

November 29, 2023

Dear Local Elected Officials and Property Tax Administrators,

I want to begin by thanking you for serving as a leader in your community as the head of a local taxing jurisdiction.

Most areas of Colorado have seen a historic increase in home values. Residential properties are up nearly 40% statewide. For some areas, the increases are over 50%. I'm writing to ask you and your board to play a critical role in making Colorado more affordable. With the state now having taken action, the final opportunity to provide meaningful property tax relief for property owners in 2023 lies with you and I'm hopeful you can help provide additional relief.

The state has taken several steps to avoid large increases in homeowners' property tax bills. The legislature placed Prop HH on the ballot to provide a permanent way to keep property taxes low, with a generous backfill for local governments. With opposition from the left and the right, it didn't pass.

I then immediately called a special session of the legislature and asked them to do everything we could for homeowners owners. I'm proud that we subtracted \$55,000 per home from property tax valuation and reduced the residential assessment rate to 6.7%, for many Coloradans, including your constituents, which, when paired with other recent measures by the state from 2021 and 2022 will provide as much relief from the state as we could get done. But for many Coloradans, including your constituents, this is simply not enough.

Now it's up to you - local elected officials - to do more, which is why I am urging you to reduce the tax rate (mill levy) in your district. Hardworking people in Colorado cannot afford a 40% increase in their tax bills, or even a 20% increase. Wages have not gone up by anything close to this amount, and high inflation and interest rates are creating an affordability challenge for many Colorado families.

I appreciate that you work hard to pass a budget that is responsive to the needs in your community. With the historic rise in property values, most districts can make significant rate cuts and still maintain strong revenue growth at or above the rate of inflation. I urge you to consider this and reduce your mill levy as much as possible. I recently signed bipartisan legislation providing statutory authority for you to temporarily reduce your mill levies, so you can lower your levies this year without risking a permanent loss of revenue in an uncertain future. Across the state districts like yours can help provide needed property tax relief.

I have asked the Department of Local Affairs to provide guidance to you on options that you can take to lower rates this year while preserving your budgetary flexibility. <u>DOLA's helpful</u> toolkit is attached to this letter.

One other way you can get involved is by engaging in the Property Tax Task Force established during the recent special legislative session by <u>HB23B-1003</u>. This bi-partisan group is tasked with looking at long-term, locally driven solutions to property taxation, and your engagement is key to that group's success.

This year is like nothing we've seen before. Property owners are now looking to their local elected officials for help during this challenging time. Each and every one of Colorado's four thousand taxing jurisdictions can be a part of this solution by reducing rates, even if by a small amount. If we all work together - the state and every local government - we can ensure homeowners throughout Colorado are protected.

DOLA Toolkit

Thank you,

Jared Polis Colorado Governor



Local Government Elected Officials and Staff:

Following the passage of <u>SB23B-001</u>, the Governor has requested that counties, municipalities, and special districts consider reducing their mill levies for budget year 2024 to provide critical property tax relief to help combat cost of living increases. Here is a helpful toolkit to take into account for local government boards considering temporarily lowering the mill levy for the 2024 budget year and technical guidance:

- Have the top decision makers, including both elected/appointed officials and staff, been engaged on this topic, including being notified about the percentage increase in assessed value that exceeds the level of inflation?
- How much assessed value increase has your local government experienced and what is the anticipated impact on taxpayers?
- Is your local government's mill levy subject to automatic revenue limits that will require a temporary mill levy reduction?
- Have you reviewed bond covenants and considered legal implications for debt and other obligations and consulted with legal counsel?
- Are you familiar with your local government's voter approval history with regard to mill levies?
- How is budget growth above the rate of inflation being communicated with property owners and is it inconsistent or consistent with voter expectations?
- Have you considered a multi-year plan for property tax revenue and/or property tax relief, or at least for this two-year assessment period?
- Are there other unique considerations for your community?

Local governments that choose to reduce their mill levies should use a temporary mill levy credit. <u>SB23-108</u> revised 39-1-111.5 C.R.S. clarifying that a local government can use a temporary mill levy reduction/temporary property tax credit to provide temporary property tax relief and later eliminate the credits if needed.

To use a temporary mill levy credit, the local government should adopt the same mill levy as the previous year, while also adopting a temporary mill levy credit. The gross mill levy minus the temporary mill levy credit will be the effective net mill levy. The effective net mill levy will be the mill levy that actually ends up on tax bills. **Ensure that any temporary mill levy credit is made clear in all relevant budgeting documents** such as the annual budget, the resolution to set the mill levies, and the <u>mill levy credit on the county</u>. The county treasurer will indicate the temporary mill levy credit on the tax statement per 39-1-111.5 (5) C.R.S. If possible, discuss the use of a temporary mill levy reduction with legal counsel.



Example: A local government with a net assessed value of \$10,000,000 and a general operating mill levy of 10 mills wants to do a temporary mill levy reduction of 3 mills for an effective net operating mill levy of 7 mills.

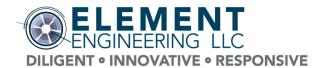
Mill Levy Type	Mill Levy	Revenue
General Operating	10 mills	\$100,000
- Temporary Mill Levy Reduction/Temporary Property Tax Credit	-3 mills	-\$30,000
= Effective Net Operating Levy	7 mills	\$70,000

In this example, the local government offers temporary property tax relief by offering a temporary mill levy credit of 3 mills. This means that 7 mills is used to calculate the final tax bill. If future revenue limits allow, the local government could choose to either adjust the temporary mill levy credit or eliminate the temporary mill levy credit, which would return to the general operating levy to 10 mills.

A sample resolution to set mill levies, an updated calendar for budget year 2024, and other resources are available on the Division of Local Government's <u>budget webpage</u>.

Note: School districts should contact the <u>School Finance Office</u> at the Department of Education for more information.

For more information, please contact the Local Government Services team at 303.864.7720 or email <u>cynthia.thayer@state.co.us</u>. The team is standing by to help you.



MONTHLY ENGINEER'S REPORT

DATE OF MEETING:	December 13, 2023
CLIENT:	BACA GRANGE WATER & SANITATION DISTRICT (BGWSD)
SUBJECT:	Monthly Engineer's Report New Items in Bold

GENERAL ENGINEERING (PROJECT NO. 0001)

<u>Casita Park Lift Station Analysis:</u> Element has reviewed the hydraulics of the Casita Park (Mobile Home Estates) Lift Station to determine why pumps continue to see failure. We have completed an analysis of the existing hydraulic conditions and are evaluating system and pump curves. We expect to be able to provide recommendations to district staff within the next two to four weeks.

