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NEWS for NEIGHBORS

WINTER 2011
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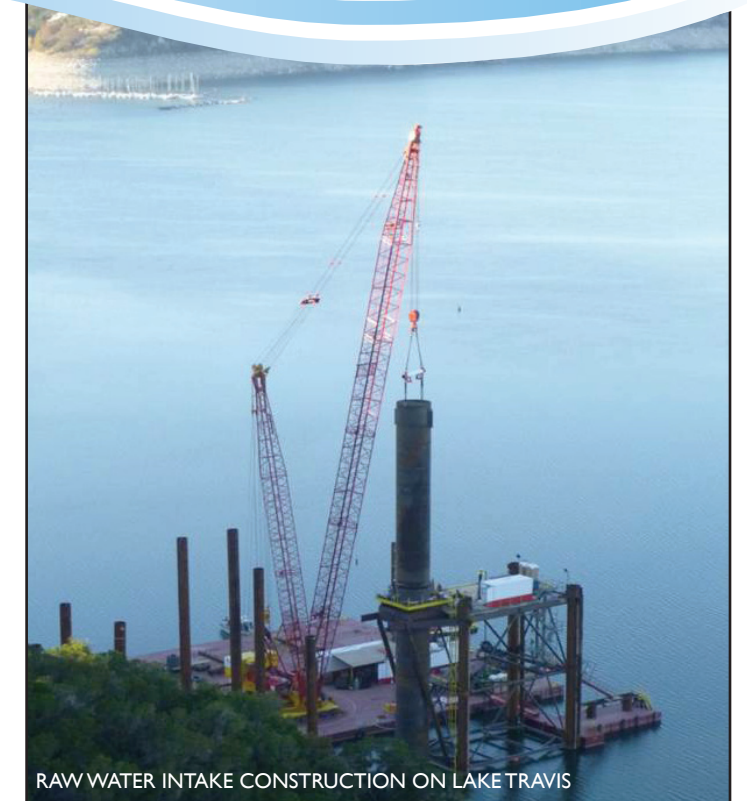
PROGRESS CONTINUES ON RAW WATER INTAKE SYSTEM

Work is well underway on the raw water intake system for the Water Treatment Plant 4 (WTP4) project – most visibly, perhaps, just below The Oasis restaurant, northwest of RM 620 and west of Oasis Bluff Drive. The intake system will ultimately deliver water from Lake Travis to WTP4 where it will be processed to drinking water quality.

In mid-September, construction activities moved out onto Lake Travis. Today, crews are working from three large, elevated temporary work platforms. In early 2012, crews will drive 8 permanent piles and begin drill work to secure the permanent intake structure into the lake bed. Crews will then dismantle the equipment and move it off the lake back to Keller Marina. This portion of project construction should be complete by May 2012.

Once completed, the top of the intake system will be at 655.75' Mean Sea Level (MSL), entirely underwater at full lake level of 681' MSL. Buoys will be located around the intake system in conformance with TCEQ and LCRA regulations and guidelines.

WTP4 is on schedule to be operational by spring of 2014. It will become Austin's third active water treatment plant facility.



RAW WATER INTAKE CONSTRUCTION ON LAKE TRAVIS

CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY ON JOLLYVILLE TRANSMISSION MAIN

Construction on the Jollyville Transmission Main for the WTP4 project is also underway. The transmission main is a 7 ft. diameter underground pipeline that will connect WTP4 to the Jollyville Reservoir at US 183 and McNeil Drive, ultimately carrying drinking water to customers. The Jollyville Transmission Main will be installed inside of an underground tunnel that is approximately 10 to 12 ft. diameter.

Four total vertical work shafts are needed in order to construct the underground transmission main to provide adequate ventilation and keep workers safe, provide the appropriate access for construction, and provide access for long-term maintenance. Two shaft sites located at Four Points and Jollyville Reservoir are being used as working shafts to launch tunnel boring machines, remove excavated materials and place pipe and grout as the tunnel is developed. Work began at both of these shafts in fall of 2011.

The remaining two shaft sites located on the water treatment plant site and at Spicewood Springs Road and Old Lampasas Trail will be used to retrieve the tunnel boring machines and place pipe and grout. Work at both retrieval shafts is expected to begin during the first quarter of 2012. Construction of the transmission main is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2014.



RAW WATER PUMP STATION ACCESS SHAFT IS NEARLY 450 FT DEEP

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please email questions and comments about WTP4 to info@wtpfour.com or call us at 498-9874. This newsletter is mailed and emailed to stakeholders.

If you or someone you know wants to receive this information electronically, please subscribe by emailing us at info@wtpfour.com.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT

www.CityofAustin.org/water/wtp4

Austin Water
Utility's Mission
is to provide
safe, reliable
high-quality
drinking services
to its nearly
900,000 current
customers, and
to ensure reliable
water to its
future customers

AN INTERVIEW WITH WTP4 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE MANAGER, ROBYN SMITH

The entire WTP4 project is being developed with an unprecedented level of environmental oversight. The City of Austin created a new process called “Environmental Commissioning,” which involves independent environmental experts in every step of the process of design and construction of WTP4 to identify environmental issues early on. This team is responsible for monitoring design and construction to make sure it meets or exceeds the City’s environmental standards. Following is an interview with Robyn Smith, Environmental Compliance Manager for the project.



What is your role on the WTP4 project?

