Upper Price River Project
Proposed Ownership and Operation

OWNERSHIP

To design and construct the Upper Price River Watershed Project (project), a sponsoring organization is needed. The sponsor would represent the entire area of distribution and should have taxing authority. The sponsor would have responsibilities such as:

- Contract with NRCS for PL56-833 funding
- Finance the cost share for construction including facilities that benefit the entire project
- Collect funds from project recipients for respective cost share
- Collect taxes
- Enter into contracts with the water right holders and project beneficiaries
- Become the owner and provide O&M of the same facilities
- Contract with another agency or to a private contractor for maintenance

It is proposed that the sponsor be the Carbon Water Conservancy District (CWCD). Its authority is governed by state code and is sufficient for the purpose of being the sponsor and the ultimate owner of the project and project facilities. Its board members are appointed by the County Commission to four-year terms and therefore can be selected to provide a wide range of representation of the water users. CWCD currently has the purpose of administering the operation and maintenance of Scofield Dam & Reservoir. This project would expand CWCD's responsibility to own, operate, maintain, and repair the project facilities. If the CWCD does not vote to accept the responsibility, another sponsor would be needed, which could be a new consolidated organization that represents all of the water right holders and would serve the same functions as identified in this document.

The sponsor would:

- Be responsible to represent all of the water right holders and water users for this project
- Elect board members according to the by-laws that would represent areas of equal share amounts. Review the by-laws to determine if the project necessitates a larger board to provide sufficient representation of the water users, including from various irrigation companies and water right holders.
- Work with legal counsel on the by-laws and details for the organization.
- Enter into contracts with the water users to manage the storage and distribution of water. These contracts will be very important to guarantee the proper distribution of the various water rights and make the daily operation as smooth as possible.
- Enter into repayment contract with funding agency(s)
- Obtain seed money. Could be obtained as a loan from the Board of Water Resources and/or begin to assess taxes for the project during the design phase to build a reserve fund.
- Set assessments to cover the costs/repayment of the project, operation, and maintenance (likely based on acre-feet used).
- Assess taxes and fees
- Own the project (diversion structure, reservoir, pipelines and all of the associated structures

- Own the rights-of-way
- Own storage rights
- Responsible for O&M of the entire system including:
    - Diversion structure on the Price River and associated infrastructure
    - Transmission Pipeline
    - Turnout to Gay Ditch
    - Reservoir, outlet structures, and associated infrastructure
    - Carbon irrigation system main line and PRVs
    - Price-Wellington irrigation system main line and PRVs
    - Meters to laterals
    - Lateral lines are the responsibility of the individual irrigation companies
- Contract for lease/sale of water for minimum stream flows
- River operating agreements and criteria
- Potential exchange and adjustment of water rights as agreed upon by water right holders
- In the future, could own all of the water rights now in the possession of each canal company
- Hire staff – including:
    - Manager (preferably an engineer). The manager would represent them during design and construction of the project. The manager should be involved in the development of the project to address the sponsors concerns as well as represent the water users. Some responsibilities would include:
        - Oversee construction to understand the system as they would be responsible for operation, maintenance, repair, and future modifications.
        - Be familiar with the hydraulic design features of the pipeline and the anticipated pressures at each meter.
        - Be familiar with the pressure control features and be able to tract the pressures on a SCADA system.
        - Tract water into the reservoir, out of the reservoir, and through each individual meter. Computer programs can aid in this process.
        - Cooperate with the river commissioner in water delivery into the proposed reservoir. Delivery can be made using the same distribution schedule presently in use.
        - Hire maintenance organization to repair pipe leaks and other problems or hire maintenance staff
    - Secretary (preferably with an accounting background). The secretary would
        - need to meet the requirements of the Federal grant contracts and be able to program the flow of money to match the contractual responsibilities.
        - Assist with contracts (ie. pipe material, construction, and right-of-way documents).
- Note: NRCS funding (75%) for the project is on a reimbursable basis, so after payments are made on their contracts, the sponsor would seek reimbursement. Local participation (25%) could be made through assessments and/or from a loan from the Board of Water Resources.

In addition to the ownership of the project facilities and infrastructure, an owner/operator is needed for:

- Access roads
- Recreation facilities

It is proposed that the access roads be owned and maintained with ROW provided by Carbon County. The main purpose of the access road at Consumers Wash is to maintain access to the Geneva Rock plant. A secondary purpose is to provide access to recreation facilities.

It is proposed that the recreation facilities be owned and operated by State Parks or BLM. The recreation amenities to be provided need to be finalized by the sponsor that owns the reservoir, as proposed, that would be CWCD. The currently proposed recreation amenities include:

- Watercrafts - motorized
- Boat ramp
- Campground with individual sites (including power and septic dump station)
- Picnic pavilions
- Restroom facilities
- Fish cleaning station
- Roadways - paved
- Parking lot

Note: NRCS funding (50%) for the project is on a reimbursable basis, so after payments are made on their contracts, the sponsor would seek reimbursement. Local participation (50%) could be made through assessments and/or from a loan from the Board of Water Resources. **The sponsoring entity responsible for entering into contracts, including repayment, with the NRCS is proposed to be Carbon County.**

PROPOSED OPERATIONS

Under the proposed project operations, water would be diverted and delivered into the reservoir instead of into the head of the canals. Water stored in the proposed reservoir would be distributed to project beneficiaries based on the water right ownership in units of acre-feet. It would be measured from reservoir releases into the Carbon and Price-Wellington irrigation system main pipelines. Daily accounting of water deliveries into the reservoir would be the responsibility of the manager and his staff in coordination with the river commissioner.

The accounting of pipeline deliveries to the individual meters based on share ownership, could be done by the sponsor or it could be delegated to each canal company to read the meters and control the deliveries. Either way, a central record of meter delivery will be necessary at the sponsor level. This information could be displayed on a web page accessible to all users.