

April 2006

Water Matters - Russ and Elaine Wright

The South Sacramento Water Group offers the following comments to the January 23, 2006, Proposed District-Specific Rules and Regulations for the Lower Pecos River Basin.

1. Entry without notification on to private land:

State Engineer, John D'Antonio, presented the 8/23/05 proposed regulations to the South Sacramento Water Group in a public meeting in Sacramento, NM in 2005. In written and verbal comments by SSWG and others, the State Engineer was asked that the punitive approach in the draft regulations be reviewed in order to bring the landowners and the State Engineer's into a partnership rather than an adversarial relationship. The January 23, 2006 Proposed Regulations do not in any way reflect these concerns and comments. In fact the punitive nature of the role of the Water Master has been enhanced. We ask that you consider the differences in language and perceived intent between the Proposed Domestic Well Regulations and The Proposed Lower Pecos Regulations.

a. In the proposed regulations for Domestic Wells, the State Engineer states that his office will make a reasonable effort to contact the permittee before entering upon his land.

10.27.5.12.6

The permittee shall allow the state engineer or his representative access to the well for meter reading, water level measurement, or other purposes. State engineer representatives will make a reasonable attempt to notify the owner prior to entry upon the property.

b. The proposed Lower Pecos Regulations make no such provision for prior notification of a property owner before entry onto private land. Why is the same courtesy offered in the Domestic Well Regulations not provided for in the Lower Pecos River Basin Rules, i.e., that the "State engineer representatives will make a reasonable attempt to notify the owner prior to entry upon the property"?

c. We believe there is a constitutional issue related to the provisions in the regulations and the authorizing statute, both of which permit entry onto private land without a warrant by the OSE, an agency with law enforcement powers. How does OSE justify this provision in light of the protections against unwarranted search and seizure in the Fourth Amendment of the US Constitution?

2. Exemption of wells currently connected to a common conveyance, 19.25.16.183:

We ask that you add to 19.25.16.183.3 "and/or stock water."

Rationale: The proposed regulation language exempts irrigation users but by omission does not exempt those who water stock from a common conveyance. At the State Engineer's meeting in Sacramento, in response to a question for a cattle grower, the State Engineer stated that there would be exemption in the regulation. The draft regulation penalizes those whose rights allow them to use surface or ground water to water stock off of a common conveyance. We ask that those who water stock from a common conveyance be given the same exemption as those who irrigate.

Fire Restrictions on Forest Lands

Stage 1 fire restrictions are in effect. No campfires, charcoal grills, or any open flames. Gas and other fuel-fired stoves are OK. Use common sense; be very vigilant during windy conditions. Keep all vehicles on the roads or cleared parking areas. The outlook for the Sacramento Mountains calls for above-normal precipitation, creating a potent capacity for early-season grassland and highlands timber fires. These conditions will persist through May. Homeowners are encouraged to create defensible space around their properties. The District Ranger has brought in our seasonal fire resources and personnel early.

Weed/Sacramento Fire Department

Class 130-190 was taught by Melinda Fleming March 11-12 on what is to be done in the event of a wild-land fire. John & Katherine Stephenson taught a CEVO class March 15 on driving department vehicles. Our future EMTs are taking training in Mayhill. We appreciate the time and effort they spend to ensure the safety of our community.

Cloudcroft Slash Pit Re-opens

Open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 1, and Friday, April 14, Hwy 244 off U.S. Hwy 82 about half a mile on the left. Tree generated items only. No building materials of any kind. Future dates TBA.

Rabies Clinic

On Saturday, April 8, Dr. John Rauch will hold a rabies clinic at the Weed Fire Station, 9 to 11 a.m., and at the Mayhill Feed Store, 1 to 3 p.m. Rabies vaccinations and yearly shots will be available at a reasonable cost.

Weed Community Association - Slim Stewart

As president of the Weed Community Board of Directors, I would like to invite each of you to attend our meetings which are held the last

Monday of the month at 6 p.m. in the school building cafeteria.

The Board needs your input - what your interests are: game nights, how often, senior events, etc. Also, how should we put these good buildings to use? Could the facilities be leased by groups for reunions, weddings, camps, etc.???

We ask you to come and help put together a plan for Weed and the surrounding communities.

Beginning in May, the Weed Community Center plans to host a game night. This will include bingo for prizes, dominos, cards, table games, and, of course, "eats." Watch for dates and times in the *Hitchin' Post* and businesses around the surrounding communities. Come one come all. Let's have real mountain fun.

