

Summer 2007

Quail Creek Reservoir
Photo: Doug Wilson

Water Line

Water for Today and Tomorrow

Manager's Message

Ron Thompson, General Manager

Is water conservation alive and well in Washington County?

Yes, water conservation is critical in a desert community. Yes, Washington County often takes criticism on its water usage. And yes, conservation efforts are being aggressively pursued by the District and the municipalities within our County.

The following thoughts should give you an idea of the importance placed on water conservation in Washington County and the strides that have been and are continuing to be taken to reach conservation goals.

The Washington County Water Conservancy District submitted its water conservation plan to the Utah Division of Water Resources in 1996. In 1998, the state legislature actually passed a House Bill requiring water conservancy districts to adopt a water conservation plan to be submitted to the Division by 1999.

Since 1998, all the cities within the County make use of an increasing

block rate structure when charging for water. The price of water increases as usage increases. St. George applies an even higher rate known as a conservation rate during the spring and summer months to discourage excessive outdoor water use.

Since 2005, the District requires all wholesale water customers to have a conservation plan in place before the District will sell water to them.

When analyzing water use and computing usage numbers, certain variables must always be considered. Following is a list of some of the variables involved when computing water usage numbers for Washington County:

- Washington County is a hotspot for tourists. Approximately 3.5 million visitors vacation in our county each year;

- As of April 5, 2006, there are 4,000 motel rooms in the county and 1,031 RV and tent sites;
- We have 300 sunny days per year with temperatures as high as 115° during the summer months leading to an extended growing season; and
- 25% of the homes in Washington County are second homes. Washington County water is used year round on the landscapes of secondary homes and this water use is counted. The people using the water are not counted and, therefore, their water use is attributed to local residents.

This unique situation with second homes led our water conservation coordinator to do some math. Julie Breckenridge apportioned water use to those using secondary residences, relying on water usage figures from the State of Utah for six of our communities. These numbers are based on residential water use only and are taken from the 2005 annual water use reports received by the state from each city.

The second number (highlighted below) for each city includes secondary home population in the gallons per capita per day (gpcd) calculation. The numbers at the bottom of this page tell the tale.

The District established a baseline water usage number of 335 gpcd in 1995. This number was determined by a study prepared for the District by Boyle Engineering translating into a savings of as much as 24%.

Yes, we still have a long way to go when it comes to water conservation. But great strides have been made in the past 10-12 years. If you take a look at new development projects in Washington County, it is plain to see that landscapes have changed significantly. Drought-tolerant plants are used extensively and grouped such that they receive minimal water.

The biggest challenge however still remains: the mindset of our people. **Each and every man, woman and child must make a lifestyle change; a change that will include conservation of our resources as a way of life.**

Commitment to conservation should not be based on our pocketbook or on city ordinances. It should be based on respect for the resource, respect for our community and respect for those who will live here long after we are gone.

Water use in gallons per person per day with second home water use allocated only to local residents OR to both local residents and people using water in second homes

St. George water use all allocated to local resident population	164 gpcd	Hurricane water use all allocated to local resident population	177 gpcd
St. George water use adding second home users	127 gpcd	Hurricane water use adding second home users	125 gpcd
Ivins water use all allocated to local resident population	141 gpcd	Santa Clara water use all allocated to local resident population	223 gpcd
Ivins water use adding second home users	101 gpcd	Santa Clara water use adding second home users	181 gpcd
La Verkin water use all allocated to local resident population	293 gpcd	Washington water use all allocated to local resident population	129 gpcd
La Verkin water use adding second home users	225 gpcd	Washington water use adding second home users	93 gpcd



PIPE DREAMS by Corey Cram

In 2006, Senate Bill 27 authorized the State Board of Water Resources to build the Lake Powell Pipeline Project. The state also selected a project manager and hired an engineering firm to conduct preliminary engineering and environmental studies.

As the preliminary work proceeds, questions come up with respect to different aspects of the project. One of the questions frequently asked concerns capital cost.

Based on what is known today, the project is estimated to cost approximately \$500,000,000 to construct (not including interest costs). In another eight years

when construction is anticipated to begin, materials, labor costs and normal inflation will be factors. Due to certain variables, the exact dollar amount of this project is not yet available. As engineering studies are completed, the actual price tag will be more clearly defined.

