

SLPOA NEWS

President's Message

1 AF = 325,851 gallons

1 AF = 43,560 cubic feet 1 CF = 7.48 gallons



It's Nice to Have Friends

It's good to have friends, especially when faced with problems. A case in point for SLPOA arose recently. Some of you may have heard that a large development has been planned for the Serene Lakes basin and the prospective developers have filed various papers with Placer County. They have also made presentations to the local water district, SLCWD, and they have made some public presentations.

In those various papers and presentations, the developers, Mr's Foster and Syme and their project manager, Mike Livak, have said that the proposed development will require 235 acre feet of water. Since SLCWD has the rights to over a thousand acre feet and use only a bit over a hundred today, there should be no problem with the request.

Let's leave out for the moment whether there is really a thousand acre feet actually available. Studies being undertaken right now will determine that.

Let's leave out for the moment also, the method of collection and storage. Those issues have been highlighted before and will be again. You will remember the main issue there is using Serene Lakes more as a reservoir: dredging 60 acre feet out (imagine the 6000 + trucks loads taking the sediment out, imagine the storage of the sediment to "dewater" it (drain the water out --- from a pile one football field in size and 60 feet tall. Are double parentheses acceptable?); imagine the 100,000 cubic yards that will be and the noise extracting it; and imagine accidentally breaching the tuff (that's a rock) bedrock and ending up draining the lake; and imagine the annual bathtub ring.

Let's leave out too, for the moment, the effects of dredging half the perimeter of the lakes and the effect on the water we drink, and let's leave out the effect of the annual draw-downs on the lakeside houses' foundations as the soil expands and contracts.

Finally, let's leave out the attempted distraction by Foster/Syme that since they won't be making any changes to the lake footprint, it's all okay.

Oh, one more thing to leave out, forget the "red herring" that, well you've dredged the lake before so this is just in that spirit - maintaining water quality. No one EVER dredged 100,000 cubic yards from the lake and even when plant material was scraped out almost 30 years ago, we had enough water for the much smaller community from the current backup well.

Okay, so we'll leave all that out for the moment. Let's focus on what Foster/Syme say they want - the 235 acre feet and another 30 acre feet for snowmaking. I just assumed the numbers were correct.

But here's where friends are important. A friend of the Summit, from outside Serene Lakes, was a little more critical and creative in her thinking. She wondered whether the request numbers would stand up under scrutiny even if we accept that 46% is a realistic occupancy expectation. She thought she'd investigate.

Here we have an interesting aside. At the water board meeting in July, a member of the audience suggested that Foster/Syme might be "lowballing" the occupancy for local consumption, and using another figure in a prospectus to prospective investors. Questioned multiple times about that, Foster/Syme representatives didn't want to comment except to say that this was a shame, and after all the communication they've done. Is there a prospectus out there? Does it indicate different expectations?

Going back to the issue at hand, in their letter to the water district (and likewise stated in other papers/presentations) Foster/Syme say, "The estimated demand for 235 acre-feet per year (AFY) is based upon a 46%

occupancy rate...” That sounded like a good number to me – how would I know how much water a development will need (if we accept 46% occupancy) – but just wait.

Then let’s go to the County’s environmental questionnaire (<http://www.placer.ca.gov/upload/cdr/planning/projects/envquestionnaire.pdf> page 10 question #3). There Foster/Syme have listed 367,692 gallons/day being used at 46% occupancy. Again, how would I know if that’s the right number?

A quick look at a reference tool shows that each acre foot equals 325,851 gallons. That 367,692 gallons/day works out to 411.87 acre feet per year NOT 235. That 411 acre feet is six feet of water in our 65 acre lakes.

If they were to be lucky enough to get 100% occupancy that would be almost 1000 acre feet. Let’s not talk about dry years.

Then the questionnaire asks about irrigation and the answer is 51,000 gallons/day. Let’s say they irrigate 4 months of the year, 120 days: that’s another 18 acre feet.

Then there was snowmaking at 30 acre feet.

If you add it all up, it looks like Foster/Syme anticipate needing all the water, leaving NOTHING for the lakes and NOTHING for the current residents.

Let’s forget too, Serene Lakes at build out, the final 200 lots being built upon, and let’s forget the trend to more full time residents.

That’s a lot of forgetting.

So, back to it’s nice to have friends. I had just assumed Foster/Syme’s assertion that they needed 235 acre feet was correct. Our friend from a nearby community did the math though. She thought a critical analysis of the papers filed with the County was called for.

It turns out the developers will need way more water than they’ve advertised. How did they miss that?

I’m glad she did. It’s nice to have friends.

And just where did the “235” acre feet come from?

Bill Oudegeest

Royal Gorge Water Demand Table

1 acre foot of water equals	325,851 gallons		
			+ irrig/snowmaking
Current Serene Lakes Usage		110-120 AF/year	
Advertised Royal Gorge request		235 AF/year	
As presented to Co. @ 46% occ.	367,692 gals/day	411 AF/year	459 AF/year
As presented to Co. @ 75% occ.	631,650 gals/day	707 AF/year	755 AF/year
As presented to Co. @ 100% occ.	859,200 gals/day	962 AF/year	1010 AF/year
irrigation		18 AF/year	
snowmaking		30 AF/year	

Serene Lakes now drops about two feet per year while using 110-120 acre Feet.

How far will the lakes drop based on the usage in he chart above?