

SUPPORT FOR SDS VOICED IN THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: The public comment period for the [Southern Delivery System Draft Environmental Impact Statement \(DEIS\)](#) ended last Friday, and we're pleased to report the Bureau of Reclamation received numerous comments supporting the project, including letters from all three military bases, local business and community organizations, city and county departments, elected officials, SDS partner communities, and business and residential customers. Thank you to everyone who took time to submit comments. The project will be enhanced by the thoughtful and valuable comments submitted.

Colorado Springs provided comment letters submitted by Mayor Lionel Rivera, Colorado Springs Utilities CEO Jerry Forte and SDS Project Director John Fredell. Excerpts from those letters are summarized below with links to the full letters posted on www.sdswater.org.

MAYOR RIVERA'S COMMENTS: SDS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO COLORADO SPRINGS

– “The Southern Delivery system (SDS) project is critically important to our City. We are duty bound to ensure that our citizens have an adequate, safe and reliable water supply.”

“Clean, dependable water is vital to the future economic viability of our community. We know that it is equally important to the health of our broader region, including our neighboring communities. We understand that our economy and our well being are intertwined with our neighbors. Colorado Springs seeks mutually beneficial solutions for our region.” [Rivera's comments: Full text \(PDF document\)](#)

JERRY FORTE'S COMMENTS: SYSTEM TO TRANSPORT WATER ESSENTIAL – “A new, safe and reliable system to transport water is essential and needed very soon. Based on the water forecast used in the DEIS, Colorado Springs' water demand could exceed current capacity in 2012 – and Fountain Security and Pueblo West's water needs may exceed current capacity even sooner.”

“Without the SDS, Colorado Springs would run short of water. Our citizens would face increased risk and frequency of water restrictions. We would need to use our emergency supply of water from the nonrenewable Denver Basin, an undesirable result for us and for other water users dependent on the Denver Basin ground water for drinking water. Without the SDS, our rates would increase dramatically and unnecessarily. It is no exaggeration to say that our quality of life in Colorado Springs and our economy would be jeopardized without this project.” [Forte's comments: Full text \(PDF document\)](#)

JOHN FREDELL'S COMMENTS: NO MAJOR ADVERSE IMPACTS – SDS project director, John Fredell, submitted detailed comments on behalf of Colorado Springs Utilities, covering key issues raised during the public comment period. Key points included:

Need & Purpose/Public Process/Alternative Analysis

“The ‘purpose and need’ for the SDS project described in the DEIS is valid; based upon planning scenarios, the four SDS Project Participants may exceed water storage and delivery capacity in the next four years.”

- “(The Bureau of) Reclamation met and exceeded NEPA’s requirements for the public comment on the DEIS, as the public was afforded many opportunities to obtain information, ask questions, review underlying documents, and provide comments.”
- “Reclamation examined in detail all reasonable alternatives to the SDS project. The alternatives were well conceived, thoroughly evaluated, and developed in accordance with NEPA and Council on Environmental Quality regulations.”

Environmental Impacts

“The DEIS addresses many issues and finds that there will be no major adverse effects to the environment and the economics of the region. Moreover, the DEIS suggests possible mitigations.” Excerpted comments to specific resource areas were as follows:

Surface Water Flow and Water Quality

“The proposed project will not adversely affect surface water flows in Fountain Creek, Jimmy Camp Creek, Williams Creek, or the Arkansas River. Water quality in Fountain Creek, Jimmy Camp Creek, Williams Creek, or the Arkansas River will not affect other water users through water diversions or wastewater return flows.”

Fountain Creek

“The SDS project will not substantially affect channel stability on Fountain Creek and will not increase flooding concerns along Fountain Creek.”

Agriculture

“The DEIS addresses in detail the effects of the SDS project upon the agricultural industry, with specific attention to the agriculture-based economies of the Arkansas River Valley. The DEIS finds — and Colorado Springs Utilities agrees — that there already exist high levels of salinity in the Lower Arkansas River Valley, and that the SDS project will not be a major adverse contributor of salinity levels.”

Energy Consumption

“The Proposed Action, Colorado Springs Utilities preference for the SDS project, has one of the lowest energy consumption totals of the alternatives examined in the DEIS.”

Recreation Resources

“The Proposed Action will increase the type, location, and amount of recreational activities in the area.”

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

“Specific individual cultural resources effects, and the extent of those effects, will be determined during the final project design. To date, several mitigation approaches and agreements have been completed.”

Wildlife, Fish and Other Aquatic Life

“The SDS project will not adversely affect wildlife or wildlife habitat. The SDS project will not adversely affect aquatic habitat; impacts to aquatic habitats will be mitigated to ensure protection of aquatic life.”

Wetlands and Other Waters

“The SDS project will not adversely affect wetlands and waters in the project area and waters outside the project area. Impacts to wetlands and waters in the project area will be mitigated to ensure protection. Waters outside the project area have undergone significant study and review.”

[Fredell's comments: Full text \(PDF document\)](#)

For more information on SDS, go to 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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