Upcoming Events

April 2 - Daylight Savings Time begins in the wee hours of the morning. Remember to set your clocks forward one hour before going to bed Saturday night, April 1.

April 4 - Bookmobile, 1:15 - 2:30 p.m., in front of the Weed Café.

April 6 - South Sacramento Water Group, 6 p.m., Camp Chimney Spring Retreat Center.

April 8 - Easter bonnet parade and music, 6 p.m., Weed Café. Prizes to be award for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.

April 16 - Easter. Attend the church of your choice.

April 17 - Income tax returns due.

April 24 - Weed Community Association meeting, Community Center (old school building), 6 p.m.

April 26 - Job Fair, 10 a.m. Nivison Library, Cloudcroft.

April 28 - Book Club, 5:30 p.m., James & Marylou Otts' A-frame, 24 Ozark, Hay Canyon, 687-3469

Attention People Eligible for Medicare

You could see your total drug expenses drop by about 50%! Attend Humana's Medicare prescription drug plans seminar at the Weed Café on April 13, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., to learn more. Seating is limited, so call soon. (Cindy Barley, 505-621-4111). You'll get all the information you need about Humana's plans in a relaxed atmosphere. There's no obligation.

Annual Bluegrass Festival

Plans are in the works for the Bluegrass Festival to be held in Weed the weekend of July 21-23. Bands are being contacted, and arts & crafts booths are available. Call Shirley Akers at 687-3680 for more information.

There have been several entries for the tee shirt contest, and the winner will be announced soon. Thanks to everyone who entered.

The Weed Store

The Weed Store, formerly CW's, is owned and operated by Bernard and Susie Cleave. Sunday hours are now 12 Noon to 5 p.m. Other hours remain the same. Great people, same great service!

Piñon News

- Margaret Merritt

...The Extension Club meets at 2 p.m. every second Thursday of the month in the Club House. The

next meeting is April 13. After the March 9 meeting, plans were discussed for a fall meeting for the candidates for office from Otero, Chaves, Eddy, and Lincoln counties. Suggestion are welcome. Please call 687-3580 or 687-3470. Yes, Joel, you are included!

...Our first measurable precipitation since October 2005 occurred on March 14. Water is scarce and container gardening may be our best chance this year. It's worth a try, anyway, since old-time friends taught the proper use of all water, including dish, wash, and bath. Grateful remembrances to beloved departed friends Oza Gentry Holcomb, Addie Gentry Gage, Ethel West Smith, and Mae Lewis Dean. These ladies could, and did, raise flowers on a rock and squash in a holey dishpan!

...Margaret Merritt's daughter, Jane Murray, visited for a few days after stopping in Lubbock to enjoy grandchildren Jonah, Gracie Jane, and Nathan with Jon and Samantha.

...We've had a firm west wind for weeks; sheep shearing is mostly done; pruning is continuing; and the Piñon Cash & Carry and local traffic are quiet since we're between hunting seasons.

Library News

- Joyce Komraus

April is a busy month for Libraries: National Library Week is April 2-9 is and National Volunteer Week is April 22-29. For us, they are connected. Without all our wonderful volunteers, both the Michael Nivison Public Library and the Weed Community Library would not be where they are today. It's the volunteers who worked on the books helping to catalogue them and prepare them for the final step - putting them on the shelves ready for you to read. It is the volunteers who staff the libraries and make them run smoothly. Without the Library Volunteers, we would not have both libraries that we have today. Think about it.

With that thought in mind, "Thank You" to all the Library volunteers! You have done a wonderful job, and you have our heartfelt thanks and appreciation!

Sympathy

Our prayers and sympathies are extended to Amy George and family on the loss of Bill George, husband and father.

Anniversaries, Birthdays, Congratulations, Get Well, Thank You, Welcome, Etc.

Happy Anniversary to:

...John & Katherine Stephenson, 3rd

...Earl & Rachael Burton, 16th

Happy Belated Birthday to:

...Buddy & Maddie Newell, March 1

Happy Birthday to:

...Paul Comino, 1st

...Ky Mydock & Walter Stugis, 2nd

...Jan Rauch, 5th

...Kade Goss, 6th

...Red Stanbrough, 9th

...Jared Livers, 13th

...Ken Hester, 14th

...Shirley Akers, 16th

...Fred, Gage, Lee Hudman, Stephanie Toth, 18th

...Spike Goss, Brandy Miller, 27th

Comings and Goings

...The fiancée' of Russ & Elaine Wright's son, Christopher, is visiting from Japan. Excitement is running high as plans are being made for a wedding!

