not be allowed to fall below 93 cfs at any greater frequency, magnitude or duration than would have occurred under historic demand conditions. How this flow would be maintained is still being analyzed, and several options are being considered. In addition, the Service also has developed guidelines to minimize impacts to natural peak flows in the critical habitat areas due to storage in new reservoirs or large new diversions.

- It has been identified that non-native fish are a major threat to the recovery of the endangered species. The Colorado Division of Wildlife has developed an Aquatic Wildlife Management Plan that in part addresses this problem and will be incorporated in the overall management plan of the basin. Reducing the numbers of non-native fish in the river and keeping those populations down will be an extremely important part of the recovery of endangered and other native fishes in the Yampa Basin.

- Of major concern to the people in the basin is the impact of the Recovery Program on future growth. The management plan is being developed to cover 50,000 acre-feet of additional depletions in the Yampa Basin in Colorado. This number is based on a water demand study prepared for the Colorado River Water Conservation District that evaluated growth and water demands through the year 2045. It appears that additional depletion of this general magnitude would be acceptable under the management plan, assuming the other parts of the plan are successfully implemented.

Although the development of the Yampa River Basin Management Plan was only started in August of last year, substantial progress has been made. The hope is to finalize the management plan later this year. The Service will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Colorado and Wyoming to implement the plan. This MOU will be the basis for a programmatic biological opinion, which will provide the people of the Yampa Valley with certainty that their existing and future depletions will be in full compliance with the regulatory requirements of the Endangered Species Act.

Costilla Creek Compact Watermaster Operations Manual

Steven Vandiver, Division Engineer, Water Division 3

Over the past several years a number of concerns have arisen from Colorado officials over the operations and administration of the Costilla Creek Compact. This Compact governs the administration of the water available in Costilla Creek, a small tributary of the Rio Grande, located along the border with New Mexico in the southeastern corner of the San Luis Valley. These concerns centered on both day-to-day administration and general principles of administration, many of which were never clearly defined by the Costilla Creek Commission or the Compact since it was signed in 1945.

Approximately three years ago, the Engineer Advisers for both states undertook, for the first time, a project to define the operating principles and criteria that would guide the Watermaster in their duties of administration of the Creek. After several "fits and starts", a formal process of negotiations and drafting was initiated, primarily during the 1999 calendar year. There were several issues that the engineering and legal representatives from the two states had to discuss and negotiate before it could be agreed to include them in the manual. The negotiating team resolved all but one of the outstanding or contested issues that will need to be decided by the members of the Commission.

On December 17, 1999 the draft Operations Manual was released to the water users and interested parties in the two states to get their input into the process. Those comments are due by the end of February at which time the Advisers will consider if changes need to be made to the original draft. The final draft will then be reviewed and presented to the Commission at its spring meeting in early May for adoption. Colorado officials are hopeful that this effort will provide present and future Watermasters guidance to accomplish their responsibilities and duties under the authority of the Commission. It will also provide an excellent training tool for new Watermasters at the time of turnover in that position and give a consistent guide to proper administration when Commission and Engineer Adviser members change. It has been a long and tedious effort to date but it will be well worth the effort if the manual is approved and can be used effectively.

1999 Meeting of Arkansas River Compact Administration

Steven Witte, Division Engineer, Water Division 2

The Arkansas River Compact Administration met in Garden City, Kansas, for the first time (at least in recent memory) on December 5-6, 1999. The location of this annual meeting was determined following the suggestion of the Administration's out-going federal representative, Mr. Larry Trujillo, last year.

Trujillo announced his resignation after nearly four years as chairman, citing the time constraints imposed by his position as director of the Colorado Department of Personnel / General Support Services.

