HEARING SET NOV. 19

The Colorado Water Conservation Board has announced a public hearing on the proposed Chatfield Dam at 2:00 p.m., Friday the 19th of November at the Century Room of the Cosmopolitan Hotel. All interested persons are invited to be present. Since there will be time for short oral statements only, the Board requests that statements in their full context be submitted to the Board at 215 State Services Building, Denver 80203, prior to the 19th. This Newsletter is designed to give information to help in the preparation of these statements.

Compiled by J.K. Smith, ICRPC and Roger Fuehrer, COSCC from official and unofficial reports and documents of the agencies concerned.
CHATFIELD DAM TO BE LARGE

Chatfield Dam, as proposed by the Corps of Engineers, would back a lake of 215,000 acre feet (approximately 85% the capacity of Dillion Dam) if ever filled by flood water. It would involve relocation of U.S. Highway 85, a few miles of railroad track, the Martin Plant road, private ranches, the small community of Riverside, and the usual utility lines. There would be a permanent sedimentation pool of 20,000 acre feet. Such a large pool could easily provide recreational facilities similar to those at Cherry Creek dam. The Corps has suggested that about 7,000 acres surrounding the dam become a recreation area; however, the Corps has no authority to establish recreational facilities, and the water for such purposes would have to be bought and maintained by some-state or local governmental body. The entire project would cost about $75 million of federal money, approximately half of which would be for the construction of the dam and the other half for land acquisition. If a state or local body purchased the water rights thru assessment of its residents, federal funds on a 50-50 matching basis would be available to purchase and develop the recreational area.

NO CHATFIELD DAM - NO BEAUTIFICATION OF THE SOUTH PLATTE

The realization of the dreams of local citizens to have the South Platte area become one of beauty with parkways, landscaping, and recreational facilities rests heavily on whether or not the river area can be protected from further flooding. No local, state or federal agency is willing to approve money for redevelopment of the Platte River area if that investment could easily be washed away in another flood. The dam would not only increase chances of beautifying the area, but also provide protection of industry, roads and bridges, and, most important, human life.

CHATFIELD DAM NOT THE COMPLETE ANSWER

The hearing is to consider Chatfield Dam; however, it may be appropriate to briefly voice opinion on related matters also. Clean-up of the Platte thru urban areas should be considered. The Corps has $50,000 to study channel improvement of the Platte downstream from the dam site; beautification of the area could easily become a part of any rebuilding for free flow of the river. Perhaps encouragement could also be given to plans for flood control on East Plum Creek to protect the towns of Larkspur, Sedalia, and Castle Rock. Projects on other tributaries to the Platte are needed as well. It would also be appropriate to show appreciation to the Corps for their plans for a permanent pool, which could become a much needed recreation facility. Of course, it never hurts to repeat the proverbial cry that an overall body is needed to coordinate the redevelopment of the Platte area. It should be emphasized, however, that if any of these related matters are stated as conditional for support of Chatfield Dam, it could delay construction many years and perhaps table it permanently.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED

Groups already having passed resolutions for early construction of Chatfield Dam include the Denver Chamber of Commerce, Regional Parks Association and Act Now-Dam the Platte. (Jack Shapiro's group has obtained over 10,000 signatures for an early Chatfield and has also passed a resolution urging removal of man-made obstructions from the river channel.)

DON'T FORGET: All written statements should be in before the 19th, oral statements ready for 2:00 p.m. the 19th. Let's show our public support -- the lack of which tabled Chatfield Dam 15 years ago.