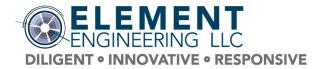
A memorandum summarizing the lift station analysis has been provided to the district for review. Further discussion on the hydraulic difference between design and actual hydraulic conditions between Element and the district staff is necessary to determine next steps. The district staff is looking into the hydraulic conditions and comparing the existing (old) originally installed pump and the newly installed pump.

<u>Water Loss Prevention Plan</u>: Element staff are periodically working with district staff in developing a water loss prevention program. It is likely that this prevention program will take several months to collaboratively develop prior to presentation by district staff and Element to the board. Element is assisting the district in assembling cost estimates for PRV vault and water main replacement program. Our initial meeting has identified the following items to focus on:

- PRV Vault Cost Estimate
- Metering Vault Cost Estimate
- Cost Estimate 1,000 Feet of Main (General)
- Meter Inventory (Ages, Visual Inspection)
- Unmetered Service Survey
- Testing Meters
- Leak/Break Fix Map
- Water Main Replacement Program

District staff is interested in applying for Saguache County grant funds to potentially pay for relocation of PRVs and installation of flow meter vaults to study. Potential uses for this grant money is installation of metering vaults, PRVs, and water shutoff valves to better isolate for breaks. Also, money could be used for leak detection equipment. A cost estimate of a PRV and metering vault has been provided to district staff for review.

Element has been released on design services of the PRV relocation, new PRV installation, and two new meter vaults. Element is completing design and bidding documents so the project can be publicly bid. We are currently waiting for the field survey work to be completed in order to finalize our draft documents for internal review.



We have received the survey and are finalizing the water loss prevention project deliverable design documents for review by district staff.

We created a cost estimate for replacement of the receiving manhole of the Wagon Wheel Lift Station with a polymer manhole that is corrosion resistant.

We have finalized the water loss prevention plans and met with district staff to review. Upon approval of the drawings the next step is project bidding. The project may be advertised and bid in early 2024 if desired by the district.

WATER AND WASTEWATER MASTER PLAN UPDATE (PROJECT NO. 0009)

The Water and Wastewater Master Plan Update document has been finalized in draft format and provided to the BGWSD staff and board for review.

The master plan was approved by the district board in September 2022. The district approved Water and Wastewater Master Plan culminated in recommendations for water and wastewater system improvements. These recommendations are being included in the Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements (Project No. 0010) and Water Treatment Plant Improvements (Project No. 0011) projects. Status reports on these projects are presented under their respective project numbers.

The master plan also included recommendations for water loss reduction. Reporting on progress for this item is listed under General Engineering (Project No. 0001). As the master plan document itself has been approved, and action is being taken on the master plan recommendations, no additional updates will be included on this project number.

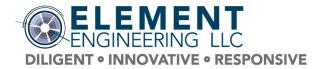
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENTS (PROJECT NO. 0010)

Element has provided the district with a proposal to complete a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Improvements Preliminary Engineering Report and Environmental Report. The report will be assembled for United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development (RD) funding of a new or upgraded/expanded WWTP. A preliminary schedule for the proposed project is shown below. Note that this schedule may vary widely based on review time by CDPHE and USDA as each entity reviews and processes the required submittals.

- Compile and submit Preliminary Engineering Report December 2022
 (Includes ER and RD Apply funding application)
- USDA review and funding/underwriting January 2023 July 2023 (Note this timeline is assumed and is shown conservatively long)
- USDA Letter of Conditions Coordination
- Design, CDPHE and local permitting
- Bidding
- Construction

July 2023 – September 2023 September 2023 – August 2024 November 2024 March 2025 – March 2026

Element was approved on the wastewater PER/ER in the district's September special meeting. We intend to meet the deadline for the PER/ER of the end of December 2022.



The PER was submitted to district staff for review in December of 2022. We are working to schedule a staff review meeting prior to updating the draft for submittal to the board for review. It is expected that the PER will be submitted to the board for review in late January or early February.

The PER was reviewed with staff on January 23, 2023. An updated PER has been provided to the district along with a PER summary handout. A work session to review the PER has been scheduled for Thursday February 23rd. USDA has informed Element that, based on the suggested project scope, an Environmental Report is required. Our original goal was to demonstrate that this was not required due to the fact that the disturbance would all occur at existing project locations, however, after review USDA has required the ER to be compiled and submitted as part of the project. Our current proposal has funding for this work but excludes State Historic Preservation Act site surveys. If a survey is required, we will let the district know and pass that on with no markup.

After review of the PER by the board, and any necessary updates, the PER and ER will be submitted to USDA, along with the RDApply application to finalize the grant and loan funding request.

The PER was reviewed at a board special meeting on February 23rd, 2023. The board approved moving forward with the project and completing the RDApply application. Element is in the process of compiling the required Environmental Report. The Environmental Report and RDApply application will be completed by the end of April 2023. Please note that the Environmental Report requires 30 and 45-day review periods for various state, federal, and tribal agencies for review and comment on the project scope.

The Environmental Report (ER) has been drafted. We are waiting for final responses from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and other agency responses to finalize the ER. The RDApply application is being processed and drafted by Element and district staff.

The RDApply application and Preliminary Engineering Report have been finalized in draft format. The Environmental Report is nearly complete. We are finalizing correspondence with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Further environmental compliance reporting may be required, and we are scheduling a meeting with SHPO to determine the necessary scope of this additional work, if any. It is anticipated we will finalize our conversations with SHPO by the end of May.

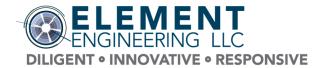
The USDA funding application has been completed. The PER and ER have been submitted to USDA. We are now waiting for the USDA underwriting process to be completed. USDA will generate a letter of conditions that outlines the funding package grant/loan combination.

USDA provided their review comments of the PER and ER. Element has completed the comment responses and resubmitted the reports. The comments were minor and did not necessitate major changes to either report.

WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS (PROJECT NO. 0011)

The Water and Wastewater Master Plan Update recommended a water project be completed including the following:

- Integrate the Motel Well and Booster Pump Station into the large BGWSD system.
- Increase Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Pumping Capacity



• Add Administrative Building for district.

It is recommended that these projects be funded through the Colorado Department of Health and Environment (CDPHE) State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program. Upon completion of the WWTP PER and ER the funding process for the water system improvement project should begin. A preliminary schedule for the proposed project is shown below. Note that this schedule may vary widely based on review time by CDPHE.

- Compile and submit pre-qualification form (CDPHE funding)
- Compile and submit Project Needs Assessment
- CDPHE review and design and engineering grant execution
- Design, CDPHE permitting
- CDPHE funding coordination and loan execution
- Bidding
- Construction

December 2022 April 2023 July 2023 August 2023 – March 2024 February 2024 – April 2024 April 2024 June 2024 – December 2024

The pre-qualification form was submitted in December of 2022. A pre-qualification meeting has been scheduled with CDPHE, DOLA, BGWSD, and Element staff on Tuesday January 31st at 10:00. The prequalification meeting is the next step in the CDPHE funding process where all entities discuss the proposed project and review the steps in the funding process.

