

Spring 2007

Sand Hollow Reservoir
Photo: Doug Wilson

Water Line

Water for Today and Tomorrow

Water is in short supply as a result of meager winter storms

Once again the winter season is behind us.

- This is the time of year when winter's bounty presents itself as spring runoff.
- This is the time of year our reservoirs are nourished.
- This is the time of year when we know if our water supply is plentiful or is greatly lacking.

Precipitation levels for the 2006-2007 water year fall well short of normal. The forecast for runoff in the Santa Clara river system is at 20% of normal. The forecast for runoff in the Virgin River is at 36% of normal through the month of July.

We are approaching the hottest and driest time of year in southern Utah. These forecasted numbers are not good. The irrigation community is facing a significant water shortage this year. All of us must band together and do everything possible to conserve this precious resource. We must use our water supply wisely and protect it passionately.

Whenever we are faced with the need to stretch our water supply, conservation is the first and foremost approach. Due to the extreme cost of building and maintaining infrastructure,

“Practice water conservation because it is the moral and ethical thing to do.”

(Ron Thompson)

conservation is the least costly method of sustaining our water supply. It is also the approach that involves each and every one of us.

The need to protect our water source is not a new concept in the state of Utah. In 1856, Brigham Young exhorted residents to be vigilant with their water supply. He said:

“In regard to irrigation, I will venture to say that one-half of the water is wasted; instead of being applied where and when it is needed, it runs here and there, and perhaps one-half reaches the drooping plants. If people would take a little more pains in preparing ditches, gates, and embankments for economically conducting water where it is most needed, it would be a very great advantage to them.”

These same words apply to us today. We need to take *“a little more pains”* in finding ways to conserve water and in using it wisely. It would be a *“great advantage”* to each of us now and to those who follow us in the future if we would put some thought into how we use our water.

Try to pay attention to how you are using your water supply. Teach your children to be conservation-minded and explain to them that the future of our water supply starts with prudent use of our current supply.

When you are away from home, do not be excessive in your water usage just because you are not paying the water bill. Develop a mindset about

Manager's Message

Ron Thompson, General Manager

water. Practice conservation at all times, not only to benefit your wallet or to stay within the parameters of your city's watering ordinance. Practice conservation because it is the ethical and moral thing to do no matter where you are.

Washington Fields Canal Project will conserve about 4,440 acre feet of water annually

Water conservation is a huge priority in southern Utah. Not only are homeowners asked to conserve water both indoors and out, the agricultural community is also expected to evaluate their use of irrigation water.

It has long been an important goal of the St. George and Washington Fields Canal Company to pipe this canal. The actual planning process for the canal project was initiated by the District on November 25, 2003.

The original Washington Fields Canal was constructed by the pioneers in the 1880's. The canal had been concrete lined in the 1970's. The lining was leaking in many places and repair efforts failed numerous times. Significant water was lost due to evaporation. The canal has washed out several times over the past few years, flooding nearby fields. With the increase in urban development in the Washington Fields area, safety concerns were a prevailing issue.

Work began on the piping of this historic canal with 63" pipe during the winter of 2004. The pipeline was completed in



March of this year just in time to once again deliver water to crops.

The total length of this pipeline is 45,522 feet or approximately 8.63 miles.

The St. George and Washington Fields Canal Company is to be commended on its efforts to see this project to completion. This is one more instance where working together leads us closer to becoming a water-conserving community with an eye on the future prosperity of Washington County.

I hope this message has conveyed my concerns for the upcoming water year. If each of us could come up with just one water-conserving idea per week and then implement it in our homes and/or businesses, the water savings would be enormous. It would not take much time or effort. Even a small task such as fixing a leak, could save up to 500 gallons of water each month.

**Water is life !
Don't waste it!**

Water conservancy districts are authorized to manage water; not to manage growth.

By Ron Thompson, General Manager

The Washington County Water Conservancy District was established to conserve, develop, manage and stabilize water supplies within the county. The District is a “special purpose” district, in large part because the business of water is complicated. Particularly in the West, laws, rules, history, traditions and the complex facts of hydrologic cycles in desert river systems create layer upon layer of interacting factors. This specialty is one that many may know a little bit about, but few know a lot about.