...The Newell's daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Doug Sheldon from Washington State, and son and daughter-in-law, Buddy and Christie Newell and their daughters, Heidi and Madison, from Conroe, TX, visited for a few days.

...Kara & Rentz visited family in March. It was good to see them and know they are doing well.

...Terry & Marie Rodgers are back home after spending a couple of months taking care of their grandchildren.

Get Well Wishes to:

...Mary Muncrief who is recovering from surgery.

...Pat Hammet who broke her foot. Rumor has it she kicked Ken.

...Todie Puryer who is having a bout with pneumonia.

...Dub Schuessler who is mending quite well from an injury several weeks ago.

Thank You to:

...everyone for their prayers for Patsy & Tom Ward's daughter who recently underwent a catheter ablation (treatment that burns heart tissue to correct irregular heart rhythms). We're happy to report that the procedure was successful!

...Dub & Barb Schuessler for the donation of a print cartridge for the *Hitchin' Post*.

Welcome to:

...Jeff & Louise Winkel whose vacation home is now their permanent residence. At least for Louise. Jeff still has another year to work and will be staying with daughter Casey in Carlsbad. Jeff & Louise are already busy in community events.

...Bern & Jenny Koern, new owners of the former Essek ranch.

Area Churches

Mayhill Baptist Church - Norman Green, Pastor. Sunday School for all ages begins at 10 a.m., with worship services beginning at 11 a.m. Children and youth Bible drill and adult and youth Discipleship training, 5 p.m. Evening worship service begins at 6 p.m. Children and youth Bible study and adult Bible study and prayer meeting, Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. Men's breakfast and devotional, Thursday, 7 a.m.

Mayhill Church of Christ - Marlon McWilliams, Pastor. Sunday Bible class begins at 9:30 a.m.; worship service begins at 10:30 a.m. Evening worship is at 6 p.m., and Wednesday Bible Study is at 7 p.m.

Piñon Baptist Church - J. B. Craft, Pastor. Sunday School for all ages begins at 10 a.m., with worship service beginning at 11 a.m.

Piñon Church of Christ - Ralph Skelton, Pastor. Sunday worship service, 10:30 a.m.; Wednesday evening Bible Study, 7 p.m.

Sacramento Mountain United Methodist Church - Dulaney Barrett, Pastor. Regular Sunday worship service at 10 a.m., Sunday School at 11 a.m. Pastor Barrett is preaching a series of sermons dealing with the various aspects of grace.

Weed Baptist Church - Sunday School begins at 10 a.m., with Worship Service at 11. Bible Study and Prayer is offered at 2 p.m. on

Wednesdays. A potluck luncheon is held after church on the third Sunday of the month. There will be a special music program from 10:30 a.m. to 12 Noon on Easter Sunday, with a potluck luncheon to follow.

Weed Church of Christ - Ralph Skelton, Pastor. Bible study is taught from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. every Sunday; worship service begins at 10 a.m. Sunday evening services are from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Weed House of Prayer - Dub Schuessler, Pastor. Services are held every Sunday in the home of Jimmy and Frances Goss. Prayer and singing begin at 10 a.m.; sermon begins at 11 a.m. Prayer service is held each Wednesday at 10 a.m. A potluck luncheon is held on the first Sunday of the month. For the month of April, the potluck will be held on the 16th after Easter services.

Bible study class is held at 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Our thanks to Bro. Dub for being the interim pastor and for doing such a wonderful job. Bro. Don & Anna Rae Brown plan to return April 16.

During Lent, The **South Sacramento Mountain Ministerial Alliance** is sponsoring a "Soup" lunch at 12 Noon each Wednesday through April 12 at the Cloudcroft United Methodist Church. Good fellowship and a brief devotional are included. If you cannot stay for the whole time because of work or other commitments, take part in as much as possible. Dub Schuessler and Dulaney Barrett are members of the Alliance. All are welcome.

Easter Sunrise Worship Service, sponsored by the South Sacramento Mountain Ministerial Alliance, will be held at 7 a.m. at the Cloudcroft United Methodist Church, April 16. It will be followed by a breakfast at 8 a.m. All are invited.