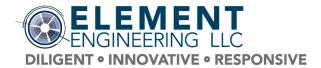
The prequalification meeting was held to discuss the CDPHE funding process specific to the BGWSD water project. The district qualifies for a planning grant of \$10,000 to support compilation of the Project Needs Assessment. The planning grant requires a local match of \$2,500, for total funding of \$12,500 for the Project Needs Assessment. The Project Needs Assessment (PNA) is an engineering planning document similar to the PER but compiled in a format and form acceptable to CDPHE. Element has compiled a proposal to complete the PNA on behalf of the district.

The draft PNA is nearly complete with an internal (Element) review by the middle of April. We are on target to provide the draft to district staff by the end of April.

CDPHE has provided a pre-qualification review letter after our January pre-qualification meeting. The review letter (dated April 19, 2023) is attached to this report. This letter clarifies that the district is eligible for a planning grant (already obtained), a design and engineering grant, and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding.

Element finalized a draft of the PNA and transmitted it to district staff on May 9, 2023. It is recommended the district board schedule a work session or special meeting to review the final PNA during the month of June. In the meantime, Element and district staff will work to resolve any initial questions and/or comments.

The draft PNA is scheduled to be reviewed by the district at an August 23rd meeting. A handout summarizing the PNA has been transmitted to district staff for board distribution.



The district approved submittal of the PNA at the August 23rd meeting. Element has coordinated with district staff and the PNA has been submitted to CDPHE. We are awaiting CDPHE review of the document. Element will respond to any questions or CDPHE comments.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

590CR Hillcrest Overlook Extension: The district has asked that Element provide design services for sewer and water main extensions. The first of these projects is the above referenced extension. The process for design and construction is as follows:

- Application for line extension (application fee)
- Deposit for preliminary design and cost estimate
- Preliminary line extension design and cost estimate
- Customer approval of cost estimate/ deposit of full estimated cost of construction
- Final design/drawing/bid package
- Bid Project
- Award bid
- Pre-Construction Meeting/establish check in meeting schedule
- Construction
- Conditional acceptance
- Final acceptance

The survey for this project is to be completed during the week of January 9th. Preliminary layouts will be completed in one to two days after the survey file is received.

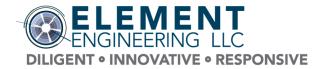
The survey has been completed and an initial alignment show that the extension project is feasible. The district has released Element to complete a full design for the water and sewer extension. We expect this to be completed during the week of February 13th.

The Hillcrest Overlook plans and cost estimate have been submitted to the district. A meeting was held with the developer to review the plans. The next step is to bid the project for construction.

This project has been publicly bid for construction per state statute. A publication was posted in the local paper of record, on the Element Engineering website, and on the district's website. The bid schedule is as follows:

RFP Release Date	Week of May 18th
Plans and Specifications Available	May 12 th at 10:00 AM
Last Day to Request Interpretations of the Documents	May 19 th at 4:00 PM
Last Day to Issue Addenda	May 26 th at 4:00 PM
Bids Due (via email to nmarcotte@elementengineering.net)	June 2 nd , at 4:00 PM

Upon completion of the bidding process, Element will provide the district with a summary of bids received and a recommendation for award.



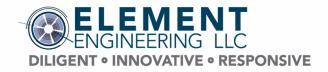
The project has been awarded to Cooley and Sons Excavation. All material has been procured and a premobilization meeting is scheduled for August 14th. Element will oversee the construction and conduct onsite inspections.

Construction is nearly substantially complete. The water main has been pressure tested and the sewer main has been videoed. Video shows a belly in the newly installed pipe that will be corrected by the contractor. Substantial completion of the project is expected to be requested by the end of September.

Substantial completion was issued on October 3, 2023 after a site walkthrough. The only punch list item was to provide a valve box riser for the hydrant valve. Element is waiting on the revised Pay Application No. 1 from the contractor. We have reviewed Pay Application No. 1 and returned it with comments as it did not subtract retainage.

We are waiting for the final pay application and as-built drawings for final processing. Prior to releasing final payment, an advertisement must be published per state statute. Element will provide that advertisement to the district.

The final payment advertisement and final payment processing is complete.



November 21, 2023

Amy Schultz Project Manager, Grants and Loans Unit Water Quality Control Division

RE: Response to Project Needs Assessment Review Letter Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District DWRF Project No. 960062D-Q Saguache County

Dear Ms. Schultz

This letter serves as a response to the Division comments letter, dated November 21, 2023. Responses to the items requiring a response in your review are enclosed herein in italics.

1. Engineering Section Review - Section 6.1.3 – Local and Regional Issues

Section 6.1.3 of the PNA requires systems to discuss if consolidation with another water system/treatment facility was considered and, if not, to indicate why consolidation was not considered. The PNA form indicated that consolidation was not considered but did not go into detail on why this option was discounted. Please describe why consolidation with another system was not considered.

Response: The nearest municipality with a water system for possible consolidation is the Town of Saguache, located approximately 25 miles to the northwest of the district, well beyond the 5-mile radius normally considered the limit for consolidation. The Town of Crestone, although closer than the Town of Saguache, does not have adequate capacity to serve the district and is not viable for consolidation.

The distance to the Town of Saguache makes consolidation an unfeasible option.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or require any additional information please feel free to contact me by phone at (303) 981-0453 or by email at alicea@elementengineering.net

