



50% Progress Report

To date the first five of the nine planning tasks within the scope of work submitted to the CWCBC are completed. Those include: Profile existing water system, Characterize water use and forecast demand, Profile proposed facilities, Identify conservation goals, and Identify conservation measures and programs. All remaining sections are currently in progress.

One accomplishment we recognized to date is the positive response from our community for the proactive approach we are taking toward water conservation. We have managed to promote our collective efforts at several public events including the Northwest Colorado Water Forums, a viewing of *Liquid Assets*, Yampatika (environmental education non-profit) and for the Yampa Valley Sustainability Council. All of these venues allowed discussion of the project and gave stakeholders and citizens an opportunity to voice their opinions. We are happy to encourage feedback and look forward to our public comment period. Another accomplishment for the CITY is approving a new tiered rate billing structure which requires high volume water users to pay more. This was a success because raising rates is never popular however we effectively conveyed the message to the City Council and public of the importance of infrastructure improvements and conservation, bringing acceptance of the increase tiered rates for 2011.

Steamboat II Metropolitan District, a wholesale customer of the City of Steamboat Springs, originally agreed to participate in the community water conservation plan. Due to recent district interactions, Steamboat II Metro has decided to not directly participate in the Plan. However, since the City sells water to them they are under contract to comply with codes and policies adopted by the Utility provider (CITY). Accordingly, indirect participation from this entity will still occur. In the plan we have decided to exclude specific data for this district, which is a minor set back because time was spent collecting and analyzing data. Possibly in the future they will resume their official participation in program implementation and cost sharing.

The main challenge that we have encountered is capturing the character of each District; recognizing the differences in available finances, distribution systems, billing systems, staff levels, and customer types. This effort required more extensive and detailed research and analysis than originally anticipated. However, we have managed to analyze the districts separately when necessary and combine them when applicable. Some conservation programs we have analyzed are for the entire city limits and others are district specific depending on applicability and implementation logistics. Both entities – the CITY and MWW work well together and continue to incorporate the ambitions of their respective governing boards.

The second challenge was accumulating some of the data for the cost benefit analysis. In the City's case, some of the records are only written by hand or available from the billing system, which we are in the process of upgrading to have more user friendly searching and printing capabilities. Quantifying true costs for staff time spent or estimated to be spent has also been a challenge due to the way employees' record their time and how certain project records are kept. On a positive note, recognizing these limitations has shown us areas that need improvement and how we can implement more efficient recording methods in the future.

Thirdly, not having access to the Alliance for Water Efficiency calculator tool was a minor obstacle. The cost to purchase the tool was expensive, especially since it required individual licenses for each district plus our consultant; therefore we decided not to purchase it. That required us to research and estimate water savings for each program, adding some time to our project. However we feel confident our extra research efforts have resulted in a sound perspective on the range of water savings estimated for different conservation strategies.

In our first narrative, April 2009, we set ambitious water saving goals to be achieved by the year 2030, of reducing water consumption by 20%. Based upon recent research, the studies of the actual performance of implementing water conservation programs and measures in a number of water districts nation-wide has resulted in less water savings than preliminary projected. In addition, our research of water savings estimates for specific programs including the raw water conversion for park irrigation, and the public outreach and educational programs conclude that water savings originally projected are actually less. With the loss of Steamboat II Metropolitan Districts' as an official partner are realized water savings in that category is also less. Therefore, it is recommended that the previous water conservation 5, 10 and 20 year targets be revised from 10% by 2015, 15% by 2020, and 20% by 2030 to 5% by 2015, 10% by 2025 and 15% by 2035. To compliment these goals, both districts set targets for improving the percentage of non-revenue water as follows: from 19.9% to 12% for the City of Steamboat Springs (City) and from 10% for Mount Werner Water (MWW) to 8%. These new targets better reflect our programs and the rate of implementation while instilling confidence that meeting these goals is a realistic accomplishment.

Due to some of the time challenges explained above we submitted a request for a time extension on completion of the scope of work, which Ben Wade has approved. Therefore our aim is to submit the new and improved plan to the CWCBC by the second week of January 2011.