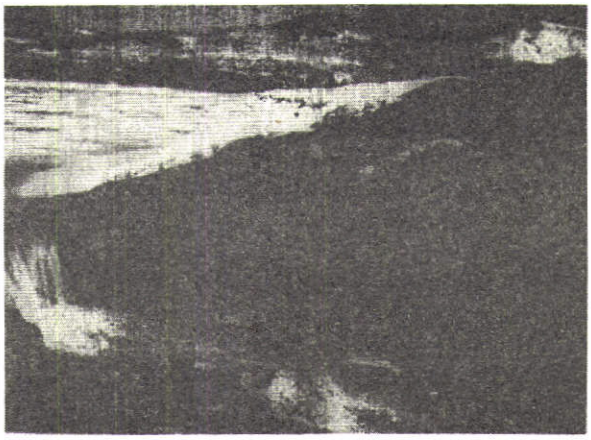
Mr. Aurelio Sisneros, President Clinton's nominee to succeed Trujillo, presided over the meeting in Garden City. Sisneros assumes control of the Compact Administration at a critical time as Colorado and Kansas seek to conclude a 15-year old lawsuit pending before the United States Supreme Court, and as the states seek to establish a normalized relationship in the post-litigation era. It was apparent to all in attendance that the job will be difficult.

The most promising result of the two day meeting was a commitment by both states to continue discussions. Meetings of the Administration's Operations Committee are scheduled to explore a number of operational and accounting issues that have accumulated without resolution over the course of recent years.

Repair of Failed Dam Essentially Complete

Jim Norfleet, Dam Safety Engineer, Water Division 4

On the evening of Saturday, May 2, 1998, at approximately 6:30 p.m., a sudden breach of the Carl Smith Dam sent a wall of water down Leroux Creek in western Colorado. The next morning, officials observed the Carl Smith dam had experienced a structural slide on the embankment near the right abutment. The massive slide, about 300 feet across, displaced a section of the earthen dam, vertically about 13 feet. Being full to the spillway, the displacement was sufficient to allow water in the reservoir to spill over the top of the embankment slide. Eventually, a trapezoidal shaped breach was eroded down to the foundation, 40 feet deep and 250 feet across the top. Peak flow at the dam was estimated between 3500 and 4000 cfs.



Looking across breach from the right abutment

The 50-year old Carl Smith Dam was an essential structure on the Leroux Creek system for administration of water delivered to down-valley farms, ranches and orchards. Not only does the reservoir regulate the flows in the delivery system, but provides an additional 800 acre-feet of storage to the total of nearly 4,000 acre feet stored in 26 other reservoirs. The importance of the structure was quickly realized after the extreme difficulty in delivering a constant flow and accounting of the water delivered during the 1998 irrigation season. It took the Leroux Creek Water Users Association, owner of the dam, nearly a year to secure funding from the CWCB for a rebuilding project and a second year of struggling to get water into the system without benefit of the reservoir. With a design approved by the State Engineer, heavy equipment was mobilized on July 12, 1999 to begin the laborious task of reconstruction. Technological advances in dam design since the original construction also necessitated major overhaul of the portion of the dam remaining after the breach. In addition, the difficult geology of the right abutment, a contributing cause of the failure, required extensive design features to protect against a similar incident.

Throughout August and September, monsoon weather patterns prevailed at this 8200 foot elevation site, an added challenge to completion of the project before winter. However, in spite of the wetter than normal weather and characteristic challenges of a large construction project, man and equipment prevailed over nature. After placement of 103,000 cu. yd. of embankment fill, 5,000 cu. yd. of sand filter material, 1,400 lineal feet of slotted drain pipe, 6,480 sq. yds. of filter fabric, 4,000 cu. yd. of riprap, nearly 200 cu. yd. of concrete, construction of a new 24" diameter outlet system and a larger emergency spillway, the dam took shape. On December 2, 1999, 143 days after the start, an inspection revealed the major components of the dam were functional, but several smaller items remained to be done before the project could be considered complete. The structure would be approved for storage during the 2000 irrigation season once the remaining items are satisfactorily completed. The owners should be recognized for their commitment and determination to secure, for the future, the water supply in this predominately agricultural community.

Looking across the partially completed breach

As with most professions, Dam Safety Engineering is a continual learning process of trying to better understand the forces and mechanisms effecting safety of a dam. Adding to the difficulty of understanding is the uniqueness of each dam's character and site geology, even though principles of design and construction for all dams are relatively basic. The aging process of dams constructed of soil and rock is also an uncertainty in assessing continued safe performance. While no activity is without risk, the historic performance of old dams must be better understood.

Human Resources

Retirements...