Sincerely,

ELEMENT ENGINEERING

Alice Arsenault, P.E. Process Engineering Manager



Office (719) 378-2352 Cell (719) 588-2406 Fax (719) 378-2530

November 11, 2023

JAMES COOLEY

4469 Cty. Rd. 108

Mosca, CO 81146

Element Engineering, Inc. 12687 W. Cedar Drive, Suite 300 Lakewood, CO 80228

Re: Hillcrest Heights Water and Sewer Main Extensions – Punch List Completion

Dear Nicholaus,

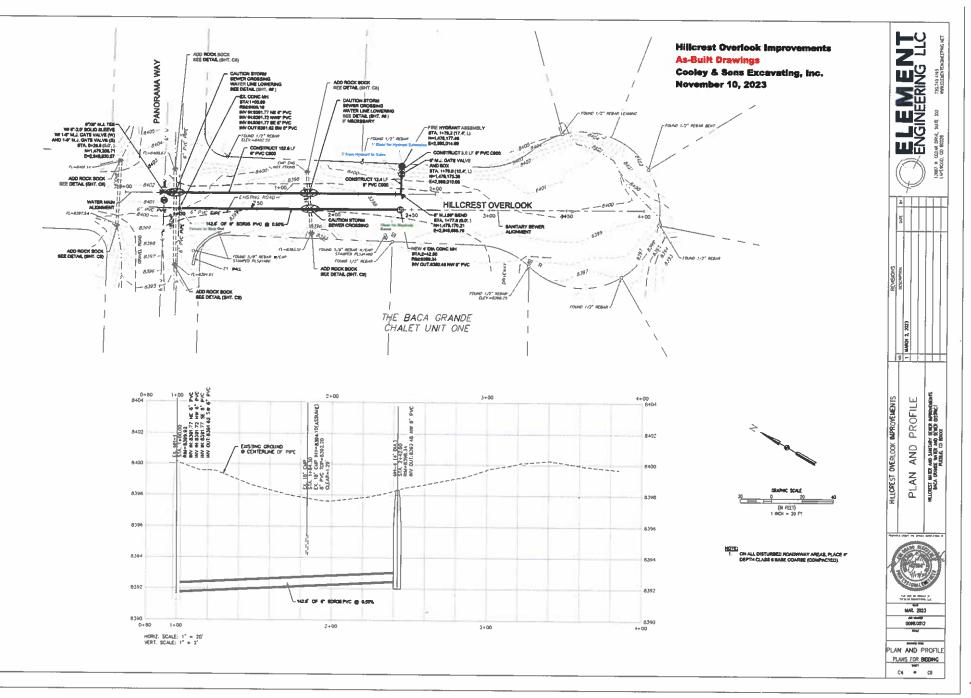
Cooley and Son Excavating, Inc. has completed the Hillcrest Overlook Improvements contract for water and sewer extensions, including the addition of a 12-inch valve box riser to the hydrant valve, as noted in the Substantial Completion Punch List dated October 9, 2023. Please see attached photo of the valve box riser as requested.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me at (719) 588-2406. We appreciate the opportunity to bid your projects and it was a pleasure working with Element on this project.

Best Regards,

James Cooley

President



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Contractor's Ap	plication for Payment		
Owner:	Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District	Owner's Project No.:	
Engineer:	Element Engineering, LLC.	Engineer's Project No.:	0098.0012
Contractor:	Cooley and Sons Excavating, Inc.	Contractor's Project No.	
Project:	Hillcrest Overlook Water and Sewer Extension		
Contract:	See Project Name		
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EJCDC C-620 Contractor's Application for Payment (c) 2018 National Society of Professional Engineers for EJCDC. All rights reserved.

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PROOF OF PUBLICATION NOT AN INVOICE**

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Notice of Final SETTLEMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District, Saguache County, Colorado, will make final payment on December 20th, 2023, to Cooley and Sons Excavation, Inc. 4469 Cty. Rd. 108 Mosca, CO 81146 for all work done by said contractor on Hillcrest Overlook Water and Sewer Extension.

This notice is provided pursuant to CRS 38-26-107(1). Any person, copartnership, association of persons, company or corporation that has furnished labor, materials, term hire, sustenance, provisions, provender or other supplies used or consumed by such Contractor or his Subcontractors in or about the performance of the work contracted to be done and whose claim therefore has not been paid by the Contractor or his Subcontractors, at any time up to and including the time of final settlement for the work contracted to be done is required to file a verified statement of the amount due and unpaid on account of such claim to the Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District at 57 Baca Grant Way, Crestone, CO 81131 at or before the time and date hereinabove shown. Failure on the part of any claimant to file such verified statement of claim prior to such final settlement will release said Town of Olney Springs, its Town Board, Officers, Agents and Employees, of and from any and all liability for such claim. **Published December, 2023**

Size: 2 x 4

Bill: Baca Water & Sanitation

Cost: \$110



November 21, 2023

JoAnn Slivka, District Manager Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District PO Box 520 57 Baca Grant Way S Crestone, CO 81131

Re: Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District Drinking Water Revolving Fund (DWRF) Project Needs Assessment (PNA) Review Letter DWRF Project No. 960062D-Q, Saguache County PWSID No. CO0155200

Dear JoAnn:

The Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, Water Quality Control Division (department) has reviewed the Drinking Water Revolving Fund (DWRF) PNA prepared by Element Engineering, and dated August 30, 2023 for the Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District (applicant). Further information is required prior to approval. Please submit written responses to all comments listed in the sections below.

General PNA Review Comments

No general PNA review comments.

Engineering Section Review Comments

Please provide a written response to the following comments.

• Section 6.1.3 Local and Regional Issues: Section 6.1.3 of the PNA requires systems to discuss if consolidation with another water system/treatment facility was considered and, if not, to indicate why consolidation was not considered. The PNA form indicated that consolidation was not considered but did not go into detail on why this option was discounted. Please describe why consolidation with another system was not considered.

Final Environmental Determination

• The Preliminary Environmental Determination included in the Pre-Qualification Review Letter dated April 19, 2023 requires a Categorical Exclusion (CatEX). Final environmental determination and associated conditions will be included in the PNA Approval letter.

Financial Analysis Comments

• An updated financial analysis has been completed by DOLA and is attached to this memo. Please review the memo for important notes and recommendations.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Principal Forgiveness Eligibility Review:

• The DOLA analyst reviewed the applicant's eligibility for BIL principal forgiveness based on the eligibility criteria outlined in the 2023 DWRF Intended Use Plan. Based on the evaluation, it appears the project qualifies for principal forgiveness. This is not a guarantee of funds and may be



subject to prioritization, potential caps, and availability of funds. The determination was made at the January 31, 2023 pre-qualification meeting and is effective for 18-months from the date of the determination. If the loan application is received after 18-months from the date of the determination, the eligibility must be re-evaluated at that time using current criteria.

• In an email to the department project manager dated November 15, 2023, the applicant confirmed that the loan request will include BIL funding, if available. The applicant's request for BIL funding will be used to evaluate the loan package, including the amount of principal forgiveness the applicant may be eligible for at loan application.

Technical, Managerial and Financial (TMF) Review:

The TMF components were evaluated and there are no outstanding comments.

This letter does not guarantee the award of funds. Award of funds is subject to meeting technical and SRF requirements, and approval by the Authority Board of Directors. Availability and terms of funding for both BIL and base program SRF funds are subject to change at any time.

Questions or clarifications can be directed to me via telephone at 303-691-4945, or via e-mail at <u>amy.schultz@state.co.us</u>.

