

Presented to the City Council on February 13, 2024  
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# City of Craig: Update on Water Rights Analysis

# Overview

- Brief Review of Water Right Analysis
- Update on Emerging Issues
- Contract Amendment





## Water Right Analysis – Brief Review

# Goals, Tasks and Progress

- Document the City's water rights portfolio
- Secure the City's water rights against future challenges
- Analyze the ability of the City's water rights portfolio to meet future demands
- Set up the City for future success





## Task 2: Review Water Rights and SEO Reporting

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- City holds 4 direct diversion rights that can be used at the Water Treatment Plant
- WWG created a new accounting form for the City that tracks diversions by water rights
- This provides a record of use and helps prevent abandonment in the future
- Accounting form was successfully filled out by the City of Craig for 2023 and submitted to DWR.

| Name                                 | Amount (cfs) | Appropriation Date | Case No. |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------|
| Fortification Creek Irrigating Ditch | 7.00         | 5/18/1884          | W-821-75 |
| Deep Cut Irrigation Ditch            | 8.29         | 12/1/1884          | W-823    |
| Craig Irrigation Ditch               | 1.33         | 3/31/1890          | W-820-75 |
| Craig Water Supply Pipeline          | 7.92         | 12/31/1915         | W-822-75 |

## Task 2: Review Water Rights and SEO Reporting

- In Elkhead Reservoir, the City holds:
  - 1 absolute storage right
  - 1 conditional storage right, known as the California Park Reservoir
- Risk to the City of not showing sufficient progress toward developing the California Park Reservoir right in the next diligence case
- In 2023, WWG worked with the River District to enhance Elkhead Reservoir accounting spreadsheet to show the City is storing and using the California Park Reservoir right
- Enhanced accounting showed California Park Reservoir right stored in 2023!
- River District submitted accounting to DWR, but it has not been approved.

In-reservoir: Not a useful municipal supply

| Name                      | Amount (acre-feet) | Priority Date | Case No.                    | Beneficial Uses   |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Absolute Right            | 5,389              | 10/1/1966     | CA2259 & Wo973              | fish propagation, wildfowl habitat, production of fur-bearing mammals and other recreational uses |
| California Park Reservoir | 4,945              | 8/7/1962      | CA2259 & 93CW131 & 18CW3032 | irrigation, domestic, stock watering, municipal, industrial, power generation, recreational       |

Useful municipal supply!



