

enough water in the middle, so that other parties with water rights are not injured when water is taken from the upstream source. It is a complex concept and does not involve actual water molecules, he said.

Assistant Manager Steve Sheffield said that at the direction of AGRA, the district released 100 acre-feet of water into the John Martin Reservoir on March 1-7.

**Assistant manager's update**

Sheffield said the following:

- He took a field trip to the Fountain Mutual Irrigation Co. headgate and diversion structures in Colorado Springs to look for potential improvements.
- He attended the Northern Monument Creek Interceptor "kick-off" meeting hosted by Colorado Springs Utilities.
- Made multiple site visits to the NDS pump house (under construction on the east side of Highway 83 at Old Northgate Road).
- Met with Tom Martinez of the Town of Monument (TOM) Planning Department to discuss and obtain approval for a right-turn lane on Leather Chaps Drive for the Bear Creek Elementary school pickup/drop-off improvements. Everyone agrees on the striping of the road, and the project is moving forward.
- Met with TOM Manager Mike Foreman and Public Works Department Director Tom Tharnish to discuss a potential interconnect between TMD and the town.
- Initiated the plan for a new security system at A yard with the district staff.

- Approved construction of a "distribution" trailer to be fully stocked for emergencies and maintenance purposes.
- Since January, the Vac truck and TV van cleaned and videoed 660 feet of sewer line. Three under-drain caps were found to be missing and replaced. The district maintains a parts trailer to replace missing and defective equipment.

**Snow removal around the clock**

This reporter thanked Superintendent Matt Rayno and the snowplow crews for the phenomenal job of keeping the streets plowed throughout the March 13-15 snowstorm.

Rayno said the snow removal crews worked around the clock during the snowstorm, keeping the streets passable in the district. Crews stayed with it to keep ahead of the storm, with prior budgeting for housing at The Fairfield Inn during major snow events staff operated on six-hour shifts throughout the storm. One truck completed over 300 miles during the snow event, and when a starter went out on a large truck, it was back in service within the day, he said.

**Public Works and Parks and Open Space update**

Rayno said the following:

- The final preparations are being made for the patching, mill, and overlay of Gleneagle Drive in the Promontory Pointe subdivision.
- An audit of the concrete within the district is underway to assess the condition of sidewalk and curb edging throughout the district. Bids will go out in April for

- the repairs.
- Street sweeping was completed on Jackson Creek Parkway and Leather Chaps, Lyons Tails, Kitchener, Gleneagle and Sanctuary Rim Drives. The inner district roads are scheduled for sweeping in April.
- The construction of the Burke Hollow Park is scheduled to begin on April 8. The district staff will save about \$6,000 by removing the equipment before the contractors install a new playground.
- Enhancements are being made to the trail on Saint Lawrence Way and the Gleneagle Drive swing park.
- Spring preparations for the landscaped areas had begun.

**Legal updates**

District counsel George Rowley of White Bear Ankele Tanaka and Waldron law firm said the loan with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) had been finalized.

McGrady said the loan extension discussed in October was approved by CWCB to cover additional overages at the South Reservoir. The loan for \$450,000 retains the original 2.05% interest rate and is accounted for in the 2024 budget as a reimbursement to the district, and payments will not begin until 2025. See [www.ocn.me/v23n11.htm#tmd](http://www.ocn.me/v23n11.htm#tmd). The district is exploring the possibility of raising money to construct a slurry wall at the Central Reservoir, and an application for the loan with CWCB is expected to be presented to the board for approval in May.

Rowley said that since the last Legislature session, special district websites are required to be in compliance with full accessibility standards by July 2024. Sites must be available to individuals with disabilities, such as easily readable fonts, text size, and

colors. Remediating old documents may be time consuming and removing them may be the simpler option, or employing a third party to correct any issues could ease the burden. Noncompliance could lead to fines, Rowley said.

