



WATERSHED NEWS

F O U N D A T I O N

AUGUST 22, 2006

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UPCOMING EVENTS

The date for Secchi Day on Beaver Lake has been rescheduled to Saturday, August 26, 2006. For details, contact Suzanne Langley or Fran Free at slangley@audubon.org or ffree@audubon.org or call the Fayetteville Audubon office at 479-527-0700. Event co-sponsored by Beaver Water District and Audubon Arkansas

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TOGETHER TO
MAKE BEAVER,
TABLE ROCK,
TANEYCOMO AND
BULL SHOALS
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WATER TAX MAY BE ON BALLOT

By Jeff Lehr The Joplin Globe

Posted on August 22, 2006

URL: http://www.joplinglobe.com/local/local_story_234005403

NEOSHO, Mo. - Newton County voters in the Nov. 7 election could be deciding a proposed tax increase to pay for the monitoring of streams for bacterial contamination.

The board of trustees for the Newton County Health Department adopted a resolution on Thursday to place a proposed levy increase on the ballot. The measure seeks to raise the current local levy of the Health Department by 7 cents per \$100 assessed valuation, to 12 cents.

The resolution states that revenues from the increase would be used for operations of the Health Department, and for monitoring and testing of Newton County watersheds for health hazards and infectious diseases.

The Health Department is monitoring five points along Shoal Creek for the presence of E. coli bacteria, according to Bob Kulp, Health Department administrator. The sites are Wallaby Road bridge, the old Route E bridge, the Lime Kiln Conservation Area, the Undercliff Campground bridge and Wildcat Park.

Samples collected have all, at one time or another just since June, tested for levels of E. coli in excess of the 235 colony-forming units per 100 milliliters that the Environmental Protection Agency considers the standard for deeming water unsafe for swimming.

"And we need to be looking at more than just Shoal Creek in this area," Kulp said.

He said single sample points tested on Hickory, Lost, Indian, Cedar and Capps creeks have shown similarly high levels of contamination. But monitoring and testing of the streams has been spotty at best and of limited value so far, Kulp said.

"The only way we're going to be able to provide any kind of intelligent information to the public is by providing continuous monitoring of these creeks people are using," he said.

He said a single sample from a single point is not of any use to the public. Weekly or twice-weekly testing is needed at multiple points along multiple creeks to build up a useful database, he said. A coliform count is used as an indicator of fecal contamination of water supplies. The presence of elevated levels of E. coli bacteria in water indicates contamination.

The Newton County Health Department has an annual budget of about \$850,000. Local property-tax revenues cover \$300,000 of the department's spending. The remainder of the revenues come from state and federal grants and programs, fees and interest income.

The bulk of the department's budget, about \$687,000, goes toward salaries and benefits.

The proposed property-tax increase would raise about \$430,000 more in annual revenues. The department's projected stream-monitoring costs call for hiring four more employees at a projected cost of \$180,000 in the first year.

The new staff members would be two environmental public health specialists, an environmental public health clerk and a computer specialist/geographic information system technician.

The projected costs for stream monitoring include \$100,000 for DNA typing as well. DNA typing is needed to determine the primary sources of contamination and to begin developing plans to improve water quality, Kulp said.

The owner of an \$80,000 property in Newton County now pays \$7.60 in property taxes for Health Department services. The proposed levy increase would bump that up to \$18.24.

The Newton County commissioners say they may seek a legal opinion on whether the health board can place the proposal on the ballot.

Presiding Commissioner Jerry Carter said Monday that the commission has no argument with the Health Department or its board. He said the commissioners believe the department does a good job and may well be within its legal authority to seek the tax increase.

"But it's our responsibility to ensure that tax levies are legally and appropriately presented, especially (real-estate tax increases) because they are already a burden on all of us in Newton County," Carter said.

More discussion

Jerry Carter, presiding Newton County commissioner, said that while state law addresses how county health departments are to be established with a property tax in 2nd Class counties, it does not appear to address whether their boards can seek tax-rate increases.

The Newton County Health Department has not sought a levy increase since its establishment about 50 years ago.