Sincerely,

Amy Schultz

Amy Schultz Project Manager Grants and Loans - Infrastructure Unit Water Quality Control Division

ec: Gary Potter, Baca Grande WSD Natalie DeBon, Baca Grande WSD Nicholaus Marcotte, Element Engineering Desi Santerre, DOLA Division of Local Government Randi Snead, DOLA Regional Manager Austin Reichel, Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority Steven Daniels, Review Engineer, WQCD Engineering Section Emily Wong, WQCD Engineering Section Ana Ruiz, Project Manager, WQCD Infrastructure Unit Alex Hawley, Work Group Lead, WQCD Grants and Loans Unit Margaret Talbot, Unit Manager, WQCD Infrastructure Unit



MEMORANDUM

To: Amy Schultz, WQCD Grants and Loans Unit
Cc: Austin Reichel, CWRPDA
From: Will Clifft, Division of Local Government
Date: November 2, 2023
Re: DWRF PNA Review, and Technical, Managerial and Financial (TMF) Review Findings for the Baca Grande Water & Sanitation District ("the District")

We have reviewed the materials associated with the District's DWRF project needs assessment.

TMF

Based on the TMF capacity criteria of the DWRF program, we did not find any mandatory financial requirement needing follow up by the District.

Financial Analysis Update

- Based on an updated analysis for the District's 2022 financials, for a \$974,568 loan with an estimated interest rate of 3% and a 20-year term, the projected coverage ratio is 170% with tap fee revenue.
- The District has expressed interest in receiving a 30-year loan term, which may be available depending on the useful life of the project and would further improve the coverage ratio calculation. A 30-year term carries a 0.25% higher interest rate.
- The District transfers money into the enterprise fund to cover capital outlay and sometimes a portion of operating expenses. More detail will be gathered at loan application to determine if these transfers should be included or omitted from total revenue. Transfers from the general fund might also impact the TABOR enterprise status of the water and sewer fund. We recommend consulting with a bond attorney to confirm whether or not an election will be required prior to loan application.
- Ultimately any required rate increases will be calculated at loan application and will be based on the most current available financial statements and any subsequently enacted rate increases, loan request, term and interest rate, and loan principal forgiveness.





Disadvantaged Community

Based on 2017-2021 ACS data, the District met the requirements of a disadvantaged community. This determination is valid for eighteen months from the date of the PNA review letter.

	Benchmark		Borrower	Met?		Benchmark		Borrower	Met?
							>		
P1: MHI	\$64,147	>=	\$48,889	Y	S1: County MHI	\$64,147	=	\$48,413	Y
							>		
P2: MHV	\$397,500	>=	\$195,300	Y	S2: Population Loss	0.00%	=		N/A
P3: County					S3: Assessed Value per		>		
Unemployment	5.61%	<=	4.92%	N	Housing unit	\$23,022	=	\$18,513	Y
County Job Loss	0.00%	>=	5.60%	N	S4a: Current System Debt	0.36%	<	3.63%	Y
					S5a: System Cost Per Tap				
					to MHI	1.30%	<	4.10%	Y

The District is eligible for a Design & Engineering Grant and a reduced interest rate. The District may also receive a portion of their loan as principal forgiveness, subject to funding availability and any applicable principal forgiveness caps.

Please contact us if we can provide additional information.



BACA GRANDE WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT

NOTICE OF INTENT TO FIX OR INCREASE FEES, RATES, TOLLS, PENALTIES OR CHARGES FOR WATER AND/OR SANITARY SEWER SERVICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 32-1001(2) (a), C.R.S., that the 2024 Fee Resolution will be considered at a regular public meeting of the Board of Directors, held via teleconference, on Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at 9:00 A.M. The District's Board of Directors will consider fixing and/or increasing fees, rates, tolls, penalties or charges for water and/or sanitary sewer services, and that any customer or other interested person may appear at said time and place for the purpose of providing input, comments, or objections regarding any proposed increase. Information regarding any proposed increase may be obtained from the District office, Monday – Friday during normal business hours. You may also call the District at 719-256-4310.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: BACA GRANDE WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT



BACA GRANDE WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT GUIDANCE TO EMPLOYEES REGARDING COVID-19

Date: December 06, 2023

From: Diego Martinez, District Manager

- To: All District Employees
- Re: District COVID-19 Guidance

The safety and health of District employees is our top workplace priority. Although the risks of COVID-19 have lessened, it is still a highly contagious virus with potentially serious health consequences that continues to impact our community. The District is providing this guidance document to all employees in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The District expects all employees to comply with this guidance document.

- 1. The most important action you can take is to stay home and not come to work when you have any COVID-19 symptoms (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, body aches). The District has a generous Paid Time Off (PTO) policy that allows employees with accrued PTO hours to take time off for any reason, including when they are ill. The District strongly encourages all employees to be cautious and stay home when any COVID-19 symptoms are present. Please notify your supervisor as soon as you can in the event you stay home because you are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.
- 2. If you do exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms, please test yourself for the virus. If you are positive, stay home from work until you test negative and are fever-free for at least 24 hours and your symptoms are improving.
- 3. If you do not test yourself but are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, please stay home from work until you are fever-free for at least 24 hours and your symptoms are improving.
- 4. If you are at a higher risk of severe COVID-19 outcomes, the District recommends you wear a mask when in crowded areas of the District's office or when you are interacting with coworkers in person and when you are in a crowded area while performing work for the District outside of the office.

If you have any questions about this guidance or any concerns you have about COVID-19 in the workplace, please contact the District Manager.



District Manager Report - December 13, 2023

MASTER PLAN:

Wastewater Improvement Project:

United States Department of Agriculture - Rural Development (USDA RDApply)

- November 2023- Application was returned for edits/more information
 - The District needed to state whether consolidation with another District was considered and explain why the option was not pursued.
 - o Application has been updated and resubmitted with help from Element Engineering.

Water Improvement Project:

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Drinking Water Revolving Fund (CDPHE

DWRF)

> 2/15/2023: Pre-Loan Planning Grant Project #960062D-Q

The District received a grant of up to \$10,000 from CDPHE that helped defray the costs of the documents required by the Drinking Water Revolving Fund program for the Water Improvement Project.

Draw Request #5, the last draw has been submitted, this concludes the Pre-loan Planning Grant Project.

8/31/2023: The Project Needs Assessment (PNA) has been uploaded to the CDPHE portal. Thank Element Engineering staff for their hard work on Planning this project and help to secure the necessary grants and loans for upgrading our water system.

Saguache County Grant - Water Loss Prevention Project (Capital Project)

> 7/19/2023: BGWSD Board approved the proposal from Element Engineering for Construction Plans and Specifications: \$7,000, Bid Documents and Bidding Process: \$8,500.

> Element has now begun working on the design services and bidding documents.

Once again, gratitude to EE for working with the District on our water conservation efforts.

