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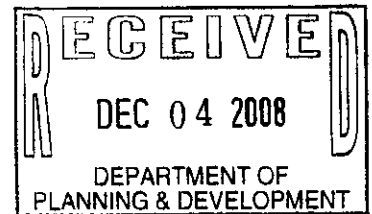
December 3, 2008

Pueblo County Department
Of Planning and Development
229 West 12th Street
Pueblo CO 81003

To: Pueblo County Commissioners

From: The Pueblo Chieftain

Re: Comments on the Southern Delivery System 1041 permit application.



The proposed Southern Delivery System – a 66-inch diameter pipeline, beginning at Pueblo Dam traversing some 20 miles through Pueblo County – poses many detrimental impacts on Pueblo and, as a result of increasing return flows and urban storm runoff down Fountain Creek, upon residents of the Lower Arkansas Valley, as well.

Colorado Springs proposes one or even two outlets from Pueblo Dam, one on the south bank and the other on the north side of the dam; a 14,000-square-foot pumping station with a pumping capacity of 78 million gallons per day below Lake Pueblo; and a pipeline route that would disrupt private property and road traffic, particularly affecting Pueblo West.

The structural integrity and safety of the dam and the continuing attractiveness that makes Lake Pueblo the most popular state park in Colorado are at risk. We believe by far the best route for the pipeline is below the confluence of the Fountain with the Arkansas River. The impacts on public and private property through Pueblo West inevitably will cause serious problems for some property owners and great inconvenience to all Pueblo West residents.

All of these construction impacts appropriately fall under Pueblo County's 1041 land-use authority, subject to the public comment that the Board of County Commissioners is conducting. Ultimately, you will be deliberating the fate of not only the SDS project, but of the potential long-term impacts on Pueblo County residents and property.



The county's 1041 regulations correctly recognize that impacts of expansion of a major domestic water and sewage treatment system, such as SDS, go far beyond the construction phase of the project application. More to the point, the project would fuel more urban growth in the Colorado Springs area, resulting in more population, more impervious surfaces (streets, parking lots, building roofs, drainage structures) and, therefore, more daily return flows and storm runoff.

All of this growth results in increasing erosion and sedimentation along Fountain Creek, deteriorating water quality and, during storm events that we know will occur in the future, the potential for flooding and the tragic loss of life and property in Pueblo and beyond the confluence into the Lower Arkansas Valley.

Recall the devastating flood of 1965, then multiply the damage to Pueblo and the Arkansas Valley by a factor of two or three times as a result of urban growth that already has occurred in the Colorado Springs area in just the last 40-plus years. Even the somewhat smaller 1999 flood took out the Pinon Bridge, washed away private farmland and part of a campground in El Paso County. SDS would enlarge the water supply and encourage still more growth, thus intensifying the threat of erosion and flooding.

Remember, too, that more than 500,000 cubic yards of sediment have accumulated in the Fountain since the Army Corps of Engineers levee system was constructed in the 1980s. The creek channel has risen to the point where the levees have lost much of their flood-control effectiveness, endangering large areas of Pueblo and the Fountain-Arkansas watershed.

The restoration and permanent protection of Fountain Creek and, by extension, the Lower Arkansas River, are paramount among the factors that necessarily will go into Pueblo County's review of this land-use application. The community's physical environment and very quality of life need your protection.