



## ***AMHERST COUNTY SERVICE AUTHORITY***

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December 12, 2011

To: Amherst County Service Authority Board

Subject: Update on Progress with Amherst County's Water Source Permits/Orders

Dear Board Members:

To operate any public water system, each locality must hold the appropriate permits to withdraw source waters from the environments. ACSA's Henry L. Lanum, Jr. Water Filtration Plant utilizes three water sources – Harris Creek, Graham Creek Reservoir, and the James River as a backup source. This facility has grandfathered water withdrawal rights from the first two sources, based in the 2.0 MGD production capacity of its Virginia Department of Health (VDH) permit.

The Lanum facility is expandable to 4.0 MGD. While this work is several years in the future, VDH will require that we first receive withdrawal permits/orders from all of the agencies now having authority over such withdrawals. These would include the following;

1. Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ),
2. U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE),
3. Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), and
4. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

The permitting process is a long and drawn out one, often requiring several years and at times taking more than a decade. When DEQ and the COE issued the 2007 permit for expansion of the Graham Creek Reservoir, one of its requirements was that ACSA seek new (rather than grandfathered) permits for all three source waters.

In the spring of 2010, (after three years and four draft permits), DEQ and the COE granted ACSA a joint withdrawal permit for 3.0 MGD. While we sought a 4.0 MGD permit, DEQ does not issue them for more than the community's anticipated demand during the 15-year life of the permit. If community growth is fast enough to require larger withdrawals, this permit can be modified.



Early last year I reported that we were successful in receiving the VMRC construction permit for our replacement Harris Creek low head dam. This structure is necessary for our usage of the Harris Creek Pump Station, and is currently under construction. **The most important new development is that in December, VMRC finally approved their permit for construction of our permanent James River Intake and Pump Station.** Construction of these facilities will be undertaken on the same timeline as the Lanum Plant expansion. While this permit is only for a 5-year period, VMRC has made provisions for their staff to administratively provide 5-year extensions, as requested by ACSA.

Because the James River Intake will be on the Reusens Hydroelectric Impoundment, FERC is also involved. Work has now begun on obtaining a 3.0 MGD withdrawal order from that agency. This effort will take most of 2012 and will likely extend into the following year. Funds for this work are already a part of ACSA's approved 2012 budget.

I will keep the Board informed of our progress. Should you have any questions, I will be glad to respond at our January meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan E. French". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan E. French  
Director of Public Utilities

DEF/ktp