

Contact: Kara Lamb, Public Information
(970) 962-4326 or klamb@gp.usbr.gov

National Environmental Policy Act Compliance Process Summary Proposed Southern Delivery System Project February 29, 2008

Reclamation is the lead agency preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Southern Delivery System (SDS) Project. The communities of Colorado Springs, Fountain, and Security seek to develop the SDS Project. The proposed project includes a pipeline and one or more reservoirs to deliver both Fryingpan-Arkansas Project water and non-Fryingpan-Arkansas Project water from a location at or near Pueblo Reservoir to the Colorado Springs area. Pueblo West Metropolitan District may also participate in the SDS Project, depending on the preferred project alternative selected.

The following, is a summary of the process Reclamation has followed, including the next steps of issuing a Draft EIS, Final EIS, and Record of Decision:

February 2003: Reclamation initially receives a request for long-term water contracts from the SDS project participants.

September 8, 2003: Reclamation publishes a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register, announcing the initiation of the EIS process. In addition, 75 press releases are sent to local and national media organizations and other interested parties.

September 2003: Reclamation begins formal scoping with a series of five meetings. One hundred and thirty five people sign-in at the meetings. Reclamation consults with 13 Native American Tribes to collect input for the scoping process. Scoping comments are formally received through October 2003.

October 27, 2003: Reclamation holds an agency scoping meeting. Letters are sent to 107 local, state, and federal agencies inviting them to the meeting. Agency participation includes eight federal agencies, seven State of Colorado agencies, and eight local agencies.

October 31, 2003: Reclamation's SDS web site is activated. It provides information and updates regarding the SDS EIS project.

January 2004: Reclamation releases the Scoping Report summarizing comments collected during the formal scoping process.

October 2005: Reclamation hosts five public workshops to present preliminary alternatives and solicit comments. Individuals on the mailing list were notified. Other notification includes fifty-eight press releases and seventeen paid advertisements. Nearly 200 people attend these meetings.

March 2006: After a 30-day comment period for review of the Draft Alternatives Analysis report, the document is finalized and released to the public.

January 2004 to December 2007: Reclamation distributes six newsletters and one Frequently Asked Questions flyer to update nearly 2,000 people who expressed interest in SDS.

December 2007: An addendum to the Alternatives Analysis report is released to respond to a request from Colorado Springs to change the No Action Alternative (Alternative 1) and Highway 115 Alternative (Alternative 7). This Addendum includes an evaluation of potential potable water reuse alternatives.

February 29, 2008: The Notice of Availability is published in the Federal Register announcing the release of the Draft EIS, and a 60-day comment period starts.

February 2008: The Draft EIS or notice of its availability is sent to area libraries, federal agencies, Native American Organizations, state agencies, county agencies, city agencies, elected officials, and private individuals.

April 2008: Six public meetings will be held to receive comments on the Draft EIS.

April 29, 2008: Ends the Draft EIS 60-day review period. Reclamation will review and consider substantive agency and public comments received on the Draft EIS and revise the document into a Final EIS.

Late 2008: A Final EIS is expected to be completed and released to the public. A notice of availability of the Final EIS will be published in the Federal Register.

Early 2009: Reclamation will issue a Record of Decision no sooner than 30 days after publication of the Final EIS.