

Staff Report

To: Big Plains Special Service District Board

From: Michelle Kinney, Finance Director and Deputy Clerk

Subject: Adoption of Big Plains Water Special Service District 2024 Water Conservation Plan

Date: December 3, 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this staff report is to provide the District Board with an overview of the proposed 2024 Water Conservation Plan prepared by the Big Plains Water Special Service District (BPWSSD) and seek approval for its adoption. This plan outlines strategies to ensure sustainable water management in Apple Valley, addressing water scarcity, infrastructure needs, and conservation goals.

Background

The State of Utah requires the BPWSSD to complete a Water Conservation Plan as part of the grant conditions for installing a new transmission pipeline connecting the Apple Valley Merritt and Gregerson Wells to the Cedar Point system. This plan serves as a strategic framework to manage and reduce water usage, ensure a sustainable supply, and address issues like water scarcity and system inefficiencies. It outlines specific goals, strategies, and actions to enhance water efficiency, educate the community, and safeguard water resources. Additionally, Utah State Code 73-10-31 mandates such plans to identify current practices and propose strategies for achieving conservation goals.

Plan Objectives

1. **Reduce System Water Loss**
 - Target a reduction from 21.94% to 11.94% by 2029 through leak detection, infrastructure upgrades, and water loss tracking specifically related to fire usage and well water turned to waste.
2. **Promote Community Awareness**
 - Increase public education on conservation practices through digital and print media. (Townwide newsletter with a Water Conservation Corner with tips and educational information).
 - Develop a waste policy for chronic high-water users who have chronic unrepaired leaks.
3. **Align with Regional Standards**

- Work with the Washington County Water Conservancy District to adopt rebate programs and conservation practices.
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Strategies and Initiatives

1. Infrastructure Improvements

- Complete the transmission line connecting Apple Valley and Cedar Point systems in 2024.
- Replace all manual-read meters with radio-read technology by mid-2025.

2. Water Audits and Tracking

- Conduct AWWA M36 audits to identify inefficiencies.
- Develop policies for volumetric testing and meter inspections by 2026.

3. Public Engagement

- Launch an ongoing public awareness campaign, including newsletters and conservation workshops.

4. Policy and Pricing Adjustments

- Review tiered pricing structures to shift more revenue to variable fees.
 - Develop water efficiency standards by 2026 to qualify for state and regional rebate programs.
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Evaluation Metrics

- Monitor monthly and annual water usage to gauge progress toward reduction targets.
 - Conduct customer surveys to measure the impact of education and outreach.
 - Perform regular system audits and update strategies accordingly.
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Financial Implications

The plan aligns with BPWSSD's current budget and capital improvement projects, such as the new transmission line and meter upgrades. Some costs, such as audits and public campaigns, may require additional funding or grant applications. Educational efforts will lean heavily on WCWCD and state programs available to those with current Water Conservation Plans and local ordinances implementing conservation practices that meet state guidelines. The majority of the work will come from current employees and a restructuring of policies and procedures for handling of water resources.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board approve the adoption of the 2024 Water Conservation Plan to support sustainable water management and meet state conservation requirements. Board members are encouraged to review the plan thoroughly in preparation for the meeting and public hearing, ensuring readiness to incorporate any necessary adjustments based on public input and best practices before final approval and adoption.

Next Steps

- Adoption of the plan by the Board.
- Immediate implementation of policies for leak detection, meter upgrades, and public education.