Westside Water Association Newsletter February 2021

The Good, The Bad and the Geeky

It has been a while since we have sent out a newsletter so here is "all the news that's fit to print".

Service line leak in south end of Westside Highway (WS HWY)

The Bad: A major leak was discovered in the southern most service line on WS HWY. That service line was shut off and thanks to the cooperation of a supportive neighbor a temporary line was run above ground to keep the last three services connected. A final fix was completed on February 10/11 by running a new line through the existing line under WS HWY.

The Good: An investigation found that the main pipe along the west side of WS HWY south of 158th was actually 6" PVC and a valve had been installed where the line crosses WS HWY. The effect of all of this is that a repair for ~$10,000 displaces planned Capital Asset Replacement work of approximately $30,000. So, although we spent this amount earlier than planned WWA will benefit substantially in the longer term.

Early January rain burst severely erodes road to Canyon Pump house

The Bad: On January 3rd a torrential downpour lasting about an hour severely eroded the access road to the Canyon Pumphouse. The upper part of the road was repaired for a cost of ~$7,000. This cost was covered by the Emergency Fund the Board established several years ago for just these sorts of situations. Note: Doug in trench to show scale.

The Good: The Capital Asset Replacement (CAR) plan has an item for the replacement of the 4" line running from the Canyon Pumphouse to the Steel Tank on 156th St. With the lower 600 feet of the road already trenched by Mother Nature, the WWA Board decided to seize this opportunity to place 420' of a 4" HDPE line and two HDPE 2" lines leaving them unconnected until we are ready to do the entire project. So, the cost for this work is not being charged to repair but rather to the CAR budget.

Outstanding Payments

When WWA introduced a new billing system last summer the initial bills generated were lower than they should have been due to incorrect loading of the rate structure for water usage beyond the base level (600 cubic feet). A subsequent (corrected) bill was issued for the correct amount. We had expected that the initial increase in the past due account would come down as members paid the revised billing, but that account has not declined as fast as we would have expected. Please review your latest bill and catch up as soon as you can. WWA does charge a 1.5%/month late fee on all amounts later than the 30-day grace period. If you need clarity on your current bill please contact, Doug Dolstad at billing@westsidewater.org or (206) 715-3805.

Status of Department of Health review of Small Water System Management Plan (SWSMP)

WWA submitted its SWSMP on October 20, 2020 and received a response from the Department of Health on February 13, 2021. Overall, the DOH review was favorable ("We compliment you on a very well-done planning document"). DOH then asks for responses to 10 questions with a due date of April 30, 2021 for WWA submittal. None of these requests appear to be onerous so WWA is expecting to be able to respond by this deadline.

Status of By-Laws review by WWA Ad hoc group

A group of three non-board WWA members and two WWA Board members has been reviewing the Associations By-Laws (any changes to which will require membership approval) and Standard Operating Procedures (requiring Board approval) in anticipation of the Association potentially being in the position to release a limited number of new water shares based on the SWSMP referenced above. The group is considering proposed changes to the By-Laws specific to water share sales in order to clarify meaning and update language. The process by which new shares are to be issued is also being defined. The Board expects to conduct a legal review of these proposed changes to ensure compliance with the applicable governing agencies.

The Board expects to conduct at least two Zoom informational meetings for members to hear in depth about and comment on these proposed changes in the spring. If you are interested in participating in these informational sessions, please contact Adrian Witherspoon (adrianspoon@gmail.com or (206) 356-5891).

Evergreen Rural Water of Washington (ERWOW) leak detection service

In attending a seminar put on by ERWOW Doug learned that this organization will provide leak detection to WWA for free using a sonic sensing device. A trial leak search was conducted along the total length of Westside Highway from Cedarhurst to 121st St and one leak was discovered. It is a small leak in the main just north of 148th St and a repair will be scheduled shortly. WWA expects to schedule regular sessions with this service to supplement the tracking from our leak detection meters and our daily monitoring of usage compared with daily historical values. Our goal is to get our leak rate below 10% of production

Results of COVID "senior campaign"

A couple of weeks ago we send an e-mail to our members offering assistance to seniors with the "vaccination roulette" process. We also called a few members who we guessed might not be on e-mail. Overall, the response was extraordinary (29 contacts). Although we didn't end up directly helping members in the way we had imagined, we did provide some moral support and many reported that a human voice was reassuring. In terms of a breakdown 5 non-seniors responded to say thanks, 9 seniors already had had a shot or were signed up to get one, 11 seniors were guided through the process and at least 6 of these were successful in getting a reservation and 4 were either unreachable or wanted to wait.

