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Water district considers Cooper Mountain site

Reservoir | The Tualatin Valley entity is discussing purchases with property owners

By DAVID R. ANDERSON
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BEAVERTON — The Tualatin Valley Water District is talking to property owners on the south side of Cooper Mountain to purchase land for a water reservoir.

The reservoir would be one of the next steps in a decadelong project to bring drinking water from the Willamette River in Wilsonville to the district's 200,000 customers in Washington County. The district serves areas of Hillsboro, Beaverton, Tigard and unincorporated communities.

Carollo Engineers, a private consultant hired by the water district, presented its final recommendations to the district board last week after 10 months of studying the project. The district paid \$850,000 for the study.

The district is prepared to start on the steps recommended by Carollo, including choosing a route for the 22-mile pipeline, purchasing land and starting the next phase of design, said board Chairman Jim Doane. But raising the dam at Henry Hagg Lake, for example, might be an alternative.

"This is not to say all our eggs are in the Willamette basket," Doane said after the meeting.

The recommendations include two alternatives for a pipeline between Wilsonville and Beaverton. One would primarily go under streets, and the other beneath Bonneville Power Administration electricity lines.

The district should choose an alignment by mid-2007, said Mark Knudson, a consultant with Carollo. The preferred route is beneath BPA lines, but Knudson warned the board that negotiations with the federal agency are moving slowly.

"It's not a simple arrangement to work with these folks," he told the board. "They don't move real rapidly."

The district is required to get voter approval before using the Willamette for drinking water. That will happen before the district spends "substantial amounts" of money on the Willamette option, Doane said. But the district needs a reservoir regardless of which water source it uses. And purchasing rights of way from other public agencies isn't that expensive.

"I don't see that as the trigger," Doane said of a districtwide vote.

The district will negotiate with Washington County for easements along roads common to

both routes, including along Southwest Roy Rogers and Scholls Ferry roads.

Carollo's estimate of the project's total cost, including improvements to the Wilsonville treatment plant and the reservoir, range from \$360 million to \$420 million. That assumes a 5½-foot diameter pipeline that could move 70 million gallons of water a day, which could handle future growth.

Carollo created a detailed timeline. It shows the district purchasing rights of way between now and early 2010, construction starting in 2012 and the project finished in late 2015. That is followed by about six to nine months of testing before the system is operational in June 2016.

Knudson recommended the district buy land soon for the reservoir.

"Land in this area is subject to very rapid property development," he said. "The sooner, the better, basically."

The reservoir would likely be a 40-foot tall, 20-million-gallon concrete structure near the 445-foot elevation. Ultimately, the district might build a second 20-million-gallon reservoir on Cooper Mountain.

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Willamette River Pipeline

Tualatin Valley Water District leaders are considering two routes for a 22-mile drinking water pipeline from the Willamette River to Beaverton. The preferred route would mostly follow Bonneville Power Administration electricity lines. The alternative would be buried under streets in Washington County, Sherwood and Beaverton and cost about \$50 million more.

Source: Tualatin Valley Water District

..... Preferred route
—— Alternate route