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WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION TO PURSUE \$15.38 MILLION REVENUE BOND

By Evie Blad The Benton County Daily Record
Posted on August 22, 2006
URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/bcdr/News/38765/>

ROGERS — The Rogers Water and Sewer Commission approved a resolution of intent to issue \$ 15.38 million in water revenue bonds at its Monday meeting.

The commission will present its request to the City Council at its Sept. 26 meeting.

Commissioner Tom McAlister said \$ 380,000 of the bonds would go toward issuance costs, leaving \$ 15 million in the group's construction fund. The commission would use the money to fund extensions and improvements throughout the city and to acquire Bentonville's share of shared water mains.

Potential projects include elevated and ground storage tanks, and work on New Hope, Perry and Pleasant Grove roads. McAlister said he worded the resolution broadly so the commission could "cherry pick" funding projects.

“ Things change and priorities change, ” he said. “ That money could be diverted very easily, ” he said.

Commissioners also agreed to post advertisements seeking new legal representation. Candidates will be asked to submit resumes and fee structures, and commissioners will rank candidates before making a decision.

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CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Northwest Arkansas Times

Posted on August 22, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/44077/>

Water sewer improvement projects 1. Hamestring sewer lift station • Construct a 36 million gallon per day (mgd) capacity sewer pump station; \$ 6, 130, 000 cost • Construction to begin August 2006; estimated completion in December 2007 • Brasfield & Gorrie Contractors 2. 48 ” gravity sewer line — Gregg to Hamestring • Construct 24, 751 ’ of 48 ” gravity sewer pipe line and 3, 876 ’ of 30 ” sewer pressure pipe line; \$ 10, 441, 319 cost • Construction 6. 08 percent complete; estimated completion in October 2007 • Oscar Renda Contractors 3. Force mains — Hamestring to West Plant • Construct 21, 740 ’ of 24 and 30 ” sewer force pipe lines; \$ 4, 582, 537 cost • Construction 80. 24 percent complete; estimated completion in November 2006 • Garney Construction

4. Broyles Road water line

- Construct 3, 100 ’ of 12 ” water line; cost included with West Side Water Treatment Plant — No. 5

- Construction substantially complete

- Brasfield & Gorrie Contractors

5. West Side Waste Water Treatment Plant

- Construct a new 10 mgd (average daily flow) wastewater treatment plant; \$ 59, 994, 710 cost

- Construction 12. 3 percent complete; estimated completion May 31, 2008.

- Brasfield & Gorrie Contractors

6. Wetlands mitigation

- Construct and plant 25. 5 acres of wetlands; \$ 287, 040 estimated cost — not yet bid

- Tentative bid date of August 2006; estimated completion of October 2008

7. Owl Creek lift station force main

- Upgrade the existing sewer pump station and install 11, 600 ’ of (estimated) 15 ” sewer pressure pipe line; \$ 1, 200, 000 estimated cost — not yet bid

- Tentative bid date of February 2007; estimated completion date of October 2007

8. Porter Road to Hamestring sewer line

- Construct 14, 100 ' of 21-24 " gravity sewer pipe line; \$ 7, 014, 948 cost
- Construction 33 percent complete; estimated completion of March 2007
- Oscar Renda Contractors

9. North Street to Poplar to Van Asche Road sewer line

- Construct 15, 500 ' of mostly 24-33 " gravity sewer pipe line; \$ 4, 154, 667 estimated cost — not yet bid
- Tentative bid date of October 2006; estimated completion of November 2007

10. Gregg Avenue sewer lift station

- Construct a 19 mgd capacity sewer pump station; \$ 1, 557, 000 estimated cost — not yet bid
- Tentative bid date of February 2007; estimated completion of October 2007

11. Old Wire Road to Gregg Avenue sewer line

- Construct 15, 770 ' of 21-36 " gravity sewer pipe line; cost included with Porter to Hamestring — No. 8
- Construction 5 percent complete; estimated completion of March 2007
- Oscar Renda Contractors

12. East Side Waste Water Treatment Plant renovation

Phase 1

- Upgrade odor control, solids handling, headworks at the Noland wastewater treatment plant; \$ 14, 644, 000 cost
- Construction 65. 09 percent complete; estimated completion of May 2007
- Archer Western Contractors

Phase 2

- Increase wet weather capacity, remove the effluent pumping station; \$ 2, 100, 000 estimated cost — not yet bid
- Tentative bid date of September 2007; estimated completion of November 2009

