



County delays water rules

Barring hauling of water may not work everywhere

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By **Katie Burford** | *Herald Staff Writer*

La Plata County Commissioners on Tuesday put on hold a vote to approve new water-supply standards based on concerns that the tougher standards didn't allow new subdivisions of any size to rely on water being trucked in.

Instead, commissioners asked county staff to craft a clause that would permit water hauling on a limited basis. They will reconsider the standards at their Sept. 18 meeting.

Commissioner Kellie Hotter said hauling wasn't ideal, but permanent pipelines could be a long way off in some rural areas.

"Realistically, there's a long gap of time between then and now," she said.

Not allowing any hauling would hurt landowners who wished to subdivide a small part of their land as a matter of necessity, she said.

Commissioner Wally White said he doesn't want widespread hauling but understands from his own experience that it can be necessary on a temporary basis.

"I'd like to see a little more variability myself," he said.

Commissioner Joelle Riddle expressed concerns that continued hauling could delay more permanent solutions to the supply problem.

"We need to make some tough decisions," she said.

The standards would require all but very small subdivisions to conduct groundwater studies and also would require water-quality testing.

In a separate work session, commissioners received a report on the possibility of imposing a countywide road impact fee that could include both the city and the county. Currently, these fees are assessed only through individual agreements with developers.

Commissioners instructed staff to move forward on developing an impact fee that would fund county road work and to continue to talk with city officials about incorporating Durango.

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