McGrady said he meets with GroundFloor media, the district's public relations firm, every other week and it assures the district it is familiar with the new requirements. GroundFloor media receives \$5,000 on a retainer per month for producing the district newsletter, public relations and website maintenance. GroundFloor has been pro-active in ensuring compliance and saw the regulations in advance, but he and Rowley would approach the subject again to ensure the district is compliant, McGrady said.

**Executive session**

The board moved into an executive session at 7:12 p.m. pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute 24-6-402(4) (a), (b), (e), to discuss acquisitions, negotiations, and receive legal advice on: water and land acquisitions, the Highway Users Tax Fund share return, strategic planning, economic development incentives, and change case updates.

Sheffield confirmed the board returned to the regular session at 9:29 p.m. No actions were taken, and the board promptly adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

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Meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of every month at the district office located at 16055 Old Forest Point, Suite 302. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for April 25 at 5:30 p.m. For meeting agendas, minutes, and update, visit <https://triviewmetro.com>.

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**Donala Water and Sanitation District, March 21**

**Good news on radium, PFAS**

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans At its March meeting, the Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board heard good news on water quality from General Manager Jeff Hodge. El Paso County Commissioner Holly Williams gave the board an overview of the county's study of the Denver basin aquifers. The board also heard operational reports.

**Radium and PFAS at low levels** Hodge told the board that the hydrous manganese oxide (HMO) adsorption technology the district had implemented had reduced radium in the water DWSD delivers to its customers from the Holbein water treatment plant. The maximum contaminant level for radium is 5 pCi/L and DWSD water had tested at 5.1 pCi/L in 2022, Hodge said. Recent testing showed radium at 1.2 pCi/L, well within the limit set by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Hodge gave the board information developed by Merrick Inc., the engineering company DWSD hired to design its HMO system, that told the history of the radium mitigation project. The presentation tracked the project from the enforcement order DWSD received in 2022 through the third cycle of radium testing completed in December 2023. The project included new equipment and training for staff. The materials credited the district's culture of transparent collaborative decision-making as contributing to the success of the effort.

Board President Wayne Vanderschuere pointed out that DWSD had used federal funds allocated to the district by the El Paso Board of County Commissioners effectively.

Hodge also had good news concerning the level of PFAS chemicals in district water. PFAS, the common name for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, which are used in a wide variety of consumer products, have been linked to diseases such as kidney and testicular cancer. Hodge said the district's water did not contain a measurable amount of PFAS at present, but testing would continue.

**Williams discusses county water availability study**

Williams opened her discussion of a

water availability study planned by the county by making a distinction between "paper water"—that is, legal rights to water—and "wet water," that is, water in the ground. Williams said the county has not done a study of the Denver basin aquifers since the 1980s and wants a better understanding of the current state of those aquifers. The aquifers are depleting, she said, adding, "there's not as much water as we thought there was."

Williams said the county commissioners wanted DWSD, Triview Metropolitan District, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Monument Water Department, Palmer Lake Water Department and Forest Lakes Metropolitan District to contribute data to the study.

Williams said the county has a 300-year water rule, adopted in the 1980s, that requires new developments to prove access to adequate water for that length of time. Hydraulic conditions have changed since then. Other entities have a 100-year threshold, she said. Williams said there is plenty of room to grow in the Black Forest neighborhood.

Williams said the study would assess the available water in each of the Denver basin aquifers, identify the top and bottom of each aquifer, and evaluate geospatial data to assess potential limitations on water availability. A final report would be written that would guide water supply regulations. Williams said lot sizes could be adjusted to make available water last longer.

Vanderschuere said DWSD had reached similar conclusions and had begun investigating indirect potable reuse, aquifer storage and recovery, and direct potable reuse.

**Operational reports**

- In his financial report, Hodge noted water sales are slow, as they always are at this time of year. Expenses are on track. Hodge also mentioned that the district's audit went well.
- Consultant Brett Gracely, of LRE Water, told the board DWSD has been awarded a \$290,000 grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board to continue the

**DONALA (Cont. on 14)**

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