

December 10, 2018

Nina Ruiz
El Paso County Development Services Department
Transmission via email: NinaRuiz@elpasoco.com

RE: El Paso County Water Master Plan
File No. MP181
Entire El Paso County
Water Division 1 and 2, Water District 8 and 10

Dear Ms. Ruiz:

We received the referral material related to the proposed Water Master Plan (“WMP”) for the El Paso County. The WMP was developed for the purpose of resolving water supply issues earlier in the land use process for new developments, identify present conditions of water supply and demand, identify ways that can achieve efficiencies, and take steps through the comprehensive planning and development review process to encourage best management practices for water demand management. Implementing this WMP will help ensure that land use decisions are based on balancing efficient use of limited water supplies with the water needs of current and future residents. The WMP also proposes cooperation among water supply entities in the County with respect to water planning efforts.

An analysis of the current water demand and the current water supply was presented in the WMP document. According to the WMP document the current demand is estimated at 116,050 acre-feet/year and it is predicted that this demand will increase to 159,205 acre-feet/year by 2040 and 206,000 acre-feet/year by 2060. The current water supply available is estimated at 146,070 acre-feet/year and it is predicted that by 2040 the future water supplies will be 185,610 acre-feet/year and 212,150 acre-feet/year by 2060.

Based on the above there is currently an apparent surplus of approximately 30,000 AF of water on an annual basis. Thus, the current supplies are sufficient to meet current demands under average climate conditions throughout the County. However at the current level of water supply (146,070 acre-feet/year) there is a projected water need of 59,930 acre-feet/year of additional supplies by 2060. Based on the reported supplies and estimated demands, the current level of water supply could serve approximately 56 percent of the projected water demand in 2060.

The sources of water supplies used by water providers in El Paso County include surface and groundwater sources. The groundwater includes the water in the Denver Basin aquifers (inside and outside of the Designated Basin) and alluvial aquifer. The WMP acknowledged that the groundwater in the Denver Basin aquifers is non-renewable and there is a risk for those water providers who rely upon these sources. Therefore WMP indicated that there is a need to bring renewable water into El Paso County from the Arkansas River system to meet the future growth demands. Ideally,

renewable water should be used in times of wet and average precipitation, reserving non-renewable groundwater for use during drought conditions when renewable water flows are low. The WMP recommends the County help promote any efforts by water providers and developers to deliver additional renewable water supplies into the county. Other goals, besides developing renewable water sources, include alluvial storage, water reuse, evaluate modification to the County's 300-year water supply subdivision regulation and the landscaping standards, to encourage water conservation, efficiency and xeriscaping.

The implementation of this WMP will be reflected in the land use application process and how development projects integrate the goals, policies, and objectives set in the WMP. Although the proposed WMP may impact the types of referrals this office will receive from El Paso County, the subdivision water supply requirements will not change, and our office's opinion on the adequacy of a proposed water supply to a proposed subdivision will continue to be based on adequacy of each proposed source of water to each proposed subdivision. The proposed WMP are administrative only and do not diminish the current water supply requirements.

Should you or the applicant have any questions, please contact Ioana Comaniciu at (303) 866-3581 x8246.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Keith Vander Horst". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Keith Vander Horst, P.E.
Chief of Water Supply, Basins

IDC/KVH

Ec: Referral No. 25409