

Comments and Responses Re: DSPUD Facility Plan

Donner Summit Public Utilities District

6/23/2010

From: Tom Skjelstad [mailto:tskjelstad@dspud.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 17, 2010 1:42 PM
To: 'lydia'
Subject: RE: DSPUD facility plan

Hi Ms. Wyrzes,

Thank you for your comments regarding the DSPUD Facility Plan.

To begin, I want to let you know that the proposed plant improvements are the result of mandates placed upon the Donner Summit Public Utility District (DSPUD) by the State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Central Valley Region. The DSPUD operates under a permit issued by the RWQCB. The permit is renewed every five years and typically new restrictions and/or regulations are enforced upon the DSPUD. Therefore, the proposed project is in response to the recent permit renewal of April 2009. The plant operates in and out of compliance of the permit throughout the year. The new permit has a set deadline of April 2014 at which time the DSPUD must demonstrate compliance with the new regulations. In other words, the thrust of the proposed project is to comply with State mandates.

Expansion or increased capacity is also included in the proposed project. Currently, the plant does not have capacity for unimproved property owners to connect to the sewer system, thus there are no sewer permits available to issue. It is DSPUD and Sierra Lakes County Water District's (SLCWD) understanding that there are property owners who desire the ability to build on their vacant land. As service districts, DSPUD and SLCWD are compelled to provide service to properties where the counties, Nevada and Placer, have approved this land use.

I am not sure of your source behind the claim of a "potential near \$900 annual increase in rates". Neither District has formally addressed the annual increase to the sewer rates because a project has not been adopted. And while I cannot speak for the SLCWD, I can tell you that the DSPUD does not intend to submit existing rate payers to the cost of any expansion. It is DSPUD's position that property owners who want capacity will pay for the portion of the expansion project costs and a percentage of the proposed improvements. So we agree with you that the responsibility for expansion costs should be borne by those wishing capacity.

I hope I have adequately addressed your concerns. I encourage you to attend the two upcoming meetings of June 21 and July 10. You will have the opportunity to discuss and comment about the proposed project with staff members, Board members and the engineers. I also encourage you to visit DSPUD's website www.dspud.com for more information about the proposed plan and a host of other topics.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any other assistance.

Sincerely,

Tom Skjelstad
DSPUD General Manager

From: owner-comments@www.dspud.com [mailto:owner-comments@www.dspud.com] **On Behalf Of** lydia
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2010 5:36 PM
To: comments@dspud.com
Subject: DSPUD facility plan

To whom it may concern: I am a vacation homeowner of a small cabin in Serene Lakes and am shocked by the kinds of monies that are being flung around concerning upgrades to the waste treatment plant. Homeowners are stressed enough without consideration of a potential near-\$900 annual increase in rates to pay for an expansion of the plant. People just don't have this kind of money available, particularly when it comes to a discretionary item like a second home or vacation cabin. This is likely to contribute to further collapse of the housing market in the area with a subsequent spiraling down of property taxes. It would certainly influence my decision to buy in Serene Lakes if I were looking for a property at this point. If there are critical fixes that need to be done, realizing the inevitable cost overruns that seem guaranteed with a government-funded project, stick with the least costly option. Fix the plant; don't expand it. Any costs of expansion should be the responsibility of developers or those homeowners building new properties. This may not be perfect from the standpoint of consultants or pro-water expansionists but it is fair and reasonable in this new age of decreased expectations all around.

Lydia Wyrzes
Serene Lakes - Cascade Road

From: Tom Skjelstad [mailto:tskelstad@dspud.com]
Sent: Friday, June 18, 2010 2:34 PM
To: 'Tom Hendrey'
Cc: jennifer@jharrisonpr.com
Subject: RE: Upgrade plans for DSPUD - comments

Hi Mr. Hendry,

I asked our chief engineer, Jeff Hauser to please respond to your questions. (please see below)

Thank you for your comments/questions. The District sincerely appreciates your interest. I hope you can attend the meetings on June 21 or July 10.

Sincerely,

Tom Skjelstad
DSPUD General Manager

I am a home owner in Serene Lakes served by DSPUD for wastewater treatment. I have briefly reviewed the Eco:Logic planning report and have the following comments:

1. Does DSPUD have real data to show that chlorination for disinfection will actually cause exceedances of the proposed halomethane limits? With the cold water, doesn't this reduce the side reactions of chlorination. UV disinfection does have benefits of reducing halomethanes, but it comes at a very high cost in capital and on-going energy cost. Also, where does the bromine come from for the formation of dichlorobromomethane since almost no bromine is present in Sierra Lakes County Water District water per their latest water quality report.