Funding mechanisms are in place for this large project. The State of Utah will fund the project through low interest bonds and financing costs will be passed on to the Districts. Interest rates provided by the state are expected to be extremely competitive and likely cheaper than bonds that can be obtained by the Districts. It is expected that the three Water

Districts will repay their portion of the project and take over ownership.

Each of the three Water Districts will determine how it will repay its share of the project costs. The Washington County Water Conservancy District has developed a Water Availability Charge calculated as an impact fee which is being used to fund future projects. This will include such projects as the Ash Creek Project, development of the Sullivan well system, the Crystal Creek Pipeline Project and the Lake Powell Pipeline Project.

Impact fees are charged to ensure that new growth pays its proportionate share of the costs for the development of water infrastructure. All impact fees collected are required to be placed into a separate, interest-bearing account and may only be spent on qualifying capital projects identified in the District's Capital Facilities Plan.

This plan may be accessed at: <http://wcwcd.state.ut.us/Capital%20Facilities%20Plan.htm>.

It is anticipated that the annual Operation and Maintenance costs (O&M) for the pipeline will amount to approximately \$2,900,000. Water from Lake Powell will have to be pumped up from Kane County. However, there is a drop in elevation into Washington County which would support power generation. The marketing of this power is expected to pay for the annual O&M costs.

The Lake Powell Pipeline Project has been in the planning stages for over 11 years. It is the goal of the District to keep the public well informed on all aspects of the project.

Find information at: <http://wcwcd.state.ut.us> and <http://www.lakepowellpipeline.org/>

Utah waters and aquatic species exhibit unveiled

By Steve Meisner, Virgin River Program Local Coordinator

The Living Planet Aquarium in Sandy, Utah, unveiled an exhibit on June 12, 2007 featuring Utah's waters and aquatic species. The woundfin, a federally listed endangered species found in the waters of the Virgin River, is one of the species featured.

One of the main goals of the exhibit is to educate the public on the importance of stewardship and conservation. Brent Anderson,

President of the Aquarium, said that educating children on our ecosystem is critical since they "are our future decision makers."

Lieutenant Governor Gary Herbert addressed those attending the ceremonies emphasizing that "we have a responsibility to be good stewards of the land. We have one chance to get this right."

If you happen to be in Sandy, plan on walking through the Living Planet Aquarium and pay particular attention to the Utah Waters Gallery. The aquarium is located at 725 East 10600 South in Sandy, Utah.

The following entities cooperated with the Living Planet Aquarium on this exhibit:

- Virgin River Program
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
- Utah Division of Water Resources
- Central Utah Water Conservancy District
- June Sucker Recovery Implementation Program

Virgin River Program web page — www.virginriverprogram.org



Staff Leaks

Kent Walker

Water Treatment Plant Operator

By Kim Walker and Ann Jensen

When the District took over the management and operation of the water treatment plant in 2006, several new workers joined the ranks as District employees. Kent Walker was one of those newly added to our ranks.

Kent is not a Washington County native, but has made this area his home for the past 24 years. He was raised in Rockland, Idaho. He graduated from Ricks College and then pursued a degree in Agronomy from Brigham Young University. He met Kim at BYU; they were married in 1979.

Kent and Kim lived in Idaho for a short period where Kent worked as an agronomist. When they settled in Santa Clara, Kent went to work as a groundskeeper for the Bloomington Golf Course. He also worked in the Parks Department at the City of St. George.

Eventually, Kent acquired his plant operator's license and, for the past 15 years, has worked as an operator at the Quail Creek water treatment plant. This license is awarded once a state test is passed.

Practical hands-on work experience enhances the likelihood of passing the test. Kent has continued his training and holds the highest certification possible to this point – level four in both water treatment and distribution.

A typical day at the treatment plant might find Kent:

- maintaining equipment;
- calibrating equipment and instruments;
- batching chemicals and doing lab work;
- cleaning the plant and the grounds (the plant site consists of 25 acres of land);
- taking readings, observing plant processes, writing reports; and
- making chemical and flow adjustments.

William Wordsworth once said “The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love.” Kent's main hobby is helping other people. A friend of Kim's once teased her by saying “she would see him more often if she were the widow next door!” Kim is proud of Kent's generous spirit and is willing to share him with others.



