



BOXELDER STORMWATER AUTHORITY

Newsletter

boxelderauthority.org

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Who are we? Three local governments, Fort Collins, Larimer County, and the Town of Wellington have collaborated to form *the Boxelder Stormwater Authority. The Authority is a unit of local government based in Wellington, Colorado.*

What do we do? The Authority was formed to finance and construct three improvements which act as a system to lessen possible damages from flooding along a 20 mile reach of Boxelder Creek and its tributaries.

What would change if Timnath participates financially in Authority Projects?

The 2006 Master Plan for Boxelder Creek that serves as the basis for Authority projects provides that depending on the need to further reduce peak flood flow near State Highway 14, the East Side Storage Reservoir could be larger. FEMA floodplain maps show that flood flows do not all follow the natural path of the creek across I-25, then southwest into the Cache La Poudre River. Instead, about half of the flows continue south and east toward and through Timnath, inundating homes and businesses south of Prospect on the east side of I-25. The larger reservoir would allow Authority improvements to sufficiently lessen peak flood flows to meet the needs of the Town of Timnath. The additional cost of a larger reservoir and other facilities has been estimated at about \$3 to 4 million.

Authority Financial Scenarios

At their October meeting, the Authority Board of Directors reviewed financial scenarios for completion of its two remaining projects.

The financial scenarios analyze the cost to fee payers of eight alternative scenarios. The scenarios represent all combinations of whether the Town of Timnath participates financially in Authority improvements, whether the remaining projects are financed by debt or on a "pay as you go" basis, and whether or not the Authority is successful in obtaining a second grant from FEMA.

If debt is issued, it would likely be for a 20 year period. The timing of the scenarios for both with debt and without debt are all based on a 20 year period for consistency.

The results of the analysis shows that the least expensive scenario to fee payers is that in which Timnath participates and a PDM grant is awarded. The total cost to fee payers was not significantly different for with or without debt conditions.

Why are the projects progressing so slowly?

A number of folks have asked why the projects progress so slowly. One reason is that a number of studies are required to site, design, and permit a stormwater project. In each step, a number of agencies must be consulted and satisfied before the project can move to the next step. The first of the three Authority projects, the Coal Creek Flood Hazard Mitigation Project is now nearly complete, three years after work on it was begun in late 2008. The process, before any construction, started with an assessment of the project's anticipated impact on the environment. This process, which was completed by a consultant working for FEMA took about



a year. The next process was to produce and secure approval of a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) from FEMA. This process also took about a year, including four months for review by FEMA. Upon approval of the CLOMR, design studies were begun. The design work started with a process to determine a configuration for the project which met the needs of the Ditch Company and FEMA while staying within budget.

As part of the process of design, legal permission had to be secured from various owners of property and water in the vicinity of the project. Finally, after approval of the design by FEMA and Larimer County, the project had to be publicly bid and the bid results reviewed. Actual construction of the project through final completion will have taken about 9 months. Similar processes are being undertaken for the Eastside Storage Project and the Middle Basin Project east of Interstate Highway 25. A siting study was completed for the Eastside Storage Project in 2010. Currently,

discussions are ongoing concerning the configuration of improvements in the vicinity of State Highway 14 and Interstate Highway 25. That configuration will affect the size of the East Side Storage Project. When the configuration of the downstream improvements has been finalized, the peak flow rates for the mitigated floodplain will be determined, and a revised flood map will be produced, leading to the filing of a request for a CLOMR with FEMA. Upon issuance of the CLOMR, the cost efficiency of the improvements will be determined and used as the basis for a FEMA grant. A grant application is planned for fall 2013. Construction of the first improvement could begin in fall 2014, depending on permitting.

About Flood Hydrology.....

Many people have said that the Authority is too involved with studies.

Stormwater Master Plans are plans that are prepared by engineers using hydraulic and hydrologic modeling to identify places that stormwater will cause damages. The studies are then used to identify improvements or management practices that will mitigate or avoid flood damages. The objective is to identify those improvements and practices which are most cost efficient.