

MEMORANDUM

TO: Programs, Planning and Operations Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Logan Creek Pipeline Crossing Project for Thurston County Rural Water

DATE: January 21, 2007

FROM: Dick Sklenar

For some time, a vulnerability assessment of the Thurston County Rural Water system (TCRW) has indicated to me that a weakness of the distribution system is located at Logan Creek, which lies immediately east of Pender, NE.

Conceivably, it could take up to several days to replace our current 6 inch pipeline under Logan Creek should the failure be severe. The solution is to directional bore an additional 6 inch waterline under the creek. This redundancy would alleviate a potential disaster for livestock producers should it occur during the hot summer months, major storm events or a severe winter.

Of the four rural water systems the District operates, the Thurston County system has always had marginal capital with which to operate since its inception in 1984. In other words, it is barely in the 'black'. The main reason for this is the lack of population density. The system averages about 1.5 customers per mile of pipeline when compared to Dakota County RW (7 per mile), Washington County RW #1 (12 per mile), and Washington County RW #2 (6 per mile). In fact the TCRW system has 17 accounts to abandoned farmsteads.

Water rates have been raised several times, most recently in 2006. This was done after a 100% increase was made by the Village of Pender (our supplier) because of a new nitrate removal treatment plant the community constructed. The Thurston County Rural Water system has the highest water rates of the 4 water systems the District operates. Thurston County itself has been one of the top 10 counties with the **lowest median household income** in the State. A comparison of water rates assuming an average use of 7,000 gals. per household is as follows;

TCRW	DCRW	WCRW#1	WCRW#2
\$52.30	\$34.35	\$42.00	\$42.40

To address the issue at hand, the TCRW system has only been averaging about \$50,000 in operating capital. In a couple of years, about ½ of the operating capital will be used to paint the interior of the 100,000 gallon water tower. Raising rates draws in little income due to the small customer base.

An estimate to design & construct the new 6 inch waterline crossing under Logan Creek is about \$45,000. A proposal is for the District to cost-share 75% of the total cost (about \$33,500) in f.y.'08, with the balance provided by the Thurston County Rural Water system.

It is recommended that the Subcommittee recommend to the Board of Directors that 75% cost-share funding be provided for the fiscal year 2008 budget for the construction of a 6 inch waterline crossing under Logan Creek.



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