

RE: POTENTIAL BUILDING MORATORIUM ON EXISTING VACANT LOTS

Dear Property Owner:

On Friday, February 13, at 5:00 p.m., in the Sierra Lakes County Water District offices at 7305 Short Road, a "Lake Management" resolution that, as drafted, will effectively impose a building moratorium on the existing 200+ vacant lots in the Serene Lakes community, and unspecified restrictions on water usage by existing users, will be considered by the District's Board. When asked at the January board meeting about the need to do this, the comments by some of the board members were, essentially, because we can. The effect the resolution will have on the existing 1000+ property owners in the district, including the devaluation of the 200+ vacant lots that will not be able to get water hookups, and potential environmental effects that the Board has exempted itself from analyzing, are important issues that the public has a right to question and to expect reasonable answers.

The "Lake Management" resolution, as drafted, will set an arbitrary three foot lake drawdown limit. "Drawdown" refers to the measurement from the crest of the dam to the lake surface. Drawdown occurs between the period beginning around July 1, when water stops running over the dam, and ends around the end of October, when we start getting our first seasonal storms. With the existing 800 homes, drawdown up to three feet already occurs during that period. The proposed resolution thus implies that the District will serve no water to new homes constructed on existing lots in Serene Lakes, and no additional water, beyond the amounts used today, to the existing homes, even though sufficient water is available.

This "Lake Management" resolution, as drafted, is a classic case of cutting off our noses to spite our faces. Our current household usage is approximately .15 of an acre-foot per year, including significant leakage from the district's water delivery system ($120 \text{ acre-feet} \div 800 \text{ homes} = .15$). The proposed resolution, with its drawdown limit based on current usage, implies that .15 of an acre-foot per single-family dwelling per year, and our currently low average occupancy rate of about 20 percent, is a reasonable benchmark for future usage and planning. By contrast, Royal Gorge is contemplating the use of .23 to .37 of an acre-foot per single-family dwelling per year, with average occupancy rates of 46 to 75 percent, in planning its water needs. I would not want to be the person making the argument to the County Planning Department that Royal Gorge's use of .23 to .37 of an acre-foot per single-family dwelling per year is too low, but we have resolved that .15 of an acre-foot per single-family dwelling is appropriate for all the rest of us, with no logical explanation and no EIR or CEQA analysis.

The District's board members are working very hard to solve many of the District's complex problems, but this proposed resolution is totally unnecessary, and it has the potential to impose unnecessary restrictions on current users and to render the existing 200+ vacant lots virtually unusable and unmarketable. I encourage you to attend the February 13, 5:00 p.m., Board meeting, or contact the board members, Wade Freedle, Martin Bern, Bill Oudegeest, Gene Bowles and Ulrich Luscher to express concerns about this proposed resolution.



Al Le Bel