13. Mally Wagnon sewer lift station and force main

- Upgrade sewer pump stations, install 4, 968 ' of 16 " sewer force pipe line; \$ 2, 043, 000 estimated cost — not yet bid
- Tentative bid date of March 2007; estimated bid date of December 2008

14. Happy Hollow to Noland Waste Water Treatment Plant sewer line

- Construct 26, 458 ' of 42 " gravity sewer pipe line; \$ 14, 225, 000 estimated cost — not yet bid
- Tentative bid date of March 2007; estimated completion of November 2008

15. Razorback Road to Happy Hollow sewer line

- Construct 13, 489 ' of 21-30 " gravity sewer pipe line; \$ 6, 015, 000 estimated cost — not yet bid
- Tentative bid date of June 2007; Estimated completion of September 2008

16. South Mountain to Industrial Park sewer line

- Construct 4, 084 ' of 10 " gravity sewer pipe line, \$ 572, 000 estimated cost — not yet bid
- Tentative bid date of March 2007; estimated completion of November 2008

Other major capital improvements 17. U. S. 62 west water line • Relocating the water line along U. S. 62 due to widening from North Hunter to County Road 647; \$ 1, 180, 177 cost • Construction 97 percent complete 18. Sanitary sewer rehab • Construct 13, 067 ' of 8-15 " gravity sewer pipe line at various locations city-wide; \$ 2, 223, 022 cost • Construction 67. 6 complete • Estimated completion of February 2007 • T-G Excavating Contractors 19. North College water line replacement — Maple to North • Replacing old water lines along College Avenue from Maple Street to North Street; \$ 1, 377, 141 cost

- Construction 90 percent complete

20. Happy Hollow-Huntsville Road intersection construction

- Installation of new traffic signals, as well as intersection and drainage improvements; \$ 1, 235, 213 cost
- Construction 65 percent complete

21. Razorback Road water line relocation

- Relocating water line along Razorback Road due to widening from 6 th Street to 15 th street; \$ 722, 891 cost
- Construction 97 percent complete

22. Arkansas 16 water line relocation — Ruppel Road to Double Springs Road

- Relocating the water line along Arkansas 16 due to widen Ruppel Road to Double Springs Road; \$ 1, 591, 426 cost
- Construction 60 percent complete

23. Fayetteville Fire Station No. 5

- Groundbreaking took place July 20; \$ 1, 583. 000 cost

24. Fayetteville Expressway Economic Development Corridor

- Contract negotiations are under way for study phase; funds available for construction — \$ 9. 57 million (includes \$ 7. 66 million in federal funds)

* All completion dates are for substantial completion. Percentage of completion is based on dollars earned as of the most recent pay request.

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EXPERTS TO PROBE SINKHOLE'S DEPTH

By Mike Penprase Springfield News-Leader

Posted on August 22, 2006

URL: <http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060822/NEWS01/608220366/1007>

The exploration effort is to determine the hole's extent before it is filled.

Residents of a quiet Nixa neighborhood whose peace was jolted when a rumbling sinkhole appeared nine days ago will hear more thumping today.

The pounding is part of an effort to probe the sinkhole on Delaware Street and determine its extent before work begins to fill it.

A consultant working with Nixa officials said Monday that exploration done during the weekend could reduce neighbors' concern that the sinkhole that swallowed much of Norman Scrivener's home on Aug. 13 will spread.

Two bore holes drilled along the street showed bedrock on the east side of Scrivener's property ranges from 35 to 45 feet below the ground's surface, Gary Pendergrass said.

Bedrock where the sinkhole appeared is estimated at 75 feet below ground.

"That should be very encouraging to the neighbors around there," Pendergrass said. "Those depths being so much shallower, there's not as much chance of collapse as we had on Mr. Scrivener's lot, bedrock being so much deeper."

While trying to determine the makeup of the sinkhole and surrounding soil has been inconclusive so far, Pendergrass said he hopes seismic tests beginning today by researchers from the University of Missouri-Rolla will reveal information.

The tests are similar to what oil geologists use to check for deposits thousands of feet underground, but are done on a much smaller scale, said UMR geological engineering professor Neil Anderson.