- 11/15/2023: Approximately \$8,300 of the \$15,000 budgeted for the year has been used. Remainder of funds will be deferred to 2024
- > Draft design plans were received and a list of edits has been returned to Element
 - o Finalized plans should be available this month
 - o Next step will be to advertise and send the project for bids

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Water lease negotiations

- Received a response on 11/6/23
- Council has reviewed the correspondence, met with the attorney representing USFWS, and sent the District's reply on 12/05/23



Next step – consider an in person meeting with USFSW

2024 Budget

Proposition HH did not pass. SB23B-001 was passed and reduced valuation assessment amount from 6.75% to 6.7%. The Bill also extended the deadlines for the budget and for the property tax certification process. Governor is calling on taxing entities to reduce mill levies.

Basic Budget Calendar

*A budget for each special district is required to be submitted to the Division of Local Government on an annual basis.

December 10 – extended to January 3 – Receive finalized assessed valuation from County

December 15 – *extended to January 10* - Budget must be adopted and mill levy set for property taxing entities.

January 31 (no change) - Budget must be submitted to the Division of Local Government of the budget year.

PERSONNELL

- COVID No cases to report
 - o Sent update COVID guidance to all staff
- Will be refunding employees all money paid in to CO PFML
 ~\$400

Employee Manual

- > Draft received from council
 - List of edits has been returned
 - o Likely approve in January

 \triangleright

OTHER EVENTS:

New Boundary Map

- > The draft map was review and feedback sent to IMEG for implementation
 - o Clearly identified the property excluded from the District

Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) – Changes will require the District to "Inventory" the materials used in service lines connected to the distribution system. Inventory list is due by 10/16/2024 – Can list as "Unknown" but will require a plan to verify the material used.

- > In process Currently reviewing records to determine the amount of homes built before 1988.
- Will require the District to excavate and verify the type of material used for service lines
 Only a certain percentage
- > Working with Natalie to develop a list of meters/meter pits that can get replaced during the inventory



Administrative Monthly Report

December 13th, 2023 - Board of Directors Meeting

Prepared by Natalie DeBon

Annual Pre-certification: November 3rd, we mailed out via USPS and electronic mail, Certification Resolution together with the Recipient list for 2023 Certification to Regina Swartz, Saguache County Treasurer. Total recipients: 77, this includes 5 usage accounts and 72 vacant properties accounts. Certification Total \$39,392.93. Most of the accounts certified for annual AOS fees, 5 accounts certified for delinquent water & sewer fees. 28 accounts were paid off and removed from the certifications.

After the December 15th deadline to report any changes to the Certification, the full payment including the statutory penalty must be paid to the SC Treasurer. The District should not accept payments toward the certified amount. Customer should refer to Treasurer. The Treasurer will send a monthly report of all payments to the District. No changes as of December 13th, 2023.

Website verification project: Website tap and AOS verification project, continue to be in progress. Admin staff are working to ensure the information displayed on the website remains accurate and up-to-date. Meanwhile, we highly recommend that our customers contact our office to verify the information found on the website.

Caselle: We received a notice from Caselle, billing & AP software, about an upcoming increase in software and maintenance support annual charge. This change will take effect for the support period starting July 1st, 2024. The cost for our District's support will see an approximate 4% increase.

Caselle Webinar: Registered for the Accounts Payable free webinar focused on AP Year-End reporting. The webinar is scheduled for December 12th at 10 AM.

CEBT: CEBT, our health insurance provider, is introducing Modern Health effective January 1st, 2024. This new program is a comprehensive and personalized mental health care platform offering self-guided, community-based, and one-on-one mental health support for members and dependents. Modern Health is hosting a few informative sessions. To get more information and share with our employees, I signed up for a session on December 7th, 12:00pm to 1:00pm.

Vector Solutions Platform: 3 courses were assigned to Admin Employees as an annual training: Anti-Harassment Training, Diversity Equity and Inclusion and Ethics in the workplace.

XBP additional notification: There was a deployment over the weekend that necessitated some files to be re-uploaded, including ours. XBP tried to make sure notifications would not go out, but some might have gone through. No calls or emails received from customers regarding this matter.

IVR Enhancements: XBP did a few enhancement to IVR system. Customers can now dial zero to reach out to live operator. They no longer have to wait for the prompts before entering in their information. At the end, they can now repeat their confirmation number. We reached out to Lindsey from XBP to implement IVR Enhancements, it's implemented as of December 1st. No additional cost. You can test it by calling 888-504-0548.

December Billing Message: The District will be on a holiday schedule between December 25, 2023 and January 1, 2024. During this time, the office will be closed in order to conduct year-end business and all necessary District operations.

To pay your bill by phone, please call the Payment Center at 800-720-6847or the IVR line at 888-504-0548. Wishing you a safe and happy holiday!

File Organization & Archiving: files organization, scanning and archiving project is ongoing. .

UTILITY BILLING ACTIVITY FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER (BILLED IN DECEMBER)									
Customer Utility Billing									
Billing Category Number of Accts Amount Billed									
Usage Customers Billed - SEWER	819	\$39,967.22							
Usage Customers Billed - WATER	841	\$49,648.51							
ON/OFF Service	5	\$150.00							
LATE FEE	44	\$840.00							
TRANSFER	11	\$2,450.00							
CONSOLIDATIONS	4	\$5,500.00							
EQR	27	\$785.75							
NSF FEE	1	\$30.00							
WATER & SEWER HOOK UP	1	\$2,800.00							

NOVEMBER - XPRESS BILL PAY TRANSACTION ACTIVITY

Product / Service Description	Qty	Unit Price	Line Total
EFT Web Transactions	241	\$0.64	\$154.24
EFT Return NSF or Account Closed	1	\$14.00	\$14.00
EFT Returned Item Basic	1	\$7.00	\$7.00
Credit/Debit Card Web Transactions	371	\$0.49	\$181.79
Online Banking - Bank Bill Pay Transactions	24	\$0.25	\$6.00
Lock Box Service Transactions	131	\$0.58	\$75.98
Toll Free Operator Assisted Transactions	3	\$1.25	\$3.75
Toll Free IVR Transactions	4	\$1.25	\$5.00
Support, Maintenance, Hosting - Fee	1	\$100.00	\$100.00

