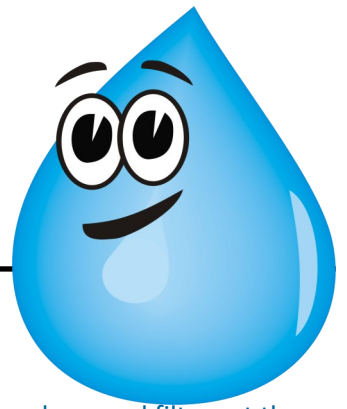


MINTURN NEWSLETTER

SPECIAL EDITION; WATER SERIES

Issue 4: Water Treatment Update



WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM UPDATE:

Several years ago, the State of Colorado required Minturn to decommission two of the three slow sand filters at the water treatment plant due to those filters not meeting state regulations. The Town now relies on the last remaining slow sand filter, along with two wells for treating and providing drinking water. The two wells were recently assessed to determine their ability for increasing Minturn's groundwater supply. Both wells have limitations making them incapable of providing a greater volumetric supply. Additionally, for legal reasons relating to Minturn's senior water right, an increased wellfield production option is not recommended.

Given the current state of Minturn's water treatment operations, the question has arisen as to how issues that might arise before a new water treatment system can be brought online will be addressed. In addition to the one slow sand filter and the two wells, Minturn also implemented (and permitted) a temporary cartridge filter in the event of an emergency. This is a back-up option that can provide additional water treatment if issues arise with other aspects of the treatment system. This option is a far better solution than a rehabilitated slow sand filter due to the temporary nature of its use, limited cost impacts to rate payers and ability to meet ongoing CDPHE regulations. With the temporary cartridge filter in place, Minturn now focuses on how best to address long-term solutions at a reasonable price.

CONTINUED ANALYSIS:

After additional analysis and legal review, the option for increasing pumping from the Cross Creek wellfield proved inadvisable. This option requires either water court approval that might result in additional limitations on Minturn's most senior water rights or more replacement to the stream system (augmentation). After a thorough analysis, Minturn determined that the risk to its most valuable and reliable water rights would not be worth any potential gains, and there are no available augmentation supplies to provide replacements to Cross Creek. With this in mind, the option of increasing pumping and drilling more wells was eliminated from consideration.

With the wellfield option abandoned, the Council went back to the three options for water treatment provided within the Water Treatment Analysis Report. As recommended by all the consultants, the Council is considering a membrane water treatment plant. As a reminder, the slow sand filters are not recommended for either a short or long-term option. The short-term solution is covered via the above mentioned cartridge filter and slow sand filters are not expected to maintain CDPHE regulations well enough into the future for being reliable as a long-term option.

The most recent cost estimate for a membrane water treatment plant was approximately \$15M—\$18M. At a Council meeting on February 7th, this cost was considered too high of a burden for rate payers. Staff is now seeking ways to reduce the cost of a membrane WTP by reevaluating design criteria. We anticipate coming back to the Council this summer with updated cost options for review.

WATER MORATORIUM:

The Water Moratorium remains in place. The limited number of water taps in excess of historic usage that are available under the moratorium will be distributed on a first come first serve basis if and as applications are submitted and approved in accordance with existing procedures.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

Another public discussion will be scheduled once new cost estimates have been obtained. The Town has been extremely appreciative of the community input throughout this process and will continue to ask for public participation. There will also be a question in the upcoming community survey seeking feedback regarding the Minturn water utility. We hope residents will take the time to answer this important survey question.

As always, please call or email with questions. A robust, ongoing discussion with a variety of stakeholders is important to this process and we greatly appreciate your participation.

Michelle Metteer
Town Manager

