



UP THE CREEK

January 1, 2010

**** HAPPY NEW YEAR ****

We've decided to start the new year off with a FAQ - a list of Frequently Asked Questions compiled over the past year. Some of the answers may prove to be helpful and accurate. If so, we will be as surprised as you.

- Q: Why must I pay a monthly bill when water is not being used? My meter is not even connected yet, for Pete's sake.
- A: The cost of operating and maintaining the system is the same whether or not you use water. If you are given a pass, the rest of the members will have to bear your share of the cost.
- Q: Why don't you take credit cards?
- A: Credit card transactions (and electronic payment, direct deposit, etc.) are not free. If all our members used these services, the cost could be fairly passed on to everybody. If only a few use them, then the rest will have to help bear the cost.
- Q: Why don't you have a drop box in Cedaredge to save us postage?
- A: Drop boxes are not free. And many of our members live closer to Hotchkiss or Eckert than Cedaredge. They might want drop boxes at those locations too. Then there is the very good chance of finding payments to DMEA, TDS Telecom, Surface Creek Ditch and Reservoir Company, etc. in our drop boxes. Sorting out such mistakes is - you guessed it - not free.
- Q: Is there a hidden theme in the two previous FAQ's?
- A: Well, if it's hidden, then we are being too subtle. The theme is that people naturally want to decrease their personal cost and inconvenience by shifting it to "the company." When "the company" finds its costs increasing to pay for extra services, it must seek more money from the you, our members. Those members who have no use for the services are ill-disposed to pay for them.
- Q: We seem to hear occasionally about Leon Lake. What's the significance?
- A: Leon Lake is a reservoir on the north side of Grand Mesa. Its water is brought to our side through the Leon Tunnel. Historically, the only allowable use of Leon Lake was for irrigation water. In 2006, a decree was obtained allowing 2/3 of the reservoir's water to be used for domestic.
- Q: What does that mean to USCDWUA?
- A: USCDWUA's reserve of stored water is all decreed for irrigation, except in Leon. The water we own in Leon Lake is now available for domestic use; the irrigation water we own in other reservoirs can be exchanged for Leon, and thereby made legally available for domestic use.
- Q: You mean we were never "legally" able to use it before?
- A: We have used it at the discretion of the State Engineer and local water commissioner. We have been restricted by State Law to using only about 40% of our irrigation water as domestic.
- Q: I heard the new decree was expensive and hard to obtain. Why?
- A: The decree was contested by Ute Water Conservancy District. A settlement was reached before the case went to trial, but it was still very expensive. USCDWUA contributed \$10,000 toward the legal expenses, and has been closely involved with work at the reservoir since then.
- Q: What happened at December's Annual Stockholders meeting?
- A: What didn't happen is that water rates were not increased, the price of a tap was not increased, and the Board of Directors was not changed.
- Q: Boring. Why even have a meeting?
- A: To say thank you to our Board for their outstanding service and wisdom. And to meet more of our wonderful members. Your attendance at this meeting is always greatly appreciated.