Extensive study and research needed to guide decisions for the public good

The District’s job, therefore, requires extensive study and research and the accumulation of a substantial body of knowledge to aid in formulating and guiding decisions that will serve the public. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that the legislature has

structured water conservancy districts to have board members selected by appointment. These public servants, who are paid virtually nothing for their service, must devote many hours to learning about water in their particular service area and in the West, in order to help guide the direction of their district.

A water conservancy district is not in the business of promoting, encouraging, limiting or restricting growth. The decisions that govern the amount, location and type of growth are delegated to elected officials of the municipalities and the county. The election process, the constitutional mechanism by which government obtains the “consent of the governed,” ensures that these officials are responsive to the desires of those who elect them. These elected officials decide what limits will be placed on the choices people make as to where and how they live and work. A wa-

ter conservancy district can then respond to the plans produced by the elected representatives of the people. Water districts do their best to make sure that water flows out of the tap each and every time it is turned on.

Many who oppose growth in Washington County would like the District to lead that charge by refusing to develop new water supplies, in particular the Lake Powell Pipeline Project.

For one reason or another, they claim that the pipeline project idea is:

- poorly considered,
- not timely, or
- otherwise ill-advised.

One thing is certain. The people who make these claims have not taken the time to attend the many public meetings held:

- by the Board of Trustees of the District,
- by city councils that have addressed questions related to the pipeline project,
- by the Board of Water Resources of the State of Utah,
- by the Governor’s office, or
- by the Legislature.

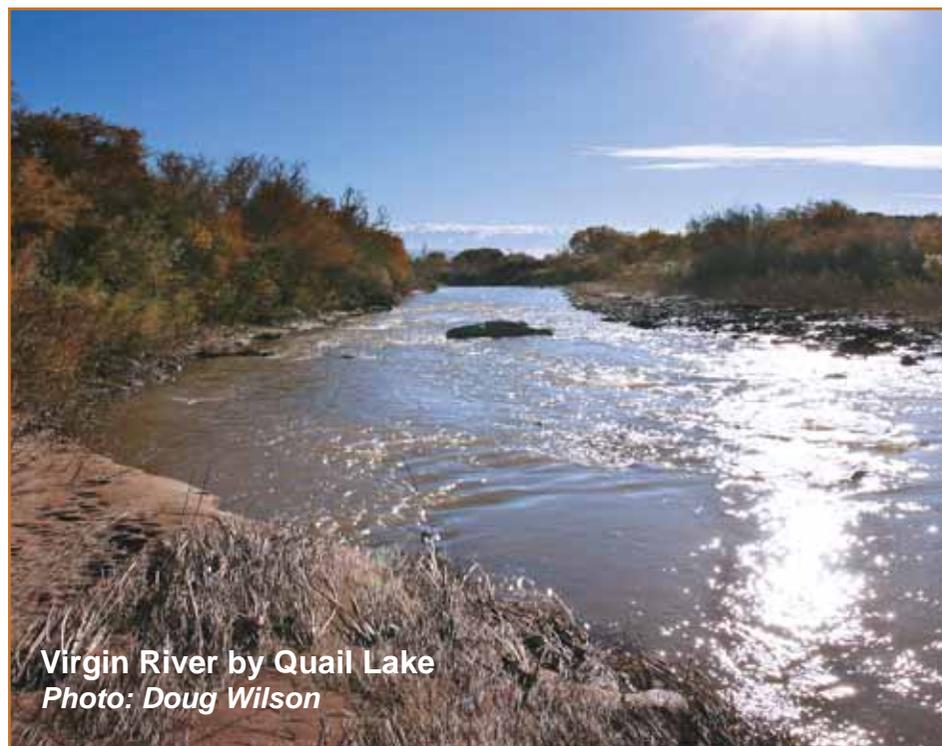
To be fully and correctly informed, attendance at public meetings is a must

If people attended these meetings, they would come to realize that countless hours of analysis go into the evaluation of the need for the Lake Powell Pipeline Project as well as the most economical approach to decisions concerning its timing and design.

These efforts have been undertaken not only by District staff but also by professional consultants and they are discussed in the public meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Residents of southern Utah must have access to sufficient water resources to meet their needs.

Sufficient water must also be left in our rivers and streams to ensure that wildlife and native species will thrive. This is within the purview of a water conservancy district. This *is* the objective of the Lake Powell Pipeline Project.



Virgin River by Quail Lake
Photo: Doug Wilson



LAKE POWELL PIPELINE

Delivering the future.

