

Tri-Lakes Facility Joint Use Committee, June 11

Study plan for nutrient compliance grant to be revised

By Jim Kendrick

On June 11, consultant engineers Steve Tamburini and Mark Maxwell of Tetra Tech in Denver briefed the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility Joint Use Committee (JUC) on their revised study proposal regarding how the facility can best comply with new tighter state regulations for total phosphorus and total nitrogen by using newly available separate state grants for planning (\$80,000) and for design and construction (\$1 million.)

The JUC had approved development of a 20-year capital investment master plan by Tetra Tech for the facility earlier this year, but that study has now been put on hold. At this meeting, the JUC reallocated the unused remainder of this study's funding to a separate new Tetra Tech treatment study for more effective removal of total phosphorus and total nitrogen in the next 10 years to take advantage of the availability of the new state grant program approved on May 10.

The Tri-Lakes facility operates as a separate public utility and is jointly owned, in equal one-third shares, by Monument Sanitation District, Palmer Lake Sanitation District, and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District. The three-member JUC acts as the board of the facility and consists of one director from each of the three owner districts' boards: President Jim Whitelaw, Woodmoor, Vice

President Dale Smith, Palmer Lake, and Secretary/Treasurer Chuck Robinove, Monument. Several other district board members and district managers from each of the three owner districts also attended the meeting.

Background: The Tri-Lakes facility's treated effluent that is discharged to upper Monument Creek already complies with the state's annual median limit for total inorganic nitrogen of 15 milligrams per liter (mg/l) or parts per million (ppm) that was created in the new Control Regulation 85 on Sept. 30, 2012.

However, about \$1 million of capital construction expense will have to be incurred by the three districts that own the Tri-Lakes facility just to meet the new Reg. 85 annual median limit of 1 mg/l for total phosphorus that was also created on Sept. 30. This new total phosphorus limit will be imposed on Tri-Lakes when the facility's current five-year discharge permit is renewed on Jan. 1, 2017. The initial estimate for the total additional cost for additional capital equipment to meet Regulation 31.17 total phosphorus and total nitrogen limits that will be imposed on May 31, 2022, is another \$1 million.

The restrictions in Reg. 85 only apply to the 45 largest publicly owned wastewater treatment facilities in Colorado, those rated at over 2 million gallons per day (MGD) of treatment capacity. The

Tri-Lakes facility is rated at 4.2 MGD, though the average flow rarely exceeds 1.1 MGD. Regulation 85 does not apply to the other two smaller treatment facilities in the OCN coverage area, Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility and Academy Water and Sanitation District's wastewater treatment lagoons, which are both rated at less than 2 MGD. There are 391 wastewater treatment facilities in Colorado.

Gov. John Hickenlooper signed House Bill 13-1191 on May 10. This bill appropriated \$15 million over the next three years for state planning grants and state design/construction grants to help finance what otherwise would be totally unfunded state mandates for Reg. 85 and Reg. 31.17 capital improvements to these 45 large state wastewater treatment plants. The 34 available planning grants would provide \$80,000 each and require a waste-

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