

Water Line

Winter 2006

*Sand Hollow Reservoir
Photo: Doug Wilson*

Drought drags on – conservation critical in 2006 – projects proceed

Conservation

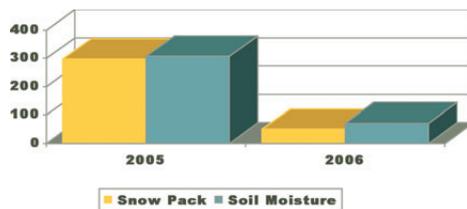
As I thought about the content of this particular “Manager’s Message”, I reviewed past Manager’s Messages dating from 2003. Every one of those messages either focused on conservation itself or mentioned conservation in connection with a particular project. In the Summer 2005 Manager’s Message, I noted that **we did not know at that point if the drought was behind us or if we were still going to be challenged by lack of substantial precipitation.**

A drought is defined as a lack of precipitation over an extended period of time. Since 1990, a period of 15 years, southern Utah has experienced only four years of above average stream flows – 1993, 1995, 1998 and 2005. Recovery from a severe and prolonged drought will take more than one exceptional storm system. I am sorely thinking that Washington County is still going to be faced with lack of significant precipitation.

Yes, the 2005 water year provided us with considerable amounts of water for our res-

ervoirs. Yes, our reservoirs are currently either full or very close to being full. Yes, there is a “but” here. But, since the beginning of the 2006 water year in October of 2005, we have had very little rain in the basin and minimal snow in our mountains. Our snow water equivalent is currently at 48%. Our total precipitation since the beginning of the water year is at 70%. These numbers do not present a hopeful scenario.

It appears that the 2005 water year has not brought an end to southern Utah’s drought. We are very close to experiencing the moisture conditions we had in 2002-2003. The following graph compares the snow pack and soil moisture of 2005 with what we have received to date in 2006.



Manager’s Message

Ron Thompson, General Manager

So, I continue to urge each and everyone of you to:

- not become complacent with the high reservoir levels;
- plant landscape that thrives on minimal water usage;
- apply water only to your landscape and not to driveways and roadways; and above all
- make extraordinary conservation efforts even during periods of plentiful flows.

Water conservation slogans such as “Reduce Your Use” and “Slow the Flow, Save H2O” should be slogans we use everyday in our households – slogans we teach our children – slogans we live by.

Washington Fields Canal Pipeline

In order to conserve water from ditch loss and evaporation, the St. George and Washington Canal Company is replacing approximately nine miles of open canal with a pipeline. This pipeline will allow for more efficient watering systems to be developed in the future.



As of the first part of March, approximately six miles of pipe has been laid in the main canal. This phase of the construction has been completed in time for the irrigation season to begin. Gravel and a base will be laid over the pipeline. Washington City hopes eventually to utilize this area over the pipeline as a city trail.

Water for the pipeline will be provided by the new Washington Fields diversion and fish screen structure which was dedicated in November 2005. The fish screens will assure that fish will not get into the pipeline.

Lake Powell Pipeline Update

The 2006 Legislative Session is dealing with legislation that will authorize the building of the Lake Powell Pipeline. SB 27 (Lake Powell Pipeline Development Act) was approved by the Senate and sent to the House on January 18th. On February 2nd, the bill passed the House and is currently on the Governor’s desk awaiting his signature.

There is broad-based support for the construction of the Lake Powell Pipeline by Utahns in general and by Washington, Iron and Kane Counties in particular.

Local Reservoir Capacities and Levels

Reservoir	Capacity	February 2005	Percent of Full	February 2006	Percent of Full
Quail Creek	40,000 af	36,710 af	92%	37,315 af	93%
Sand Hollow	50,000 af	20,920 af	42%	49,664 af	99%
Gunlock	10,884 af	10,884 af	100%	10,884 af	100%
Kolob	5,585 af	3,544 af	63%	5,443 af	97%



Sand Hollow Reservoir with the Kolob portion of Zion in the background

Sand Hollow Reservoir and State Park draws record crowds

By Laura Melling and Ann Jensen

The primary purpose of the Sand Hollow project is to provide additional storage and a more stable supply of municipal water for Washington County. This reservoir, however, is not limited just to the practical tasks of storage and supply. It also provides:

- additional fish and wildlife habitat, including a food source for several species of endangered birds;
- enhancement of the natural beauty of the locale; and

- a vast area promoting such activities as camping, boating, water sports, picnicking, OHV riding, sunbathing, fishing and other recreational uses.

Several park facilities were completed in 2005 on the northeast side of the park in close proximity to the boat ramp:

- a 50-unit, full-service campground with water, electricity and sewer; and
- two restrooms with showers.