Dichlorobromomethane was found to be present in the DSPUD effluent in three of six sampling events completed prior to development of the permit adopted in April, 2009. The Regional Board determined that there was a reasonable potential for the effluent to exceed water quality standards for dichlorobromomethane and, therefore, included numerical limits for this constituent in the permit. It is expected that the risk of problematical concentrations of dichlorobromomethane and other disinfection byproducts will increase as more effective ammonia removal is accomplished with improvements to the biological treatment system, because the presence of ammonia can substantially suppress the formation of disinfection byproducts. The District will investigate the possibility of purposefully adding back a small amount of ammonia prior to chlorine disinfection (chloramination) as an alternative to UV disinfection. No investigations have been completed regarding bromine sources, however, it is likely that it will always be present in the wastewater in adequate amounts to form disinfection byproducts at or above permit limits.

2. Has your consultant considered upgrades utilizing packaged plants fabricated and assembled in remote shops as a way of saving installation labor at the site.

Prefabricated package treatment plants are generally available only for smaller plants (less than 0.1 Mgal/d). However, certain treatment modules within the plant may have prefabricated components.

3. EDU calculations seem to assign different flows or BOD loads depending on where the new housing is located. Why is this?

In 2004, DSPUD and SLCWD completed a study that specifically investigated the per-EDU flows and loads coming from each district. Based on that study, there are substantial differences. These differences could be due to different types and sizes of homes, different mixes of residential and commercial connections, different methods for determining dwelling unit equivalencies for non-residential connections, or other factors.

4. We should only spend for what is required now and not some fancy MBR plant. The cost of service per owner is already very high.

It is the intent of the District to develop the most cost-effective treatment system to reliably meet existing and future discharge requirements. After careful consideration of all relevant cost and other factors involved, the Joint Wastewater Facilities Committee, with members from both DSPUD and SLCWD, believes the MBR option is in the best long-term interests of both districts.

Thomas Hendrey
8544 Acorn Road
Serene Lakes

From: owner-comments@www.dspud.com [mailto:owner-comments@www.dspud.com] **On Behalf Of** Tom Hendrey
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 2010 4:25 PM
To: comments@dspud.com
Subject: Upgrade plans for DSPUD - comments

I am a home owner in Serene Lakes served by DSPUD for wastewater treatment. I have briefly reviewed the Eco:Logic planning report and have the following comments:

1. Does DSPUD have real data to show that chlorination for disinfection will actually cause exceedances of the proposed halomethane limits? With the cold water, doesn't this reduce the side reactions of chlorination. UV disinfection does have benefits of reducing halomethanes, but it comes at a very high cost in capital and on-going energy cost. Also, where does the bromine come from for the formation of dichlorobromomethane since almost no bromine is present in

Sierra Lakes County Water District water per their latest water quality report.

2. Has your consultant considered upgrades utilizing packaged plants fabricated and assembled in remote shops as a way of saving installation labor at the site.
3. EDU calculations seem to assign different flows or BOD loads depending on where the new housing is located. Why is this?
4. We should only spend for what is required now and not some fancy MBR plant. The cost of service per owner is already very high.

Thomas Hendrey
8544 Acorn Road
Serene Lakes

-----Original Message-----

From: Tom Skjelstad [mailto:tskjelstad@dspud.com]

Sent: Tuesday, June 22, 2010 3:33 PM

To:

Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

Mr. Keicher,

Typically there is a substantial investment in researching options for WWTP improvements and bringing plants into compliance. Therefore, it makes sense that the same firm researching options carry their work forward into the planning and design phases. Both Districts, Donner Summit Public Utility District and Sierra Lakes County Water District do have full confidence in ECO:LOGIC's ability to provide sound and reasonable evaluation of the alternatives and then eventual design of the plant improvements. Keep in mind that ECO:LOGIC was directed to study five process alternatives. The Joint Facilities Committee was tasked with the responsibility of selecting its preferred alternative. The Committee's recommendation to both Boards can be found on our website, www.dspud.com.

That being said, Sierra Lakes has hired a third-party firm to review the facility plan. DSPUD is fortunate to have this review performed by Waterworks Engineering. Their comments can be found at our website.

Thank you for your interest in our project and don't hesitate to contact me if you have any other questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Tom Skjelstad

DSPUD General Manager

-----Original Message-----

From: owner-comments@www.dspud.com [mailto:owner-comments@www.dspud.com] On Behalf Of Janet KEICHER

Sent: Friday, June 18, 2010 5:31 PM

To: comments@dspud.com

Subject: Conflict of Interest

Typically for public works facilities, the author of the facilities plan (in this case Eco-Logic) becomes the design engineer and the construction project manager. The larger the plan, the larger the design and project management contracts. See the problem? The author of the plan has no incentive to "just fix it." Rather, the opposite is true: The bigger the project, the better.

Accordingly, I highly recommend that you seek a second opinion. The relatively small cost now might well save millions in unnecessary improvement costs later.

Leigh P. Keicher
Serene Lakes