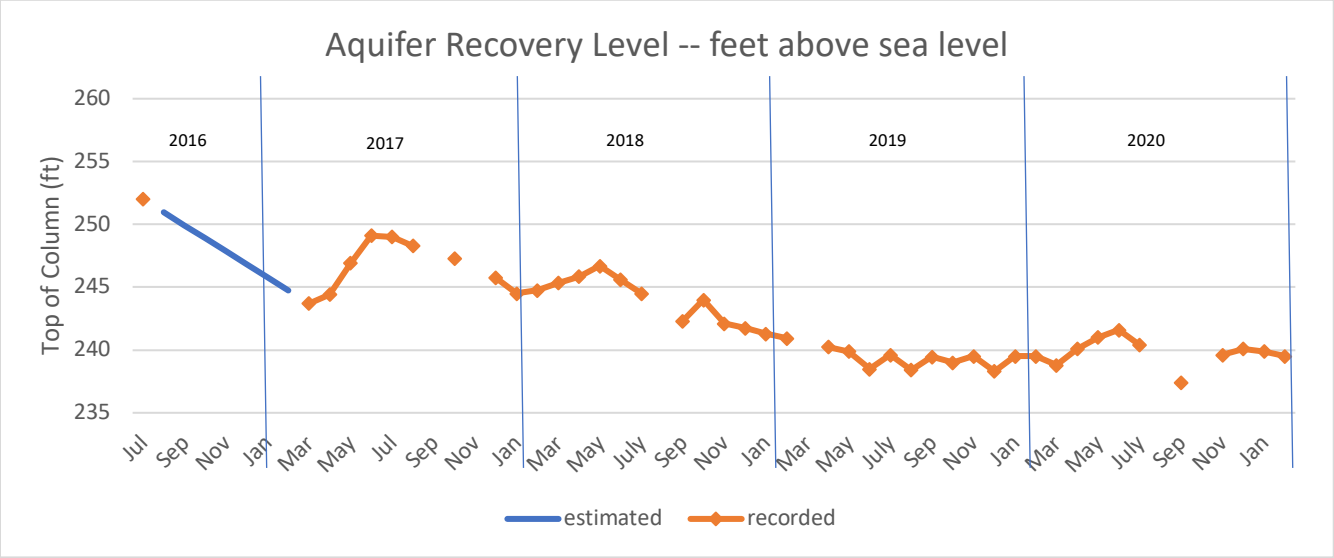
Geek Section (beware)

Anderson Well Field (AWF) flow calibration challenges

There are three meters on the AWF. One meter each on the two sources (A1 and A2 – also known as S07 and S08) and a summing meter at the corner of 156th St and 115th Ave (known as S09). Since the AWF was put online we have used S09 as our official record of water delivered from the AWF. In January of 2020 the S09 meter failed and needed to be replaced. Subsequently we detected some odd readings compared to historical records and in July 2020 we conducted a flow test comparing S07, S08 and S09. Those tests showed that S09 was reading substantially lower than the other two meters (17%). At the end of December 2020 we replaced S09 and retested it against S07 and S08. With the new meter S07 and S09 read identically and S08 reads 4% low compared to S09. All of this sensitizes us to the need to frequently recalibrate our meters. Going forward we are going to use S07+1.04*S08 as our official production record for the AWF. If we apply this correction factor retrospectively the main impact is to increase our 5-year average leak rate from about 13% to about 15%. Adding motivation to find our leaks.

Anderson Well Field (AWF) recovery monitoring

We continue to monitor the recovery of the Anderson Aquifer with our regimen of minimizing usage of this source. The procedure is to turn off the Anderson source for 24 hours and then do a well depth measurement. As seen in the following chart it appears that we have reached a stable level with our current usage (pump level in this chart is at 219 feet above sea level). Under these conditions the AWF can produce 50 gpm when demand warrants that amount. With the addition of the Back40A well this upcoming summer we hope to further reduce reliance on the AWF and further improve the aquifer level.



Here is the total production of the AWF over the past 5 years in millions of gallons, corrected according to the formula in the previous section (note 2015 was only A1 and 2016 was only a partial year for A2).