Dewayne Schroeder retired on January 1, 2000, after 30 years of service to the Division of Water Resources. Mr. Schroeder started his career with the Division in 1970 in the Designated Basins Branch. He became chief of the ground water section, and later appointed as chief of the Modeling Branch. He was recognized NATIONALLY for his expertise in ground water modeling. He had an illustrious career at DWR for 30 years and his contributions to the State of Colorado in the Kansas v. Colorado trial were nothing short of monumental. He has done an exemplary job and the Division would like to wish Dewayne all the best in the future.

Bob McCabe retired on December 3, 1999. His tenure with the State of Colorado began in the early '70s with the Colorado Water Conservation Board; he transferred to Division 6 in 1979, and then to Division 5 in 1987. Bob's primary duty was to regulate, control and distribute the waters of the Colorado River Basin during a Total River Call. He assisted in the preparation and maintenance of the water rights tabulation, was the key person for all matters relating to the 1990 Abandonment List and its ensuing court cases, and performed computer programming.

Robert Barnes is retiring on March 1, 2000, after 14 years of service to the State of Colorado. He has worked as a Professional Engineer in the Designated Basins Branch in the review and processing of changes of water right applications for almost 5 years. Prior to this, he worked for the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation in Ridgway, Colorado. Bob will be returning to Montrose to enjoy his retirement.

New Employees...

Joan Drummel started on January 14, 2000, as an Administrative Assistant in the Records Section, Denver office. Her duties will include providing research, information, interpretation and/or copies of historic documents for wells, water rights, etc. to the public and staff. Her previous experience included substitute teaching at Jefferson County Schools, and working at the Auraria and Arapahoe Community College libraries.

Toni Tucker started with the Division on January 24, 2000, as an Administrative Assistant in the Records Section. Her duties will include researching, interpreting and/or copying historic documents for the public and staff, and other resources for self-research. Prior to this, she was employed by the Department of Personnel, General Support Services for 1½ years.

Christina Dumpert will start employment with the Division on March 1, 2000, as an Administrative Assistant. She will be the receptionist in the Denver office. Her prior state experience includes 6 months at the Attorney General's Office as an Administrative Assistant.

Restructuring of Permitting Services Branch

Ken Knox, Assistant State Engineer

Beginning December 1, 1999 the Permitting Services Branch was reorganized by shifting the staff and their inherent functions within the Water Supply Section. Reassigned well permitting services staff will aid the individual Denver-based teams in the processing of well permits and other DWR related duties as deemed appropriate by the individual team leaders. The intent of this personnel and functional restructuring is to increase the effectiveness of our professional service and to support the engineering and technical staff. As directed by the team leaders, the additional team members will perform the following primary duties:

- Analysis and processing of well permit applications
- Change of ownership
- Requests for extensions of the expiration dates of water well permits
- Generate well permit registrations pursuant to decreed absolute water rights
- Statements of Beneficial Use
- Monitoring Hole Notices
- Data entry and copy functions

The anticipated benefits of the reorganization are:

- Increased well permitting efficiency by instituting a global directional process
- Enhanced team and individual responsibility
- Greater work diversity for permitting services staff
- Potential career advancement
- Better coordination of personnel with electronic capabilities (Well Tools and imaging)
- Increased individual employee morale
- Opportunity to broaden Team Leader supervisory experience

Calendar of Events

February 17	1st Quarterly Meeting of the Colorado Ground Water Commission, Northeastern Junior College, Sterling, CO; for more information, contact: Marta Ahrens at (303) 866-3581
March 1-3	State Engineer's 2000 Annual Meeting, Holiday Inn - Lakewood, CO
March 20	Annual Rio Grande Compact Commission Meeting, El Paso, Texas; for more information, contact Jerri Baker at (719) 589-6683
March 27-28	Colorado Water Conservation Board meeting, Colorado Springs, CO; for more information, contact Susan Maul at (303) 866-3441
April 4	Board of Examiners of Water Well Construction and Pump Installation Contractors, Denver, CO; for more information, contact Gina Antonio at (303) 866-3581

OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER

Colorado Division of Water Resources
Department of Natural Resources
1313 Sherman Street – Room 818
Denver, Colorado 80203

Phone (303) 866-3581
FAX (303) 866-3589
http://water.state.co.us/default.htm

Greg Walcher, DNR Executive Director
Hal D. Simpson, State Engineer
Marta Ahrens, Editor

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