Ham Radio Classes - Reg Duncan

Ham radio operators can be a vital link to any real disaster or emergency that could happen. Would like to attend a class?

There must be a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 24 students before a class can be scheduled. When (if) scheduled, the class will be held Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. On Saturday, it will run from 8 a.m. until 12 Noon. Lunch will be from 12 Noon until 1 p.m.; probably pizza from one of the restaurants in Cloudcroft. There will be a review from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., with the test to be administered at 12 p.m. The test will be graded immediately, and students will know if they passed or failed. The class will be held in the James Canyon Fire Department training room and will cost approximately \$24, which will cover the cost of the test and student study guide.

Classes are also held in other communities.

Classes may take an all-day Saturday session or several evenings, depending on instructor availability and community preference.

Monthly meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the James Canyon Fire Department at 10 a.m.

For more information, contact Reg Duncan by e-mail at duncan@pvtnetworks.net or at 687-3025, or Linda Steinhoff at 682-4664 or by e-mail at lsteinhoff@zianet.com.

Tidbits

Proceeds from the aluminum can recycle bin brought in \$19 for March! Approximately \$75 has been added to the community fund and is used to pay the water bill for the Community Center. Thanks to everyone who recycles their cans!

U. S. Postal Service

Come tax night, the USPS will be on your side ... twice.

First, we appreciate your business 365 days of the year. We welcome the opportunity to help you fulfill your mission - whether it's paying your monthly bills, sharing your love with family and friends, using the mail to increase your customer base and profit margin, or paying your taxes. Your local postal employees are glad to be able to help.

Second, while we will accept your tax payments, handle them with care, and safeguard them through to delivery, one thing we won't do is spend them. Your Postal Service is financed by the sale of its products and services. The only funds the Postal Service receives are reimbursements by Congress to provide free mail for the blind and to keep certain postage rates for non-profit and other qualifying organizations below cost.

More than 30 years ago, the federal government performed one of the first successful "extreme make overs." Congress and the President transformed the two-centuries-ole Post Office Department into the U. S. Postal Service, a new organization with a new mandate: to operate on a break-even basis, without taxpayer subsidies.

That change has been largely successful. Today, your Postal Service is the world's largest and most productive postal system, with mailing rates that are among the lowest in the industrialized world.

Farmer's Almanac April Gardening Tips

(This Bulletin is determined by the Almanac's age-old formula and applies generally to regions where the climate is favorable.)

1-2 Favorable for planting beans, corn, cotton, tomatoes, peppers and other aboveground crops.

3-4 Poor days for planting. Seeds tend to rot in ground.

5-7 Plant tomatoes, beans, peppers, corn, cotton and other aboveground crops on these most fruitful days. Plant seed beds, start flower gardens.

8-11 Grub out weeds, briars and other plant pests.

12-13 Favorable planting days. First day good for planting corn, melons, squash, tomatoes, and other aboveground crops. The second day good for planting root crops and flower gardens, sowing hay, fodder crops, and grains.

14-16 Good days for planting beets, carrots, radishes, turnips, peanuts and other root crops. Also good for cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, kale,

celery and other leafy vegetables. Start seed beds.

17-18 Barren days. Do no planting.

19-20 Favorable days for planting beets, carrots, turnips, radishes, onions and other root crops.

21-22 Excellent time to kill weeds, briars, poison ivy and other plant pests.

23-24 Favorable days for planting root crops. Extra good for vine crops. Set strawberry plants.

25-27 Poor planting days. Break ground or cultivate.

28-29 Favorable for planting beans, corn, cotton, tomatoes, peppers and other aboveground crops.

30 Poor day for planting. Seeds tend to rot in ground.

News for the *Hitchin' Post* may be mailed to Patsy Ward, Editor, P.O. Box 565 or sent via e-mail to patrice@cavemen.net anytime during the month. **Deadline for submissions is the 25th of each month.**

If you have information you want included in the newsletter, you may also call Joy Garrett, 687-3862; Margaret Merritt, 687-3580; Evelyn Miller, 687-2170; Barb Schuessler, 687-2513; or Elaine Wright, 687-3073, with your news. If you prefer not to have your personal information included, please let us know.

Would you be interested in receiving the *Hitchin' Post* via e-mail rather than a paper copy? If so, please let Patsy Ward know and we can try it out with the May issue.