Sand Hollow is a work in progress. Currently, there are several development plans for the east, south and west shores. In the spring of this year, an OHV staging area will be developed near Sky Mountain in Hurricane. This will provide easy access for local residents to Sand Mountain. A maintenance facility will also be constructed which will include an education center for the OHV and personal watercraft classes that are taught at Sand Hollow.

Future development will include campgrounds on the south and east shores, group use areas and day use facilities.

Sand Hollow is among the most visited state parks in Utah. The park is unique among state parks in that it has a major activity for every season: boating in the warm months and OHV riding on Sand Mountain in all but the hottest months. Visitation to the park has doubled each of the three years the park has been open. Visitation continues to increase. Sand Hollow has enormous support from local clientele in addition to numerous first time visitors from all over the world.

Sand Hollow Reservoir Trivia

Began filling in March 2002

Opened as a State Park in April 2003

Percent full:

December 2002—13%

December 2003—9%

December 2004—27%

December 2005—92%



Beaches at Sand Hollow

Sand Hollow State Park is among the most visited state parks in Utah.

Laura Melling, Sand Hollow Complex Manger, has provided the following information regarding public usage of the Sand Hollow recreational area in 2005:

1. People visiting the park = 279,618
2. Water Craft usage = 14,646
3. Off Highway Vehicle usage = 16,704
4. People fishing = 3,850



LAKE POWELL PIPELINE

Delivering the future.

PIPE DREAMS

by Ann Jensen

Vanguard Media Group was hired by the District in September of 2004 to act as media consultants for the Lake Powell Pipeline Project. Two of Vanguard's objectives were to:

- Determine the public's knowledge of and attitude toward the Project by utilizing one-on-one interviews and a public opinion survey; and
- Develop a communication strategy whereby the public would be informed of the Project's goals and implementation processes.

The information gathered from the initial research efforts was quite vast. Residents from Washington, Kane and Iron counties were interviewed. These three counties are targeted to receive water from the pipeline. In addition, questions were asked of the gen-

eral public throughout the entire state of Utah. Since only 46% of the respondents in the targeted counties and only 24% of those surveyed statewide had even heard of the Project, outreach strategies were deemed crucial.

Since it is not possible to relay all the results in a short article, the following summary of the issues has been compiled to offer a succinct and yet rather broad-based rundown of some of Vanguard's key findings.

Topic: Important Issues Facing Utah

The statewide survey indicated that the two top-ranked issues were education (19%) and drought or lack of water (19%). The targeted counties ranked lack of water at 23% and education at 15%.

Topic: Utah's Future

Almost all (84%) of the respondents from the targeted counties and 72% of the statewide respondents said that water development projects are very necessary for future generations.

Topic: Growth and Planning

Utahns in general (82%) and the targeted

county respondents (84%) stated that the Lake Powell Pipeline Project is essential for growth, maintaining quality of life and ensuring economic prosperity.

Topic: Using Colorado River Allotment

An overwhelmingly high percentage of Utahns, both statewide survey respondents (91%) and targeted county respondents (94%), stated that Utah should tap into its unused portion of the Upper Colorado River water.

Topic: Need for the Pipeline

84% of the statewide respondents and 86% of the targeted county respondents reported that the Project is definitely needed.

Topic: Barriers to the Project

Survey participants stated that environmental groups, funding, obtaining approvals, environmental impacts and lack of overall support could be possible barriers to the Project.

In Governor Huntsman's State of the State address on January 17, 2006, he confirmed that his administration is indeed mindful of the

needs for the future of southern Utah. "It is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States and we must secure the needs of our citizens there." The Governor's budget calls for lifting the current caps on water project funding which will allow projects like the Lake Powell Pipeline to be expedited.

"It is urgent that we begin planning for the pipeline now. Water is the life-blood of Utah. Because of the state's low precipitation, we must rely on organized water resource management."

Mike Styler, Director, Utah Department of Natural Resources

STAFF LEAKS

Melodie Sorensen, Accountant

by Ann Jensen

"Arithmetic is being able to count up to twenty without taking off your shoes." (Mickey Mouse) Based upon this principle, Melodie Sorensen has definitely mastered the numbers game.

Melodie began working as the District's accountant in May of 2000. She is primarily responsible for:

- accounts payable;
- accounts receivable;
- payroll, payroll tax and form filing;
- enrolling employees in the District's benefits programs;
- preparing reports for management and other District employees as requested; and

- collaborating with the District's independent auditors in the preparation of the District's financial statements.

As with most jobs, her daily routine entails an abundance of other duties that are an essential part of her responsibilities. She is always available to answer an employee's question concerning anything from personal health benefits to the payment history of an account to the summary of water distribution for a certain year. Melodie enjoys working for the District and with its employees.

