



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Farmer, Brown, Cassidy, Cunningham and Ernst
FROM: Jeannine Parisi, Public Affairs
Cheri Wilson, Associate Civil Engineer
Catrin van Donkelaar, P.E., Generation Manager
DATE: September 15, 2009
RE: Update on Closure of Johnson Creek Irrigation Withdrawal System

Issue Statement: This memo provides updated information regarding the impending closure of the Johnson Creek irrigation withdrawal system along the Leaburg Canal. EWEB is taking steps to provide opportunities for property owners who have legal water rights to install new irrigation-withdrawal systems that ensure the safety of the canal.

Background: EWEB is committed to the safe and reliable operation of our power canals and is mandated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), as a condition of our operating license, to conduct regular reviews and inspections of embankment safety.

Based on safety inspections and review of original construction drawings, it was determined that the Johnson Creek irrigation vault poses a safety risk and needs to be decommissioned as soon as possible. Staff committed to decommissioning the system in 2009. A July 13, 2009, memorandum to the Board described the safety concerns and decommissioning plans in more detail.

Letters announcing the closure prior to the 2010 irrigation season were sent to all affected water right holders in July 2009 (approximately ten property owners). Response to the notification and public testimony received at the August 4, 2009, EWEB Board meeting is being used to develop the decommissioning plan and to assist impacted property owners who choose to install new water-withdrawal systems. To this end, EWEB is planning a workshop focused on providing technical information about options they have for installing new systems that meet EWEB's safety and other requirements. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 13, 2009 at the fire department training center in Leaburg.

Discussion: Although EWEB has no legal responsibility to provide water or to maintain intakes for most water withdrawals along the length of the Leaburg Canal (the legal diversion points for McKenzie River water rights are at Leaburg Dam), the utility has allowed users to withdraw water from several points along the canal as a courtesy to residents with water rights. As explained in the July Board memo, the existing Johnson Creek withdrawal is a high priority for decommissioning due to its configuration and operation by users.

EWEB's intent is to assist affected water right holders who wish to install new water-withdrawal systems to replace the vault that is being decommissioned. EWEB staff has been in contact with several impacted property owners to provide information and assistance in designing a new water withdrawal system that meets our safety and other specifications. Our research indicates that there are several options available to property owners to continue accessing water from the canal. While water right holders will be responsible for the cost of the new systems, depending on the system selected, they may be installed for less than \$2,000. There are also opportunities for collaborative solutions amongst neighbors which would further reduce the cost to individual property owners.

The purpose of the workshop is to share water right information and provide more detailed explanation on designs/costs for different water withdrawal systems. Residents with legal water rights will be notified of the workshop by mail, as will others who have expressed an interest in attending. EWEB Public Affairs (Jeannine Parisi) will facilitate the workshop and be available to provide general information to participants. Technical questions regarding the Water Right's consultant report, decommissioning of the vault, or design of new systems will be answered by engineering staff (Cheri Wilson).

Recommendation: None; this is an information item only.