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City Council Approval of Fremont County Agreement on Southern Delivery System Positive Step Forward

The City Council's approval today of the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Fremont County related to potential construction of the Southern Delivery System (SDS) through that county "is a positive step forward in obtaining the water Colorado Springs needs for the future," says John Fredell, SDS Project Director for Colorado Springs.

The Fremont County Commission unanimously approved the agreement April 8.

The agreement establishes a process for Colorado Springs and Fremont County to work together on review of proposals and reimbursement of costs incurred by Fremont County for the review of permit applications associated with the Southern Delivery System. The agreement also states the parties will work together to identify and plan for mitigation of potential SDS impacts.

Colorado Springs and its partners in the project – Pueblo West, Fountain and Security – have proposed building the SDS pipeline from Pueblo Dam through Pueblo County. A pipeline through Fremont County is one of the alternatives being considered by the Bureau of Reclamation in its Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project. Pueblo West would not be a participant in the project if the pipeline goes through Fremont County.

"To ensure the best interests of our customers, Colorado Springs has been working with Fremont County leaders to determine how we can best work with the county to obtain the permits we would need to build the SDS pipeline through their county," Fredell said. "This agreement is the result of those discussions. If we determine the Highway 115 Alternative is the best option for the Southern Delivery System, we want to have all the necessary permits in place so that we can begin construction once the Bureau issues a record of decision."

Now that the agreement has been approved, Colorado Springs Utilities expects to begin filing permit applications in Fremont County in the near future. The Bureau of Reclamation is expected to issue its Record of Decision for SDS early next year.