Since becoming an employee of the District, Melodie has learned the importance of water conservation. She now uses less than half the water she formerly used to irrigate her landscape. She is in the process of replacing part of her grass with desert landscape so as to cut back even further on water usage.

Melodie and her 12 brothers and sisters were born and raised in Washington County. She graduated from Hurricane High School in 1970. In 1989, she committed to furthering her education. Attending both Dixie State College and Southern Utah University, she obtained a Bachelors degree in Accounting. Melodie graduated in 1994 with *Magna Cum Laude* honors.

It has taken her a bit of time, but Melodie eventually discovered that cooking can be an enjoyable hobby. She wishes she had more time to spend in the kitchen. In her spare time, she takes pleasure in reading and quilting. When the temperatures are below 100, she enjoys working in her yard.



Melodie and grandson, Braxten going for their evening walk

In 2005, Melodie became a grandmother for the first time. She spends hours with her grandson and desires to be a "prime figure" in his life.

"Five out of four people have trouble with fractions." (Steven Wright) Melodie is not one of them.

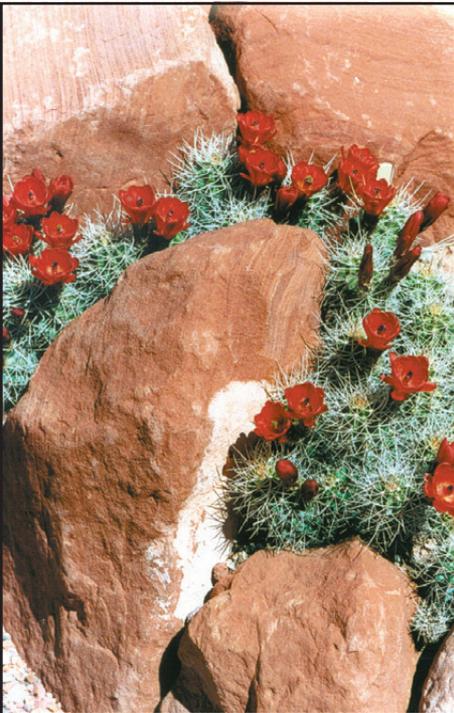


Conservation Corner

FREE Landscaping Workshops March – August 2006

By Julie Breckenridge

These workshops are held at the Tonaquint Nature Center - (1851 Dixie Drive).
Space is limited so please call 673-3617 to reserve your spot.



Photos of Kayenta Gardens
by Cherri Stoddard

Patio Pavers & Concrete Finishes:

Saturday, March 25 - 10-11 a.m.

Discover the variety of pathways (or patios) available for your landscape. Learn the how to's for these hardscapes.

Is Your Irrigation Clock Alarming You?

Saturday, April 22 - 10-11 a.m.

Are your irrigation timers causing you to freak? If knowing how to water your plants and how to set your clock is a mystery to you, you are not alone. Protect your investment in your landscape by learning and practicing efficient, appropriate watering techniques. Learn easy-to-follow steps to determine the amount and frequency of water needed for your landscape plants, trees, and grass.

A Desert Rose:

Saturday, May 20 - 10-11 a.m.

Roses can still be an integral part of a water-wise landscape. Choosing the correct variety, proper soil preparation and appropriate care can all make the difference in your growing success.

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

Saturday, June 10 - 10-11 a.m.

Learn the how-to's of identifying and treating pests and disease problems in your landscape.

Made of Stone - Realistic Riverbeds and Creative Rock Gardens:

Saturday, July 15 - 10-11 a.m.

Learn how to be creative when adding rock to your landscape design.

Fall Into Vegetable Gardening:

Saturday, August 19 - 10-11 a.m.

One of the benefits of living in southern Utah is the long growing season. Learn how to make this climate work for you and your vegetables.

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Water Fair attracts hundreds

by Ann Jensen

The first Water Fair was organized and took place in 1995 with 1100 students in attendance. On the morning of December 20, 2005, 1800 fourth graders arrived on the Dixie Campus to attend the 11th annual Water Fair.

- 22 schools were represented;
- 30 volunteers gave presentations throughout the day; and
- 15 additional volunteers hosted the five water trivia contests.

Many topics were explored. Following is a brief list of the subject matter:

- How to conserve water
- What is a watershed and how do we protect it
- History of water rights
- History of early settlers along the river
- Importance of plants in the water cycle
- How to protect native species in the river
- Washington County's water development projects



The Fair is free to students and teachers. Dixie College allows the use of their facilities free of charge and contributes toward the lunches provided for the presenters. The cities and towns with schools within the boundaries help defray the cost of using the school buses. The cooperation of countless individuals and agencies brings this educational experience to fruition on an annual basis.



Tyce Palmer with the Natural Resource Conservation District explains watersheds

Water Line

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