Town of Crestone Sewer 2023

Town of Crestone Sewer Billing -2023

Average										
Date	Monthly Total	Monthly Flow	Flow Charges	Daily BOD	Monthly BOD	BOD Charges	Paid	Balance Due		
								02/28/2023-		
January	434,425	3,431,957.50	\$ 3,431.96	54	1674	\$ 1,658.93	Check # 2596	\$5,090.89		
								03/31/2023-		
February	404,042	3,191,931.80	\$3,191.33	57	1596	\$1,581.64	Check #2604	\$4,773.57		
								04/30/2023-		
March	391,356	3,091,172.40	\$3,091.71	51	1581	\$1,566.77	Check #2612	4,658.48		
								05/31/2023-		
April	484,123	3,825,282.70	\$3825.28	38	1140	\$1,129.74	Check # 2587	\$4955.02		
								06/30/2023-		
May	452,229	3,572,609.10	\$3,572.61	43	1333	\$1,321.00	Check #2630	\$4,893.61		
								07/31/2023-		
June	474,843	3,751,259.70	\$3,751.26	63	1890	\$1,872.99	Check #2630	\$5,624.25		
								08/31/2023-		
July	517,982	4,092,057.80	\$4,092.06	60	1860	\$1,843.26	Check #2636	\$5,935.32		
								09/30/2023-		
August	497,162	3,927,579.80	\$3,927.58	53	1590	\$1,575.69	Check #2638	\$5,503.27		
								10/31/2023-		
September	488,582	3,859,797.80	\$3,859.80	47	1363	\$1,350.73	Check # 2649	\$5,210.53		
- ·								11/30/2023-		
October	524,932	4,146,962.80	\$4,146.96	41	1312	\$1,300.19	Check #2654	\$5,447.15		
XY 1	410.252	2 212 020 00	*2 212 04	4.1	1220	a1 010 00		12/31/2023-		
November	419,372	3,313,038.80	\$3,313.04	41	1230	\$1,218.93		\$4,531.97		
December										
2023 Totals	5,089,138		\$40,204.19	548	16569	\$16,419.88				

New Rate 10/2022 Rate per 1,000 Gallons of Flow: \$7.900 / 1,000 gallons Rate per Pound of BOD: \$0.991 / pounds BOD

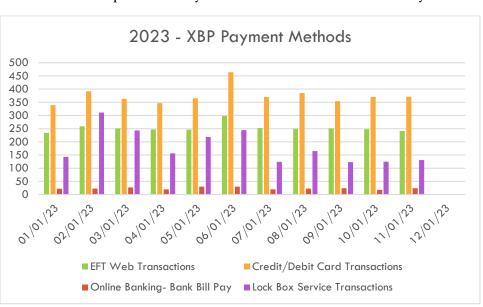


November - 2023- Property Sales: 2- Homes, 3 - Lots

November- 2023 - Other Sales Statistic Including Name Changes Only

Prepared by Jennifer Jenkins:

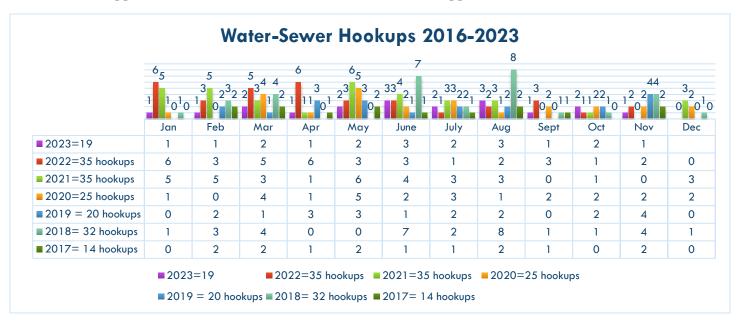
Туре	Vacant Lot	House	Total Charges
Quick Claim Deed	1	0	\$350.00
Warranty Deed	0	0	\$0.00
Treasurer's Deed	0	0	\$0.00
Bargain & Sale Deed	0	0	\$0.00
Contract for Deed	0	0	\$0.00
			Total: \$350.00

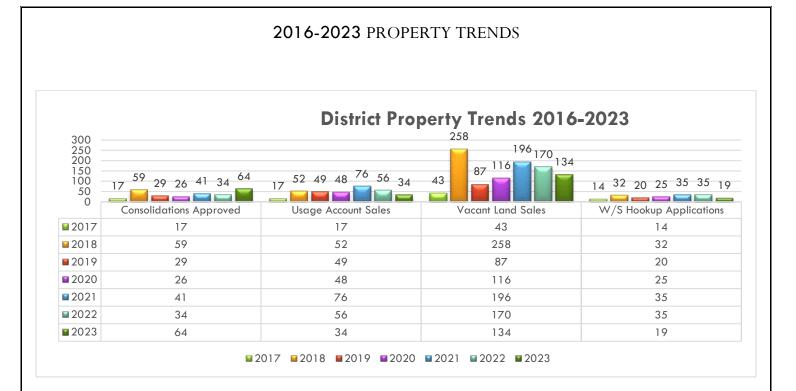


2023 - Xpress Bill Pay Customers Transactions Activity

2023 - Water and Sewer Hook up Applications

1- Application (s) received in November. 19 – Total application (s) received in 2023





HOLIDAY CLOSURE

The Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District Office will be closed to the public from December 25th to January 1st and will reopen Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 9:00am.

If you would like to make a payment during the holiday, our IVR payment line is always available at 888-504-0548.

The Board of Directors and Staff wish you a safe and happy holidays!



November 13, 2023

Baca Grande Water & Sanitation Dist 57 Baca Grant Way S PO Box 520 Crestone, CO 81131 RECEIVED NOV 27 2023

RE: Software Support and Maintenance Increase

Dear Valued Customer,

Caselle appreciates your business and our relationship with your organization. We understand how hard you work to provide quality service to your customers. Our goal is to provide your organization with the best and most cost-effective customer service possible.

We work hard to keep our software and our services affordably priced despite the increasing costs that we incur. As much as we would like to maintain our current rates, we find it necessary to increase our fees by a minimal amount.

Effective for the support period beginning July 1, 2024, which is billed in June 2024, the cost for your organization will increase by approximately four percent (4%).

f you have questions regarding this notice, please call Scott Cook at 801-850-5031 or Larry Hutchings a	it
301-850-5016.	

Thank you for allowing us to provide software and services for your organization's needs.