PIPE DREAMS

by Ann Jensen

Historic setting unites southern Utah in a common purpose

Scott Wilson, general manager of the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District, began his remarks to the three water district boards by saying *“this is an historic setting uniting us in a common purpose.”*

On April 18th and 19th, Key Stakeholders and Board members from Central Iron, Kane and Washington Counties met at the Abbey Inn for an informational workshop concerning the Lake Powell Pipeline Project.

Individuals from the three counties with an interest in the project representing municipalities, counties, chambers of commerce, the development community, the environmental community, water and canal companies, health care, recreation, government agencies, education, business and the media, came together to gather information on the project in order to be better informed when their constituents had questions.

Speakers familiarized the attendees with various aspects of the project such as the:

- History and background of the project
- Financing of the project

- Role of the state in the project
- Role of the project manager
- NEPA process
- Public outreach
- Engineering scope of work and timeline for the project
- Individual county issues with regard to the project

Ron Thompson, general manager of the Washington County Water Conservancy District, explained some of the water development projects currently underway in Washington County. He stressed conservation as a major factor in protecting our water resources. Southern Utah goes through a lot of drought periods and this requires that we have redundancy in our water system. This redundancy includes the Lake Powell Pipeline. Ron summarized his presentation by saying *“we cannot afford to be short-sighted when it comes to water issues.”*

Mike Noel, general manager of the Kane County Water Conservancy District, explained to the group that a *“water district’s job is not to promote growth or set growth policy. Our job is to manage water to meet needs.”* He summarized the water man-



Photo: Doug Wilson

Marc Brown with MWH Global, Inc. explains role of the engineers.

agement activities currently taking place within Kane County and Kane County’s need for the pipeline.

Scott Wilson shared with the group a remark made by Cedar City’s Mayor Sherratt in a recent public meeting – *“we’ve been discovered; growth is inevitable.”* Iron County will be significantly limited without water from the Lake Powell Pipeline.

This was indeed an historic setting as the largest water development project ever envisioned for southern Utah moves forward.

Harold Shirley from the Board of Water Resources put it most succinctly when he said *“we are to the sticking place – we must not fail.”*

Speakers

Dennis Strong
Director

Utah Division of
Water Resources

Eric Millis
Deputy Director
Utah Division of
Water Resources

Harold Shirley
Utah Board of
Water Resources

Larry Anderson
Project Manager for Phase I

Harold Sersland
NEPA Consultant

Marc Brown
MWH Global, Inc. (Engineers)

Cindy Kindred
Vanguard Media Group

Scott Wilson
General Manager
Central Iron County
Water Conservancy District

Mike Noel
General Manager
Kane County
Water Conservancy District

Ron Thompson
General Manager
Washington County
Water Conservancy District

“This project is the culmination of hard work and dedication from Washington, Kane and Iron Counties to a vision that supplies southern Utah with another generation of water.”

(Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr.)

Conservation Corner

FREE Landscaping Workshops June - September 2007

By Julie Breckenridge

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, June 16
10-11 a.m.

What's Eating You? Guide to Pest and Disease Control in the Landscape:

Learn how to identify and treat pests and various disease problems in your landscape.

Saturday, August 18
10-11 a.m.

Fall into Vegetable Gardening:

One of the benefits of living in southern Utah is the long growing season.

Learn how you can make this climate work for you and your vegetable garden.

Saturday, July 21
10-11 a.m.

It's All in the Container:

From patios to large yards, learn how you can add more space and visual interest using containers. Techniques will be featured on how to care for potted plants and how to minimize water use.

Saturday, September 15
10-11 a.m.

Fall Festival:

Garden tours will be featured along with various booths containing crafts and gardening ideas.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES of the Washington County Water Conservancy District

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WASHINGTON COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Water Line

Spring 2007

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<http://wccwd.state.ut.us>



Nandina domestica (Heavenly Bamboo)
Photo: Julie Breckenridge

FREE WATER CHECKS

This FREE program will help homeowners learn how to water landscapes efficiently.

*Call for your FREE
water check today!
435-673-3617*

Local Reservoir Capacities and Levels

Reservoir	Capacity	May 2006	% of Full	May 2007	% of Full
Quail Creek	40,000 af	37,752 af	94%	37,860 af	84%
Sand Hollow	50,000 af	51,099 af	102%	46,849 af	93%
Kolob	5,585 af	5,443 af	100%	4,302 af	77%



*“Water is the true wealth
in a dry land.”*

(Wallace Stegner)