The Environmental Compliance Manager is responsible for ensuring the project is in compliance with all federal, state and local environmental regulations and all of the environmental goals that were established in the Environmental Commissioning plans that were developed specifically for WTP4. This is a new role for the City to take on and isn’t typical for most City projects.

What actions are being taken to make WTP4 construction an environmentally-friendly process?

We are constantly monitoring any and all activities that could lead to an environmental issue. Some of those activities include dust control (especially during the bird nesting season); keeping mud and rocks off of roadways; pre and post storm site walks to ensure our erosion and sedimentation controls are functional and adequate for storm events; regular functionality checks of water quality ponds and water treatment systems; and following proper procedures for equipment maintenance repair, including containment of chemicals and fuel. We also monitor the disposal of rock that is excavated and cannot be reused on the site and require our contractors to dispose of these materials in permitted locations.

How do the environmental aspects of WTP4 construction differ from other large-scale construction projects?

WTP4 is more environmentally friendly than most other projects. For example, trees that must be cleared for construction are being turned into mulch, which is then used for temporary erosion control. Basically, we are doing everything possible to minimize, and more often than not eliminate, sediment transport offsite and even onsite. In addition, although the design of the project may have earmarked certain trees for clearing, we have saved quite a few of them by making minor adjustments to structures such as retaining walls. Some of the tree savings comes from field verification of structures and facilities. When you look at a design feature on a piece of paper it may look as though a tree or some trees are in conflict with the ability to construct that component of the project. When you are standing in the field with that design sheet, the necessity to remove the tree(s) in some cases goes away. The Contractor has gone to great lengths to save trees wherever possible, even though they were authorized for removal by permit.

We are also reusing everything possible. For example, the rocks coming out of the ground are crushed onsite for use as backfill around structures and in trenches. Our contractors reuse and recycle metal, wood and other materials, as well as office products and materials. And we built our water quality ponds first, so contractors can dewater their excavations into the ponds, which results in treatment for the water. Since we’ve been in a drought, we encourage the contractors to dewater into the woods to give trees some much needed hydration.

Something unique we’re doing on WTP4 is requiring all personnel, including City staff, to go through an Environmental/Safety Orientation prior to coming onsite for work. The orientation includes a variety of environmental topics such as an explanation of oak wilt, how it spreads, what trees are most susceptible, and how to prevent it from spreading.

We also show workers how to identify voids (holes in the ground that may be suitable habitat for endangered species) and the proper notification protocol to follow if they encounter one. Every void we have encountered has been reported and investigated as required.

Last but not least, during every site tour, we consistently hear that this is the cleanest construction site people have ever been on. This is a testament to the level of awareness and engagement by all personnel onsite.

What factors influenced development of the Environmental Commissioning plan for WTP4?

Geography was the driving force. The water treatment plant and raw water pump station are surrounded by preserve tracts that are home to two endangered birds - the Golden Cheeked Warbler and the Black Capped Vireo. One of the shafts for the Jollyville Transmission Main is upstream from one of the most pristine preserve tracts, which is in the Bull Creek Watershed. That tract is one of the places the Jollyville Plateau Salamander calls home. Bull Creek itself is also a resource for our drinking water. Through design and now construction of all components of WTP4, we are monitoring conditions and making adjustments along the way so that we can meet all the goals in the Environmental Commissioning plan.

What is your opinion on how WTP4 construction is functioning from an environmental standpoint?

I think overall we are doing extremely well. We continue to be challenged by Mother Nature; be it a hot dry summer where dust control was extremely important, to now experiencing wet, soggy days which makes keeping the streets clean a huge priority. I am impressed by the level of engagement not only from MWH but from their subcontractors as well. Most of them have not previously been exposed to the specific environmental components and/or requirements that are associated with the construction of WTP4. They stop me in the field on a regular basis to ask why we are doing certain things. The environmental bar has been set very high on WTP4 and it’s very unique compared to other projects, which is why I think it’s important to create an environment that provides our contractors with a voice when we are trying to adapt to certain environmental situations. When you give the contractors a seat at the table while trying to solve a problem or when you’re just trying to be proactive, it makes them feel like they are truly part of the team, which in turn makes them feel fully involved in the environmental efforts. I personally feel so blessed to be out here managing the environmental component on this project and quite frankly, I’ve never felt more supported in accomplishing the goal of WTP4 crossing the finish line with an environmental record that we can all be proud of.

What should citizens do if they have an environmental concern about WTP4?

The project team is very proactive in our environmental efforts. We monitor the project constantly so we can address issues in real time and we talk to neighbors and the businesses that front WTP4 on RR 620 continuously. However, if someone has a specific environmental concern, we encourage them to email us at info@wtpfour.com or call our project information line at 512-498-9874.



WTP4’S CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK (MWH CONSTRUCTORS) WINS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

WTP4’s Construction Manager at Risk, MWH Constructors, recently received a “Best of 2011” award for its management of the \$873M Facility and Utility Expansion Program in Cape Coral, FL. Industry publication, “Engineering News Record” recognized MWHC in the category of “Best Civil Works/Infrastructure Project.” The project included installation of more than 720 miles of water, irrigation and gravity sewer pipelines and construction of over 240 miles of residential road. MWHC also designed and built a new reverse osmosis water treatment plant, doubled the capacity of two wastewater reclamation facilities, expanded an existing water treatment plant and designed a new biosolids facility. The project was included in the November issue of ENR Southeast and will automatically be entered into the national competition. Congratulations to MWH Constructors!