



PRELIMINARY EXPLORATION

West Des Moines Water Works, Waukee Collaborate on Joint Study to Evaluate New Water Sources and Options

WEST DES MOINES, Iowa (Aug. 23, 2016) —West Des Moines Water Works and the City of Waukee announced today that they are commissioning a study together that will identify and evaluate the feasibility of tapping new water sources in the Raccoon River Alluvial Aquifer. The move comes a year after Black & Veatch completed a survey of the water source and treatment assets available across the region.

“A key finding in that report is that future demand outstrips our current supply as well as water treatment and distribution capacity,” said **Karen Novak-Swalwell**, chair of WDMWW Board of Trustees. “Effective regional management and operation of water treatment begins with cooperation and collaboration between communities and utilities. This preliminary study will help us understand the options available to the region as our two communities expand and grow westward.”

The comparative study, approved by the WDMWW Board of Trustees and the Waukee City Council, is being conducted by **Veenstra & Kimm Inc.** The first phase of the study, which is purely exploratory, will commence in September. The cost of \$84,100 will be shared.

“Waukee and West Des Moines face similar opportunities and challenges, and the delivery of safe, quality water remains chief among them,” Novak-Swalwell added. “This study complements other research being done in the metro area and provides us with comparative data for making long-term decisions about source water and the capital costs associated with building treatment facilities. To proceed in any other manner would be to make long-term decisions in a vacuum.”

The study, expected to start in September, is charged with two primary tasks: (1) identify potential water source sites long the Raccoon River Alluvial Aquifer from I-35 west to the Van Meter area, and (2) evaluate the feasibility of those sites in the context of the current water assets, water purchase agreements and projected water needs of the two communities. If the initial study determines adequate source water is available to serve the needs of Waukee and West Des Moines, additional studies on treatment facility options and costs could be performed in the future.

“As our communities continue to grow, we need to make long-term decisions on how to meet water supply needs,” said Waukee City Administrator **Tim Moerman**. “In order to make good decisions, we need good information. This study will give both communities the basic information needed to explore water supply options for our residents.”

WDMWW conducted a separate study in late 2014 of its operations and future treatment requirements. The results and recommendations supported the need to explore source water and treatment options beyond its current assets and purchase arrangements. The utility pulls water from three deep wells and 19 shallow wells and treats the ground water according to governing state and federal regulations. In addition, WDMWW purchases water from Des Moines Water Works.

“This cooperative study is the natural follow-up to the report we commissioned in late 2014,” noted **Diana Wilson**, general manager of WDMWW. “It’s good stewardship to have as much data and information as possible before making long-term decisions that will affect our ratepayers for years to come. If the study shows that we can be more efficient and cost-effective working together, that is a positive for the future of our entire region.”

The West Des Moines Water Works is owned by the citizens of West Des Moines and governed by a five-member Board of Trustees. Appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council for staggered six-year terms, the trustees formulate policies and govern the operations of the water utility. Managed by a professional staff, West Des Moines Water Works is supported solely by the revenues it generates by supplying water to the community’s residents and businesses.

Waukee is a rapidly growing community with a population of more than 18,000 people. Waukee offers a family-friendly environment featuring quality parks, schools and trails. The City is also dedicated to economic development and expanding business opportunities, including the creation of its mixed-use development, Kettlestone. For more information, visit www.Waukee.org.

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