

## Powell airport looks for water

Written by Gib Mathers

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A handful of people attended a meeting at Powell City Hall the evening of Aug. 10 to hear engineers outline a study to find potential water sources for Powell Municipal Airport.

"If the airport is ever going to develop, we have to have water," said Dave Blevins, chairman of the Powell Airport Advisory Commission.

Thanks to \$50,000 allocated from the Wyoming Water Development Commission, a Level 1 study is under way.

That money will bankroll the research, but it does not guarantee more money arriving from the state to help with actual costs of getting water to the airport.

The study identifies potential water sources, costs and funding, said GDA Engineer Bill Harris.

"This could have difficulty getting further funding," said Chase Tavelli, project manager for the Wyoming Water Development Commission.

The commission and the Wyoming Legislature will review the results of the study, said Dusty Spomer, of GDA Engineers, the firm that is undertaking the study.

Spomer said the above entities will either offer financial support for the next step, Level 2, the planning phase, or quash the project.

Level 3 is the final construction phase.

If the commission/Legislature refuses future funds, two possible money options are the Wyoming Business Council or the State Loan and Investment Board, Spomer said.

GDA has also been working on an airport master plan to outline the airport's future development.

Because Engineering Associates is looking at potential water sources for Northend Water Users, Inc., GDA is partnering with that firm because their goals are similar, and they can share knowledge, Spomer said.

There are a number of potential water sources in the area, but GDA does not have a short list at this time.

When the Level 1 study is completed, one or two options will be presented, Tavelli said.

"Ideally, our scope will look at the cost of reasonable alternatives," said Rob Overfield of Engineering Associates. "A big part of what we are doing is trying to look at all the costs for each of those options."

A summary of the team's findings will be presented in January 2010.

The initial alternatives include:

- Tapping into a Northwest Rural Water District from the O'Donnell connection, which would run 12 miles.
- Tapping into a Northwest Rural Water District from the Garland area, which would run 8.3 miles.
- Tapping into a Northwest Rural Water District from the Shoshone Municipal Pipeline, which would run 5.4 miles.
- Tapping into the city of Powell's pipeline to run 7.8 miles.
- Tapping into water from Howell Petroleum in Elk Basin, which would run 9 miles.

Those are the initial sources identified. Spomer said they would search for additional alternatives.

Surface water, such as a reservoir, or ground water, such as drilling a well, have been studied in the past, but water quality could be a problem, Spomer said.

“Those are probably not going to be the likely outcome,” Spomer said.