

Tribune Opinion: Windy Gap Firming Project gets good news

Important storage construction will help city plan for future growth

We are the first to admit that water can be a dry subject.

As long as they can flush their toilets and get water from their taps, most people don't think about where that water is coming from.

That's why we need guys like Jon Monson, director of the city of Greeley's Water and Sewer Department. Monson understands water and the importance of a project like Windy Gap Firming Project.

He's the kind of guy who is excited the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation said last week that the proposed Windy Gap Firming Project's preferred method for completion is the "least environmentally harmful and most practical alternative."

"What?" you may be asking. Exactly. But Monson and other water officials understand this is an important step for an important water project.

Windy Gap is a project that helps provide water to 13 northeastern Colorado water providers. However, getting water from the project has been somewhat unreliable because there isn't enough storage.

The project's coordinators are planning to construct the Chimney Hollow Reservoir southwest of Loveland, which would provide additional storage for the Windy Gap water.

The Bureau of Land Reclamation's environmental impact statement opened the way for this project to be completed. And that is good news for Greeley and Evans residents who will directly benefit from the additional water.

Although growth has slowed significantly during the downturn in the economy, planners must still anticipate future needs.

The Windy Gap Firming Project will help ensure that water will be available to accommodate growth along the north Front Range.

While we may not have his depth of understanding, we join Monson in celebrating this victory for the project and hope it bodes well for completion of the reservoir on schedule.