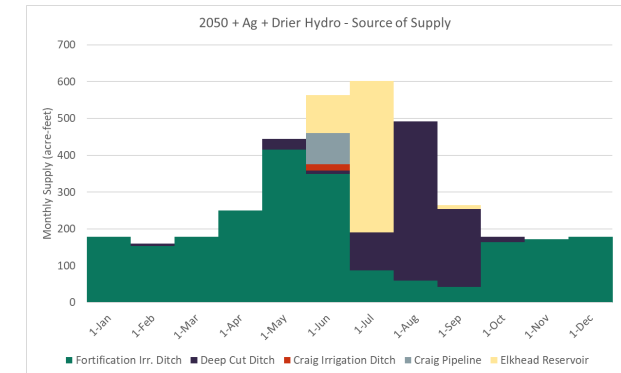


## Task 3: Water Rights Yield Modeling



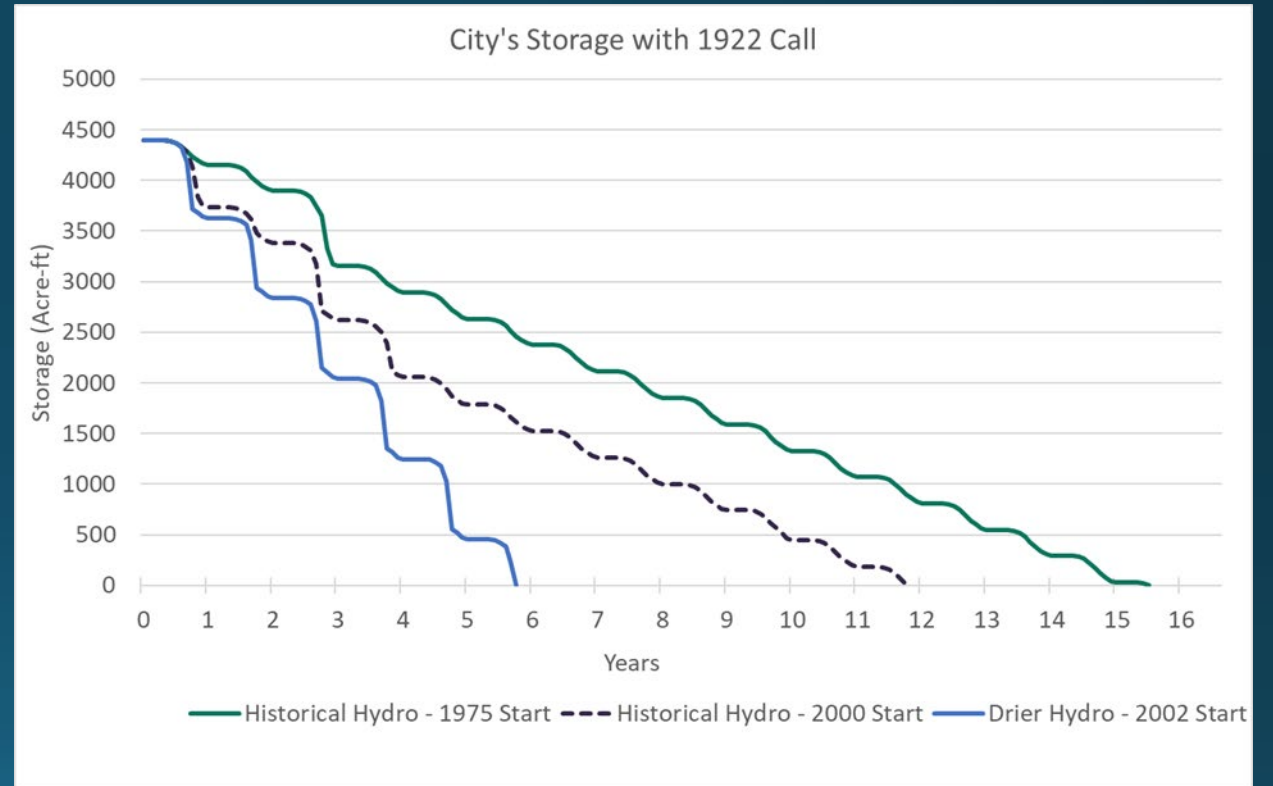
# Task 3: Water Rights Yield Modeling

- Key point:
- City's water supplies are sufficient to meet 2050 potable demands and 1,000 acre-foot agricultural lease, even with 2002 hydrology multiple years in a row and an extended Lily Park call
  - Municipal demands are met mostly by river diversions
  - Municipal uses about 530 acre-feet per year from Elkhead Reservoir



# Task 3: Water Rights Yield Modeling

- What if there was a 1922 call year-round?
- Storage in Elkhead Reservoir could not refill
  - Assume the City starts with a full pool
  - Suspend leasing to agriculture





## Task 4: Scope Additional Studies



# Task 4: Scope Additional Studies

- As part of the updated diversion accounting, the City needs to track low-flow conditions on Fortification Creek
  - Preferred solution is real-time stage measurement connected to City's SCADA system
  - WWG assisted with grant writing for the Yampa-White-Green BRT
  - The City's \$10,000 grant was approved!
  - The City has a contract to purchase necessary equipment.
- 
- Outstanding task – develop SOW for Drought Mitigation and Response Plan



## Task 5: Final Report

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- Finalized in 2023
- Details of the water rights yield modeling
- Whitewater park considerations
- User's guide to the accounting form
- Related documentation



# Emerging Issues

- Yampa Valley Golf Course water rights, measurement and accounting
  - Recently discovered the City holds the Yampa Valley Golf Course water rights to pump from the Yampa River
  - Likely will need new measurement device on the river pump
  - Record Golf Course use in City's accounting form
- Elkhead Reservoir accounting tracking California Park Reservoir Right
  - Diligence for CPR due end of 2025
  - Ideally, show multiple years of storage & use
  - DWR has been moving slowly on their review

# Contract Amendment – Address Emerging Issues

- Task 9 – Yampa Valley Golf Course
  - Document water rights in Final Report
  - Map decreed locations of pump and as-built, confirm within 500 ft.
  - Update diversion accounting to track Golf Course pumping
- Task 10 – Elkhead Reservoir Accounting
  - Continue to reach out to DWR
  - Coordinate with the River District
  - Up to 40 hours to address any DWR comments
- Task 11 – Write SOW for Drought Mitigation and Response Plan
  - Original budget for this task was re-allocated to Task 2 to enhance the Elkhead Reservoir accounting

# Contract Amendment – Requested Budget

| Task  | Description                                | Budget   |
|-------|--|----------|
| 9     | Yampa Valley Golf Course                   | \$2,400  |
| 10    | Elkhead Reservoir Accounting Coordination  | \$7,960  |
| 11    | Scope Drought Mitigation and Response Plan | \$2,960  |
| Total |  | \$13,320 |



# Questions?

Thank you!

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