Sensitive instruments will be used to trace vibrations that travel downward and rebound from blows on the ground by a 20-pound sledge hammer.

"It can give you an image of the subsurface," he said.

"They can use that to estimate depth to bedrock, whether you're looking at soil or rock and God forbid, if there's a cavern," he said.

"Obviously, everybody is hoping there's not a cavity."

Expenses involved in having UMR personnel go to Nixa and conduct tests are being covered by the university as a community service, Anderson said.

The UMR crew visited Nixa over the weekend and did resistivity testing similar to what Missouri Department of Natural Resources researchers did last week, Anderson said. That testing was inconclusive.

Results of the weekend testing weren't available Monday, but Anderson said he's hopeful the tests will have better results than the DNR tests.

Checking the area with ground-penetrating radar also has been considered, but probably won't be done, Anderson said, because soil conditions probably won't allow radar waves to penetrate deep enough to reach bedrock.

"Clay is a little bit like lead for the ground-penetrating radar," he said. "It absorbs the signal."

Nixa also is continuing to have a surveyor check the site daily to detect any collapsing, Pendergrass said.

Other than more dirt falling into the sinkhole, there haven't been any changes, he said.

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TRAILS COULD BE REMOVED

By Brandon Cone Branson Daily News

Posted on August 22, 2006

URL: <http://www.bransondailynews.com/story.php?storyID=1686>

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is looking to close many of the non-maintained lake access roads leading to Bull Shoals Lake, and Taney County residents will be called upon to help find a compromise.

The Taney County Commission met with representatives from the Corps Thursday morning to discuss the issue and the effects it may have on the county and its residents.

"I feel like it was a very productive meeting, where we met for about three hours," said Presiding Commissioner Chuck Pennel. "I feel like we did get a lot accomplished."

Pennel said the commission will soon be appointing a 6-8 member advisory board to work with the Corps, the commission and the Missouri Department of Conservation in finding a compromise where maintained access roads should be placed and where trails should be eliminated.

"At the public hearing we had back (in April), a large number of residents put their names down on a list as being interested in serving on the board," Pennel said.

The Corps' Mountain Home, Ark., office's Natural Resource Specialist Mark Case said the Corps doesn't want to eliminate any lake access, just better define access points.

"We're going to be looking to the advisory board to tell us where we can put maintained, graveled roads that will best serve 99.99 percent of the people for whatever they want to do, whether it be swimming, fishing or hunting," Case said.

Case said the many unmaintained trails leading to Bull Shoals cause "multiple impacts."

“For one, those unmaintained trails are illegal, and we have to have several park rangers out, keeping people on four-wheelers off those trails during times when they could be in a park attending to other duties,” Case said. “Second, when people are out riding four-wheelers and things they can cause more trails, which because they’re unmaintained, erode and become even more unsafe over time.

“People also like to ride four-wheelers through water and, when they ride through a creek or something, it doesn’t only have a negative effect on your water quality but is also detrimental to the habitat in that creek.”

Case said the Corps’ objective is to take care of the public land around the lake the same way land owners take care of their privately-owned land.

“I don’t know of any land owner who say, ‘Sure you can drive through my fields and yard wherever you want,’” Case said. “We’re just trying to do that, too.”

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WATER PUMP BACK IN SERVICE

Springfield News-Leader

Posted on August 22, 2006

URL: [http://www.news-](http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060822/NEWS01/608220336/1007/NEWS01)

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Power interruption Monday shut down pumps temporarily. A 6-ton water pump that failed last month after a lengthy repair was back in service over the weekend at City Utilities' Stockton Lake pumping facility.

Spokesman Ern DeCamp said that pump and a series of temporary pumps were delivering nearly 21 million gallons of water to Springfield since Saturday morning.

But shortly before 2 p.m. Monday, a power interruption in the line serving the pumping station caused all the pumps to shut down.

"The pumps do remain off, but our plan is to restart the permanent pump tomorrow," DeCamp said.

The temporary pumps may return to service later.

DeCamp said CU customers won't notice any difference because the utility's water storage lakes still have enough water to meet demand.

However, without significant rains to help fill them up, Fellows and McDaniel water storage lakes continue to decline.

Last week they were at 68.7 percent capacity but Monday had dropped to 67.4 percent.

