
Stagecoach Reservoir Capacity Increase

4-Foot Rise Project

Planned Unit Development

Minor Amendment

ACTIVITY #: PZ2007-006

PETITIONER: Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District

PETITION: Increase Stagecoach Reservoir Capacity by 3,185 acre-feet by increasing the spillway height by 4 feet

LOCATION: Stagecoach Reservoir and Hydroelectric Dam

ZONE DISTRICT: Outdoor Recreation (OR)

AREA: Stagecoach Reservoir and Hydroelectric Dam, Stagecoach State Park, Stagecoach Community

STAFF CONTACT: Ross Easterling

ATTACHMENTS:

- Wildlife Mitigation Plan
- Construction Drawings
-

History:

The Final PUD plan for the Stagecoach Reservoir was approved in 1987
PZ1995-006 Petition to develop a Wetland Observation Area

Pz1991-012 Stagecoach State Park SPOA PUD Amendment

Pz1988-007 Stagecoach State Park Boat Ramp PUD Amendment

PZ 1987-007 Final PUD for Stagecoach State Park

PZ 1987-005 Rezone Stagecoach Reservoir from A/F to OR

PZ1987-006 Conceptual PUD Plan for Stagecoach State Park

Constructed during 1987 and 1988, Stagecoach Reservoir serves various communities in the Yampa Valley and enables this region to meet its share of Colorado River Compact obligations while providing for recreational, municipal, and agricultural needs.

Site Description:

Stagecoach Reservoir is located on the Yampa River approximately 16 miles South of Steamboat Springs and adjacent to the Stagecoach Community. It is a prime recreational resource to the region. Colorado State Parks reported 132,158 visitors to the park during fiscal year 2007-2008. The surface area of the lake is 771 acres with 870 acres of land in total.

Project Description:

Stagecoach State Park is a popular recreational resource for the region. The rise in the water level of the lake requires the reconstruction of various recreational amenities and infrastructure associated with Stagecoach State Park and recreational activities there. The December 2008 construction drawings (attached to this report) depict the construction grade alteration and site plan revisions to accommodate the 4-foot rise. Listed below is a brief description of the modifications to the recreational amenities.

- Swim Beach: Approximate 4-foot increase in beach sand grade.
- Swim Beach Patio Area: Approximate 4-foot grade increase and new concrete structure.
- Swim Beach Volleyball Area: Approximate 4-foot grade increase and installation of a retaining wall.
- Swim Beach Picnic Area: Approximate 4-foot grade increase and installation of a retaining wall.
- Marina Boat Ramp and Docks: concrete extension of boat ramp.
- Fisherman Access: Bank stabilization and rip rap.
- Parking Lot: Embankment break to maintain required 25-foot setback from existing vault toilet and the proposed normal high water line.
- Little Morrison Creek boat ramp, vault toilet, and parking lot: additional parking lot grading.
- Elk Run Trail Realignment and Pedestrian Bridge: Install new bridge.
- Fish Barrier at the RCR-16 48-inch culvert. Installation to reduce northern pike spawning habitat. Northern Pike is an undesirable non-native species.
- Wetland Mitigation and Waterfowl Habitat Area. Grading and rip rap installation. 7.1 acres.
- Water System Revisions at Junction City Campground. Raise manhole, junction box and pit pump.

Staff Comments:

The 4-foot rise will inundate wetlands discussed in PUD amendment PZ-1995-006. Wildlife has been the primary concern with the project. The Wildlife Mitigation Plan is a

flexible document that allows programmatic changes to improve effectiveness over the long term.

Inundation:

The District engineer Kevin McBride has represented to staff verbally that all inundations resulting from the 4-foot rise will occur only on district owned property. The mapping submitted with the 1041 petition (PP2008-013) supports this representation.

Stahl Development Company is the successor to an unrecorded agreement between the District and Mountainair (Al Saterdal). That agreement, as part of a Property Contribution Agreement that allowed the construction of the reservoir, allowed Mountainair to, at some later date, build a marina on the south shore of stagecoach reservoir.

Stahl Development Company is in a discussion at this time with the District regarding the future marina and that discussion assumes the 4-foot rise proposed in this petition. The marina would have a beach and may require the realignment of the trail but easements would continue and would be essential to the marina operation. (Per telephone conversation with Stahl's representative John Vanderbloemen)

Southshore Subdivision:

Staff's primary question regarding the operation of the reservoir at a new level of 7,204 feet is that private property at the Southshore Subdivision would be inundated from time to time as the lake levels change. The graphic below indicates the current 7,200 pool and the proposed 7,204 pool these lines trace almost entirely along the same path indicating that the new pool level will not impact private property at Southshore.