Sincerely,

Caselle, Inc.

www.caselle.com • Phone: 800.228.9851 • Fax: 801.850.5001 • 1656 S. East Bay Blvd #100 • Provo, UT • 84606

Baca Grande Water and Sanitation District Monthly Operations Report

December 13th, 2023



Fire Hydrant Replacement on Antelope

Facilities and Staff Updates										
	In S	Service	Repaired last month							
Water Facilities										
Well 18	Моо	nlight	Ridge	Ridgeview Fallen Tree		Pinecone		Shumei		
		nsfer	-	nsfer	Transfer		Booster		Booster	
	Sta	tion	Sta	tion Station Station		Station		tion	Stat	tion
Pump Pum	Pump	Pump	Pump	Pump	Pump	Pump	Pump	Pump	Pump	Pump
1 2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2

Wastewater Facilities									
Aspen WWTP		Stables Lift Station		Wagon Wheel Lift Station		MHE Lift Station		Dharma Ocean Lift Station	
Pump 1	Pump 2	Pump 1	Pump 2	Pump 1	Pump 2	Pump 1	Pump 2	Pump 1	Pump 2

Service Vehicles							
Truck 1	Truck 2	Truck 3	Truck 4	Truck 5			

Equipment								
Vactor Truck	Vactor Truck Dump Truck		Skid steer	Excavator				

> Wagon Wheel Lift Station

- Pump is installed and wire is run through the new conduit.
- o Waiting for the electrician to wire the motor to the panel

Vactor

o Vactor Truck was sent to Colorado Springs for maintenance and rehab

> <u>Accidents</u>

o Happy to report no accidents in November!!

Operations Updates

Aspen Wastewater Treatment Plant

- o New Incubator is operational
- We are currently running duplicate samples. One set is being analyzed in house and the other set is being sent to Colorado Analytical Laboratory.
- These duplicate sample will ensure we get the best data possible regard the current loading of the plant

Excavations for repairs

o Fire Hydrant Replaced on the corner of Antelope Way and Badger Way

CRWA Mini Conference

- Bryan, Tim and I attend the Colorado Rural Water Association mini conference in Monte Vista
- The conference consisted of two day of water and wastewater related classes and informational seminars
- Overall great experience

Water Loss Prevention Project

 Had a productive meeting with Element Engineering where reviewed the preliminary plans for the two new distribution system meters and the two new distribution system Pressure Reducing Valves. We also discussed next step projects and developing a comprehensive water loss reduction plan.

New Lead and Cooper Rule Revision

 Currently focusing on gathering information and building a spreadsheet to help us determine the scope of this project.

Ongoing Summer Projects

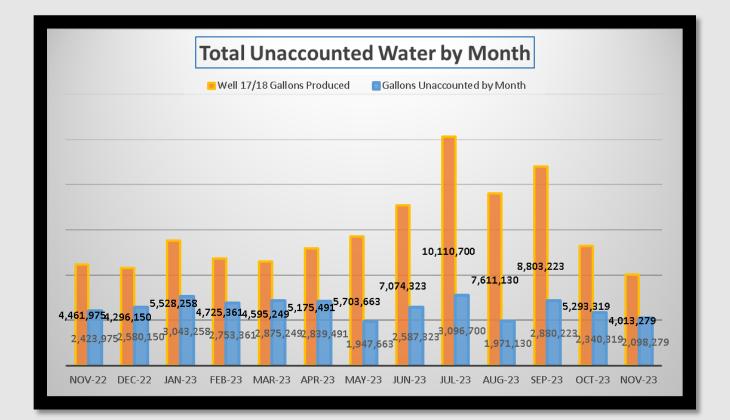
- o Annual fire hydrant maintenance. Completed
- o Annual lead and cooper sampling- Completed
- o Annual collection system cleaning and inspections
 - Nearing completion for the year
 - All main truck line in C basin jetted
 - Roughly 50% of all of C Basin mainlines inspected
- o Annual Backflow Device Testing. Completed
- AOS Verification. Completed with a few questions that will require excavation to verify.

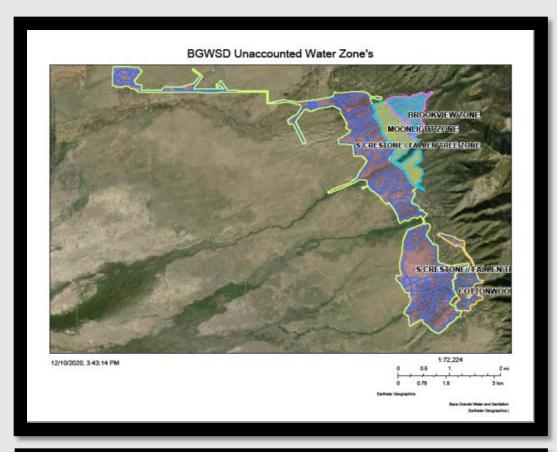
Unaccounted Water

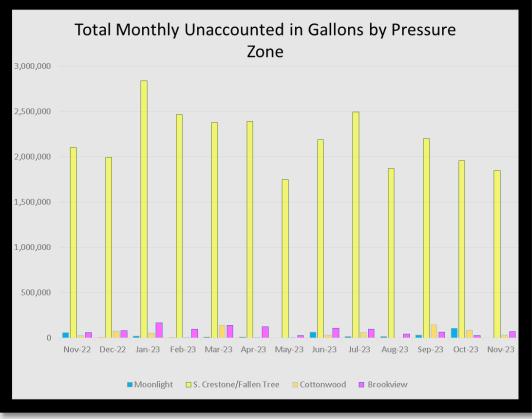
- Wells 17 and 18 produced 4,013,279 gallons of water in the month of November.
- The District sold its customers 1,915,000 gallons of water in the month of November, leaving 2,098,279 gallons unaccounted for.
- o 52% of the water produced is unaccounted for in the month of November

Aspen WWTP and Town of Crestone Loading

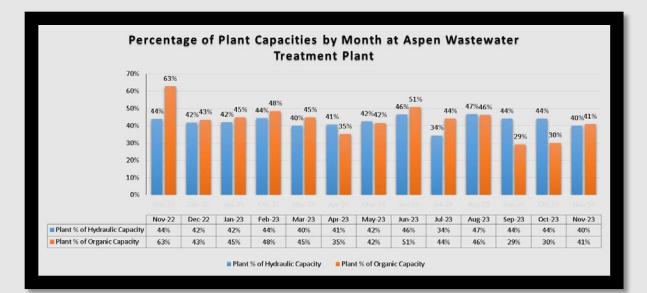
 Aspen WWTP averaged 40% of hydraulic loading capacity in the month of November, the Town of Crestone contributed and average of 24% of the treatment plants hydraulic load. Aspen WWTP averaged 41% of organic loading capacity in the month of November. The Town of Crestone contributed an average of 44% of the treatment plants organic load.



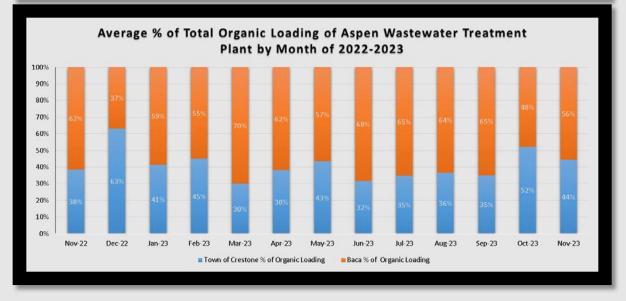




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