

Bureau of Reclamation Releases Draft Environmental Impact Statement: The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation today released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Southern Delivery System (SDS). Go to www.sdseis.com to view or comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Public Meetings to be Scheduled on Draft EIS: The public will have 60 days to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and the Bureau of Reclamation will schedule a series public meetings to provide information to the public and gather public input. Go to www.sdseis.com/events.html for the upcoming schedule.

Mayor Rivera says Draft Environmental Impact Statement is “An Important Step” for SDS: The Draft Environmental Impact Statement “is an important step toward making this critical project a reality,” says Colorado Springs Mayor Lionel Rivera. “We need the Southern Delivery System. Our future depends on it.” Mayor Rivera made his comments in a [news release](#) issued in response to the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement today.

“The Southern Delivery System is a cost-effective, dependable and environmentally responsible way to meet our future water needs,” Mayor Rivera said. The Mayor said SDS will meet the needs of future residents, help protect the City against future droughts and increase the reliability of the City’s water system. The project will ensure uninterrupted water for homes and businesses when existing pipelines need maintenance or repair. And, he noted, SDS maximizes the return on the \$65 million El Paso County residents have invested since 1959 in the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project, which includes Pueblo Reservoir. “We encourage the public to use this opportunity to learn more about this vital project and submit their comments to the Bureau of Reclamation,” Mayor Rivera said. “This is about our community’s future.” For more information on SDS go to www.csu.org and click on the Southern Delivery System link.

Investing in a Reliable Water Supply: Our existing water system was made possible thanks to the investment made by previous generations. In fact, water rates doubled between 1966 and 1976 to pay for the Homestake system, which supplies the majority of our water today.

The estimated cost to build SDS from Pueblo Dam is about \$1.1 billion (2007 dollars) – the least expensive of hundreds of options studied from Leadville to Lamar. Providing water to our community through SDS is an investment in our future and will require increases in water rates. Data prepared for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement shows the average single-family residence paid approximately \$25.58 per month for water in 2007, based on an average use of 8,500 gallons per month per household. Without SDS and with no major investments in a water delivery system, it is anticipated rates would increase to \$35.08 per month in 2015 and about \$46.25 per month in 2025. With the added cost of implementing SDS, households would pay \$57.78 per month in 2015 and \$77.71 per month in 2025.

To help pay for future water projects including SDS, development charges have already increased from an average of \$4,695 for each new home in 2003 to \$7,849 in 2007. For the proposed alternative, the estimated fees in 2015 and 2025 would be \$11,990 and \$17,697 respectively. The project cost will be included in future cost of service studies to ensure that no single customer group or groups will be required to contribute an unreasonable portion of the cost. We anticipate the cost distribution to be similar to what it is today.

Rates will need to increase with or without SDS for future water. Without SDS, our community has two options. One would require strict and potentially permanent water restrictions. The other would be to implement more expensive water supply alternatives. Both would result in significantly higher rates, without the long-term benefits of SDS. For questions to answers about SDS and rates, visit www.csu.org, click on the Southern Delivery System button, and the Questions and Answers tab.

Comparing Front Range Water Prices: On a related note, we recently surveyed a number of Colorado's Front Range cities to see how our water costs compare to other cities. Using a monthly residential water bill based on 8,500 gallons and prices as of Feb. 1, 2008, Colorado Springs ranked the third lowest cost of the cities surveyed:

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| Lakewood | \$44.89 |
| Aurora | \$39.10 |
| Castle Rock | \$35.02 |
| Broomfield | \$31.74 |
| Fort Collins | \$29.90 |
| Colorado Springs | \$25.59 |
| Pueblo | \$20.76 |
| Denver | \$19.21 |

Fountain Creek: Since Fountain Creek is one of the resources studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, we thought you might find this [Gazettearticle](#) interesting. It highlights just one of the many efforts by Colorado Springs Utilities to join with other partners in the region to make Fountain Creek an amenity to Southern Colorado. An excerpt: "Imagine observing beavers building dams in wetlands along Fountain Creek or watching the stream change during rainstorms — in person and from a webcam. How about picnicking near the water's edge while the kids play in an American Indian village replica playground nearby? Those concepts — for one spot in Colorado Springs and another north of Pueblo — have been conjured by consultants working for Colorado Springs Utilities and another agency to inspire excitement about converting the eroding and murky creek into a natural showcase."

This is the first edition of an eNewsletter 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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