

Wellington Water Works, LLC - Oil Well Nontributary Permit



Wellington Water Works, LLC., sought to obtain a permit from the Colorado Division of Water Resources to allow them to apply to beneficial use water being produced by fifteen oil production wells in the Wellington field in northern Colorado, and which water had previously been discharged as a waste byproduct under the Colorado Oil and Gas Control Commission Rules and Regulations. Martin and Wood conducted hydrogeologic analyses and applied geophysical log interpretation, seismic data assessment, well construction and completion analysis, and geologic mapping to reach the conclusion that the water produced by the wells

from the Muddy Sand member of the Dakota formation (the oil producing unit) could be classified as nontributary, thus clearing the way for a permit to be issued allowing for application of the water to beneficial uses. However, there was no administrative framework in place to facilitate such permitting. Further, the water being produced and disposed of was at the time under the jurisdiction of the Oil and Gas Commission, setting the stage for a jurisdictional conflict that had to be resolved. Working closely with the Division of Water Resources and incorporating a review of the Oil and Gas Commission Rules, Martin and Wood developed a set of terms and conditions that would allow the water to be classified as nontributary and be applied to beneficial use, but that would

maintain Oil and Gas Commission authority over the administration of the water so long as the wells also continued to produce oil. Once the oil production ceased, the Division of Water Resources Rules and Regulations controlling the annual volumes of water produced would take over and such things as 100-year aquifer life and water banking would then be in effect. The permit issued, allowing for beneficial use of nontributary ground water produced from an operating oil well, is the first of its kind in the State of Colorado and will likely act as a model for subsequent permitting actions by other field operators.

120th Estates Partners - Substitute Water Supply Plan

As part of the permit process for 120th Estates Partners Sand and Gravel Mine, Martin and Wood constructed a scaled map of the pit area utilizing ArcMap, identified owners within 600 feet of the gravel pit, obtained a well permit for

the gravel pit, determined evaporative losses at the site, and completed a substitute water supply plan that was approved by the State Engineer.

Denver Wells, LLC - Walestone Wells

Obtaining replacement permits for older wells can sometimes prove to be a challenging legal and technical procedure. Denver Wells, LLC, owns four old Denver Basin wells: the Ideal Laundry Well, the SEC Icehouse Well, and two wells from the old Swift meat packing plant: Webber #1 and Webber #3 Wells. Collectively, these four wells have been known as the “Walestone Wells” and have changed hands multiple times over the past 30 years – each

successive owner trying to get the wells back into production and the water into use.

Martin and Wood personnel ran video surveys and pump tests of the wells, and determined historical use numbers through library and historical society research and interviews with previous persons who had used the well. Using the decrees and historical use research, the Office of the State Engineer granted replacement permits for these four wells in 2004.