That's about 12 percent below the 10-year average, but not near the 50 percent mark that initiates forced water conservation measures.

DeCamp said CU water customers have been using about 40 million gallons of water a day.

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WATER WOES

By SUSANNAH PATTON Northwest Arkansas Times
Posted on August 21, 2006
URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/44030/>

When water providers in Washington County recently had to employ mandatory conservation measures because of the strain on the water infrastructure, some county officials began to worry about the future water supply.

Washington County Judge Jerry Hunton issued a disaster emergency proclamation in the first week of August when the system used by Washington Water Authority and the cities of Prairie Grove, Lincoln and Westville, Okla. reached critically low levels.

Hunton said the issue is overutilized water lines.

“ Everyone is watering at the same time, ” he said.

New subdivisions are putting an extra strain on the lines, he said, because people are trying to keep the new grass alive.

“ There’s competition for water, ” he said.

The problem, he added, is that the water lines in many areas were built 10 to 15 years ago.

“ They were built for 150 percent of what was there at the time, which means they only allowed for 50 percent growth, ” he said. “ We’re way past that in a lot of areas and we’re getting there quickly on some of the other lines. ”

Hunton said the water providers need to start developing policies to determine who can tap into the system.

For instance, he said, right now a developer could build a subdivision on a line that feeds a small rural area.

“ All of a sudden whatever taps were available could be taken up by that subdivision, ” he said. “ There’s got to be a little room for future growth in the remote areas of the water lines. ”

Hunton said there needs to be a policy that leaves some water taps in reserve for individuals so developers can’t take 100 percent of what’s available.

The water companies also need to be aware of what’s available so they can tell a developer up front if there’s going to be enough water or not.

“ I’m hoping the water companies are making serious investigations into what’s going to be available, ” he said.

Josh Moore, general manager of Washington Water Authority, said engineers are working on a complete hydraulic analysis of the entire system and would start looking into a policy to address capacity issues.

Hunton said the water issues are just another part of the growing pains the county is dealing with similar to overcrowded roads and increased traffic.

However, this is different than the problem with roads, he said. Roads get crowded and people have to deal with it.

“ With water, you can only get so much down that pipe, ” he said. “ When you’re maxed out, you’re done. ”

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STRATEGIES TO WIN A BATTLE WHILE SAVING WATER

By Robert L. Seay The Benton County Daily Record
Posted on August 20, 2006
URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/bcdr/Agriculture/38658/>

BENTON COUNTY — As area residents continue to be solicited to participate in a combined effort to conserve water, a common question during times of drought is “ How do you keep grass alive under trees ? ”

The response: “ Why bother ! ” It isn’t that it can’t be done, but many problems can be avoided and gallons of water saved by converting shady areas to plants other than grass.

The primary problem associated with growing grass under trees is the competition for moisture, a battle that trees always win. By July people are mowing thin, dusty grass while bouncing over and scalping exposed tree roots. Pruning the tree limbs higher may help add sunlight to benefit the grass, but will not solve the need for moisture or the tree root problem.

Take a few minutes to drive around the neighborhood and notice how other homeowners and commercial businesses are learning to solve this problem. After fighting the battle, perhaps an observation will note a blending of shade tolerant plants in patterns which reach out to make smooth contact with the lawn where sun and shade meet. No battles to be fought here, only a sight which proves to be mentally refreshing which is the ageless idea behind landscape design.

Plant selection is the most difficult aspect of the problem. A regionalized plant recommendations guide will offer a place to start. Basically, a guide should serve as a shopping list for plants which have a proven track record in northwest Arkansas. The important point is that recommended plants will grow on and under soil types and weather extremes here.

One disclaimer to plant guides is to review some recommendations. For example, English ivy and winter creeper are often listed. While both are durable, once established you can’t turn your back for fear of them taking over an area.

Plant guides should have listings by shade tolerance and whether they are grown for flowering, foliage or both. However, don’t miss the most important quality of making the right selection, which is drought tolerance.

In the long run, regardless of drought or the fact you travel for two weeks each summer, it’s pleasant to know that drought tolerant plants do not require a pampered watering schedule. Throughout the months and years ahead the right plant selections will save time, peace of mind, untold gallons of water and needless wear-n-tear on a lawn mower.

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