Back row: Danielle, sons Paul and Mark, Crystal
Front row: Kent, granddaughter Faith, and wife Kim

Other hobbies he enjoys include hiking, hunting, fishing and scouting. Kent has been involved in scouting in one capacity or another for the past 25 years and is currently Scoutmaster for Troop 545. He is the District Boy Scout roundtable training commissioner for the Snow Canyon District. He has been awarded the Silver Beaver in Scouting for exceptional service. This is the highest award the Utah National Parks Council can bestow. In order to qualify for the award, a person must be nominated and have been a scout leader for at least 10 years.

Kent is active in his community. He was a volunteer EMT for four years. For the past eight years, he has given his time to keeping the Snow Canyon Little League ball fields in top playing condition.

Kent and Kim's two sons, Paul and Mark, have seen to it that Kent has three baby granddaughters to love. One of his greatest joys is spending time with Faith, Grace and Lydia.

Hank Childers, Kent's supervisor at the treatment plant, says “when Kent desired to change careers, he certified with the Utah Department of Drinking Water in water treatment on his own without any promise of employment at the plant. That initiative got his foot in the door for an interview and helped him reach his goal. He has a great customer service attitude, is usually the first to volunteer to help out any of the other employees and is a team player.” Hank and the District value Kent's sense of commitment to duty, his generosity in the workplace and his tireless work ethic.

Local Reservoir Capacities and Levels

Reservoir	Capacity	August 2006	% of Full	August 2007	% of Full
Quail Creek	40,000 af	30,369 af	76%	24,357 af	61%
Sand Hollow	50,000 af	46,843 af	94%	41,871 af	82%

Conservation Corner

by Julie Breckenridge – Water Conservation Coordinator

FREE Landscaping Workshops September — November 2007

These workshops are held at the Tonaquint Nature Center

1851 Dixie Drive
St. George, Utah

*Space is limited so please call
673-3617 to reserve your spot.*

Saturday, October 20
10-11 a.m.

Unlock the Bulb Mystery

Bulbs are a great way to add color and the element of surprise after a dull winter. This class will supply information on bulbs that work well in our climate and their care.

Saturday, October 20
1-2 p.m.

Fall Festival

Garden Tours will be conducted; booths containing crafts and garden ideas will be featured. A pumpkin patch will be available for the kids.

Saturday, November 17
10-11 a.m.

I do What? Where? Care of Native Plants

Would you like to know what to do with the red yucca shoots after they bloom? How about the care of ornamental grasses?

Everyone has been planting desert plants, but not everyone is sure how to care for them properly.

Help is here! This workshop demonstrates how to care for native plants throughout each season.

Water Faux Paus

A typical garbage disposal uses about one gallon of water per minute. Why not compost instead of using the disposal? The compost would provide nutrients to your plants and conserve the soil's moisture. The water savings would be significant over time.

Conservation Tips

Be conscientious about removing weeds from your garden. Excessive water consumption due to plant competition will decline. Educate children about the importance of conserving water. Show them how to turn off faucets completely after each use.

Water-Wise Plant Features

Apache Plume - *Fallugia paradoxa*

The Apache Plume has the ability to thrive in extreme drought. In fact, it will perform poorly if overwatered. This plant has a lacey appearance and will retain its delicate coloring throughout the summer months. Well-drained soil conditions are needed and full exposure to the sun is required. If properly cared for, the Apache Plume has a long life span.

The Demonstration Garden
(1851 Dixie Drive)
features this plant.



Photo: Julie Breckenridge

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WASHINGTON COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

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Editor:

Ann Jensen

Contributors:

Ron Thompson, *General Manager*
Julie Breckenridge, *Conservation Coordinator*
Corey Cram, *Watershed Coordinator*
Steve Meisner, *Virgin River Program
Local Coordinator*

Photography:

Doug Wilson, *Special Projects Coordinator*

Design Consultant:

Polly Pattison

Production, Printing & Circulation

The Spectrum

The *Water Line* is published by the
Washington County Water Conservancy District
136 North 100 East
St. George, UT 84770
435-673-3617

This publication can be accessed
on the District's web site at
<http://wccwd.state.ut.us>