



Will-O-Wisp Metro District announces plans for expansion

The Will-O-Wisp Metro District (WOW MD) announced on Monday August 21, 2006 that it is advancing with plans to expand the district's water, wastewater and recreation infrastructure.

Will-O-Wisp MD currently supplies all of the water used by the district from ground water. The district also has surface water rights on Elk Creek of some 0.7 cubic feet per second (~318 gallons per minute). "This is enough water to completely supply the metro district, and allow us to turn off our ground water pumping operations. This is good for the entire mountain community, as it allows the ground water we share to recover", said Bill Schwartz, district water operator.

Most of the water used in the subdivisions and homes around Pine Junction is ground water, pumped from the ground by wells. In the mountains, ground water can be spotty, controlled by unseen fractures in the rock. Throughout the past 20 years, the Will-O-Wisp Metropolitan district has been acquiring water rights to fulfill the district's obligations. We are now further developing these rights for the good of the District, and the other mountain communities.

Generally water is returned to the ground through septic systems. While septic systems were a good solution when population density was low, the wastewater can end up in the drinking water. This has become a problem in many areas, as evidenced by high nitrate levels in drinking water wells.

The expansion will include the necessary infrastructure to bring Elk Creek water to a treatment plant, where the water will be treated to meet or exceed Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) drinking water standards. The development plan also calls for the building of a water reclamation plant and well-engineered collection systems to reclaim water to CDPHE and federal EPA standards, before being re-introduced into our mountain environment.

"Currently there are over 1,000 new homes planned for the area around Pine Junction. The majority of these homes will have septic systems. As more and more homes are being built, it is our responsibility to insure that our customers have clean drinking water and that we process wastewater per CDPHE standards. Residents in the Pine Junction



area should be concerned about the long-term effect on our groundwater. We are confident that this well planned expansion will protect our customers and our neighbors” Said Rick Angelica, President of WOW Metro District Board.

As part of the District’s long-range plan, a reservoir is planned. A reservoir will allow for emergency water storage for the community, as a third level of raw water in the event Elk Creek (primary) or ground water (secondary) resources need support. It is anticipated that this will be a pleasing water attraction, as well as allowing for stored surface water to be available for local emergencies, such as fires.

The expansion will allow service for about 450 new homes, and include some 143 acres of open space. Additionally 2 acres have been deeded to Platte Canyon Fire District, and approximately 5 acres will be donated to a recreation authority.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 303 838 3990.