Graphic indicating current pool (7200 feet) and proposed 7204 foot pool

Staff is satisfied that the proposed rise in elevation will not negatively impact property owners along the southern shore of Sturgeon Reservoir and will not impact the trail.

Compliance with the Routt County Master Plan

The Routt County Master Plan and Sub Area plans contain dozens of policies regarding land use. The following checklist was developed by Planning Staff to highlight the policies most directly applicable to this petition. Interested parties are encouraged to review the Master Plan and Sub Area plans to determine if there are other policies that may be applicable to the review of this petition.

CHAPTER 5 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Chapter 5.3. POLICIES:

Complies Yes No	Section	Policies (staff comments in bold)
☐	5.3.A.	The County encourages the use of "green" building techniques that lead to the conservation of energy and overall reduction of pollution in our environment. Green building techniques refers to the design and conservation of commercial and residential building, so this policy does not apply to the retrofit proposed to the dam structure.
☐	5.3.B.	While respecting private property rights, the County will not approve development applications or special use permits that would lead to the degradation of the environment without proper mitigation that would bring the proposal into compliance with the Master Plan, appropriate Sub-area Plans, Zoning Resolution, and Subdivision Regulations. Wildlife is the primary environmental concern associated with this proposal. The district has entered into an agreement or Wildlife Mitigation Plan that addresses design criteria as well as operations and flexibility for future mitigation measures.
☐	5.3.F.	Routt County will continue to consider the impacts of

development and uses on view corridors, water, wetlands, and air.

Water quality and quantity concerns are considered in detail with respect to the application materials and have been reviewed by numerous State and Federal Agencies. The applicant has filed a 404 wetlands permit with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

Chapter 6.3 Policies:

Complies Yes No	Section	Policies (staff comments in bold)
	6.3.B.	Disperse recreational users so that trails are not overused. Consider the cumulative impacts of recreational permits on their target areas.
		Stagecoach State Park is zoned Outdoor Recreation.
		The applicant anticipates a marginal increase in the use of these facilities as a result of the proposal.
	6.3.C.	Encourage a formal system of cooperation between the many agencies involved with public land management in Routt County.
		The management of the recreational facilities at Stagecoach is a good example of the implementation of this policy. Stagecoach State Park is operated by the Colorado Department of Natural Resources while the Colorado Division of Wildlife manages the fishery and other wildlife resources.
	6.3.G.	Preserve public access to public lands.
		The rise in the water level has required redesign of the swim beach, a partial realignment of the trail in one area, an other modifications to existing public facilities but access to all the recreational facilities will continue.
	6.3.K.	Encourage the development of shuttle/mass transit alternatives to major recreational and tourist attractions.
		This policy is not applicable. Stagecoach State Park's use is determined by the users who provide their own transportation.

LANDSLIDES AND ROCKFALLS

Chapter 8.7 Policies:

Complies Yes No	Section	Policies (staff comments in bold)
☐	8.7.A.	Routt County strongly discourages all construction on potential landslide and rockfall areas. The dam is built into bedrock. The dam's stability was evaluated by FERC in 1997 and found by FERC to be stable. An extensive evaluation of the dam has been conducted in association with the proposed 4-foot rise. The location is neither a landslide or rockfall area.
☐	8.7.B.	Routt County strongly discourages all excavations on unstable slopes and in rockfall or potential landslide areas. See Staff Comment 8.7.A above
☐	8.7.G.	Routt County discourages permanent structures on unstable geology which is, or will be, subject to significant vibrations. See Staff Comment 8.7.A above

Compliance with the Stagecoach Community Plan

Chapter 4.8 Trails and Views

Chapter 4.8 Policies:

Complies Yes No	Section	Policies (staff comments in bold)
☐	1.	A system of non-motorized hike/bike/ski trails should be developed to link the various recreational amenities and open spaces in Stagecoach. This policy actually applies to interconnectivity between neighborhoods in the Stagecoach community, but there is a trail around the lake that will continue to be available to users in the area.

FINDINGS OF FACT that the expansion of the Stagecoach Reservoir and amendment to the existing PUD plan is in conformance with Section 7 of the Zoning Regulations, the Routt County Master Plan, the Stagecoach Community Plan, and is in conformance with the approved PUD Plan.

CONDITIONS:

1. All conditions of the existing Stagecoach Reservoir PUD not impacted by the reservoir expansion continue to apply.
2. Prior to the issuance of this approval, the applicant shall obtain an approval through the Routt County Regulations Governing Areas and Activities of State Interest (1041 Regulations).
3. The approval is limited to those uses and structures presented in the project application. All other uses and/or structures will require a subsequent PUD approval.

I hereby approve/disapprove (circle one) Upper Yampa Water Conservancy Districts PUD amendment.



Chad Philips, Planning Director

02/08/2009

Date

