

SOUTHERN DELIVERY SYSTEM | eNews
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Hearings continue on Pueblo County SDS 1041 permit: The Pueblo County Board of Commissioners held a second hearing in Pueblo Thursday night on our 1041 land-use permit application for the [Southern Delivery System](#).

The hearing, which lasted about 3 ½ hours, was devoted to hearing testimony from the public in support and opposition of the permit application, as well as those who wished to express comments and concerns not necessarily in direct support or opposition to the application.

Our project partners spoke in support, and Colorado Springs Mayor Rivera and Vice Mayor Small offered compelling statements for the project.

NEXT STEPS: We will submit a written rebuttal of the comments to Pueblo County. The hearings will resume on Dec. 29 at 6 p.m. providing an opportunity for the Commissioners and staff to ask additional questions about the project and our application.

SDS Reaches Major Milestone with Completion of Final Environmental Statement: SDS reached a major milestone today with the Bureau of Reclamation's completion of the [Final Environmental Impact Statement](#) (FEIS) for the project.

Reclamation's Eastern Colorado Area Office has sent the FEIS to the agency's Washington D.C. headquarters for publication in the Federal Register, expected to happen on or before December 19.

Publication of the FEIS in the Federal Register is a prerequisite for Reclamation to issue its Record of Decision (ROD) for the project after a 30-day waiting period. That means the ROD could be issued as early as mid January.

Reclamation identified the project participants' Modified Proposed Action – a 53-mile-long pipeline from Pueblo Dam to a terminal storage reservoir on Upper Williams Creek near Colorado Springs – as the agency's preferred alternative in the FEIS.

"We're pleased to be nearing the end of this very important step toward making the Southern Delivery System a reality," said John Fredell, SDS Project Director. "Reclamation's review of SDS dates back more than five years and included extensive study of a number of alternatives beyond the seven included in the Environmental Impact Statement. The process has been comprehensive and well done. We'll end up with a better project as a result of their scrutiny."

SDS receives second-highest rating from EPA: The SDS project Draft EIS received EPA's second highest marks as EPA ranks environmental impact statements. That is very positive and speaks to the thoroughness of the FEIS.

Colorado Springs' goal is to build an environmentally responsible SDS project. EPA's goal is the same. That is why we appreciate EPA's feedback. However, we disagree with EPA's comments in some regards. The EPA came to different conclusions than the Bureau of Reclamation on key

issues, such as growth, SDS impacts on water quality and the comparison of action alternatives to the no action alternative.

The EC-2 rating also means that EPA wants more information about SDS Project mitigation. To understand EPA's ratings in detail, visit <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/comments/ratings.html>.

We are working on specific, detailed, on-the-ground mitigation in cooperation with Reclamation, EPA, the Corps of Engineers, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, local authorities, and others. It is our intent to bring those discussions together to complete a comprehensive approach to mitigation. Mitigation plans are being developed based upon the technical aspects of project impacts that are now well understood as a result of the FEIS process.

Fredell emphasized, "The SDS project will meet every national and state environmental standard that applies to the project. We are required to meet these standards."

For more information on the Southern Delivery System, visit www.sdswater.org.

Southern Delivery System / eNews is an electronic newsletter designed to keep interested public officials and members of the public up to date on developments associated with the Southern Delivery System. Please forward it to anyone you think would be interested. Contact us at sdsinfo@csu.org to subscribe or unsubscribe.

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