

## **SDS project moves forward**

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FLORENCE — It's full steam ahead.

That was the plan for Colorado Springs Utilities, who will begin the permitting process in two to three weeks to complete the Colorado Delivery System project.

Colorado Springs is seeking the rights to use the water from the Lester-Attebery conversion near the Arkansas River at Florence for Colorado Springs.

And at the same time, the company will continue to pursue the preferred alternative, which is to build it from the Pueblo Reservoir to Colorado Springs.

This was part of Colorado Springs Utilities employees project director John Fredell and program manager Dan Higgins' presentation Monday at the Florence City Council.

While waiting for an environmental impact statement for the Southern Delivery System project, the company continues to pursue both Pueblo and Fremont County for its SDS project.

If the company goes with the Colo. 115 route, the intake would be built near the Lester-Attebery conversion on the Arkansas River. The pipeline would parallel Colo. 115, then cross Fort Carson to the eastern side of Colorado Springs before joining the same line, which would be used from Pueblo.

To compensate the community, the company would make improvements, such as adding a boat ramp, pedestrian bridges and roads into the park.

"I want to be upfront in terms of who would pay for these ideas," Fredell said.

Colorado Springs would pay for the project.

"We are looking for a final environmental impact statement toward the end of the year," Fredell said. "We're looking for a record of decision from the Bureau of Reclamation early next year."

The option of choice is Pueblo Reservoir, he said.

"The reason being, we have a lot more options to draw from a huge bucket of water at the Pueblo Reservoir, but we believe we can build the project very successful and without major impacts along Colo. 115 and in Fremont County, as well," Fredell said.

Downtown merchant Rudl Mergelman asked if the landowners did not give their permission if the company would use eminent domain.

“That is clearly my absolute last choice,” Fredell said. “I’m going to do everything in my power to avoid condemnation. We’re going to do everything to work out the issues with the landowners.”

In his report, City Council Manager Tom Piltingsrud said Sumo had sent a letter asking the council to put weight limits on Siloam Road.

It is “because of the gravel trucks that impact the Siloam Road detour,” he said.

The issue has been going on for six years, he said.

“If they had just put the road to Highway 67 like they promised to do five years ago, (then there would not be an issue),” Councilman Joe Caruso said.

Councilman Paul Villagrana said he had met with Sumo at least three times, but nothing has ever been resolved.

“Their failure to recognize the fact” that they have obligations “is the reason they’re in trouble,” he said. “They have broken every promise. They have not adhered to any kind of a time line that they were given.”

A workshop to discuss the Sumo and Siloam Road will be at 6 p.m. Sept. 15.

In other business, the council made the following decisions:

- Adopted six ordinances on second reading for the 2006 International Building Code.
- Approved changing the next meeting to 7 p.m. Sept. 2.
- Set hearing date for the Elks Lodge special event.
- Approved a liquor license renewal for Green Parrot Lounge.
- Approved the closure of South Pikes Peak for Louie’s Street Dance on Sept. 19.
- Tabled a request for endorsement of the working border collie invitational.
- Set a public open house meeting to discuss replacing the water main for 6 p.m. Sept. 16.