WISSLER RANCH

Wissler Ranch Homeowners Association

Wissler Ranch Fire Cistern Proposal

Informational Meeting

8 Feb & 18 Feb 2023

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Agenda

1. Background of Cistern project – why is the Board working on this?
2. Description of the project
3. Benefits of the project
4. Financials
5. Next Steps
6. Q&A

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Board and Officers

- Board members
  - Hal Goldback, Acting President
  - TBD, Vice President
  - Peter Popp
  - Sharla Davis, Secretary
  - Wayne Gardner
- Other Officers
  - Kathleen McCormick, Treasurer

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Background

Information gathered from Monument Fire.

- Today, the nearest fire hydrant is approximately 4 ½ miles South of Wissler Ranch
- Fire Trucks hold 750 gallons, perhaps 3-5 minutes supply
- A Fire Tender, transports water and holds 2,000-2,500 gallons
- Fighting a typical house fire will require 15,000-25,000 gallons of water
- Wissler Ranch has three concrete in-ground cisterns, not connected to pumps
- Extracting water from the Wissler Ranch cisterns is an inefficient use of equipment, as it requires stationing a fire truck at a cistern, filling a tender 3-4 times, then moving to the next cistern.
- During the last fire, a tender drove South to Kilmer Elementary School, approximately 5 ½ miles each way, to fill its 2,000 tank.
- The crews ran out of water
- The house was a total loss
- The Wissler Ranch HOA Board has been working on this project for approx. 3 years

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Description of Project

- Proposed Cistern
  - 35,000 Gallon DARCO Fiberglass in-ground tank, attached to a pump that meets fire authority specs
  - The new cistern will be attached to the existing “common area” cistern
  - Total capacity of 45,000 gallons, allows a 10% margin imposed by ISO, making a net of 40,500 gallons
  - Pumps call for three-phase power, supplied from lines along Palmer Divide Road
  - Black Hills Energy established that the transformer, located across Wissler Ranch Road from the cistern site, was maxed out and could not supply the needed power
  - An extensive search has been made to find grants or other funding. No external funding sources have been located.

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Benefits of the Cistern Project

- A pressurized cistern in our own common area will dramatically shorten the time to transport water by Fire Tender to the site of a fire in Wissler Ranch
- Wissler Ranch enjoys a favorable ISO (Insurance Services Office) rating, which results in reduced insurance premiums when compared to surrounding neighborhoods
- The three 25+ year-old unpressurized cisterns contribute to our ISO rating, even though they were unused during the last fire, as they are not pressurized
- We are informed that ISO is considering an amendment to their standards regarding the amount of water available for firefighting, increasing it to 40,000 gallons, which could influence or maintain our ISO rating
- This proposal will mitigate the risks of a downgrade, helping to preserve our favorable ISO rating

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Financials

- If approved by the homeowners, each voting lot will be assessed $2,800
- Assessment will be due 31 March 2023
  - If other arrangements are needed, please contact the board
- Excess funds, may be used for restorative landscaping (topsoil, reseeding other unanticipated cost over-runs) if needed.
- Disposition of any excess funds will be voted on at the Annual HOA meeting.

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Next Steps

- Informational meetings
  - 8 Feb 4-6:00 @ Serranos Coffee Shop
  - 18 Feb 10-11:00 @ Tri-Lakes Methodist Church
- Special meeting on 25 Feb 10-11 @ Tri-Lakes Methodist Church
  - Formal Vote on Cistern Proposal Special Assessment
- Take Homeowner approval to vendor for contracting

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Appendix 1 – Questions from Homeowners

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Question 1

1. In May 2020, it was stated we would need at least 40,000 gallons to comply with the new ISO rating standard and at that time a 50,000 gallon tank was considered, this new design in the quote is only 35,000 gallons. Is the capacity enough for the ISO rating we need?

- **Initially, we were indeed discussing a 40,000 gallon cistern. In our search, we found that a fiberglass cistern of that size would cost substantially more and shipment would also require lead and follow vehicles from the Dallas area, further increasing costs.**
- **Instead, by linking the existing 10,000 gallon cistern to a new 35,000 gallon cistern, would give us a combined total of 45,000. Net of ISO's customary "haircut" of 10% to avoid burning out pumps by fully draining tanks, 40,500 gallons.**

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Question 2

2. The board provided a quote which is not based upon a geotechnical engineered design as stated in the footnote of the quote, how do we know this estimate will be accurate?

- **Advanced Septic has experience in Palmer Divide and we are confident that shortly below grade (we are told that on average, two feet below grade), any drilling or excavation will reveal sandstone, a very stable environment in which to install a cistern.**

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Question 3

3. What will happen to our current cisterns, will they continue to exist, will there be a future cost to remove them?

- **The existing cisterns will remain in place and as noted above. The Common Area cistern will be connected to the new fiberglass cistern.**

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Question 4

4. The estimate does not address the landscaping necessary to restore the land after construction.

- **The amount of material excavated will be used to mound-over the cistern and the soil removed will be preserved to provide cover for replenishment of the natural vegetation. An additional $8,348 collected above estimate is planned for restorative landscaping. The estimate does include the cost of expanding the small apron, which served as parking for the sales trailer of 20 years ago.**

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Question 5

5. The estimate does not address the cost of filling the tank with water.

- **Monument Fire District (formerly Tri-Lakes Monument Fire) has agreed to fill the cistern(s) and keep them filled at no cost to the HOA.**

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Question 6

6. What is the ongoing cost to maintain, test, and inspect this new pressurized system? I anticipate there will be inspection costs to ensure this highly specialized system is working properly.

- **As with the current cisterns, annual inspections will be completed by Monument Fire District at no additional cost to the homeowners.**
  - **Inspection will not involve draining and entering the cisterns. Inspections will be done visually through access ports.**
  - **The Grundfos pumps, will be tested periodically, according to the vendor's standards.**

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Question 7

7. The board provided a quote from only one contractor, we should have at least 3 quotes for such a large project. Why was Advanced Septic chosen?

- **Many months ago, we solicited bids from a variety of contractors, including Barnhart Pumps, National Storage Tank and others. All backed out or failed to respond for a variety of reasons. Advanced Septic Solutions is the only contractor who remained interested. They have experience in installing septic systems in this area. They have also helped to engage Innovative Process Engineering which assisted in design and permitting.**

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Question 7 - continued

- As stated, early on, (2019) we consulted with Barnhart Pump, the most prominent choice at the time, due to their experience with several septic or well projects in Wissler Ranch. They chose to back out after losing a key employee who was essential for such a project.
- We also contacted National Storage Tank, which would bid for a tank, but would not act as a general contractor
- Jenson Brothers, a Colorado Springs construction company which claims experience in such projects, but they were unresponsive.
- Associated Fire Protection, also unresponsive

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Question 8

8. It has been stated that our cisterns are at the end of their service life, does the board have any inspection documentation from a qualified professional stating any issue with the current cisterns and estimated timeframe of when the official end-of-life may occur?

- **Although we have no engineering studies for the existing cisterns, we know that although easements are filed for each cistern, there were no permits retained by the county, and there are no plans or drawings. They are**
  - **at least 25 years old,**
  - **made of concrete**
  - **all who have been consulted, (included Monument Fire), express some level of concern for their long-term usefulness**
  - **Currently, none of the three cisterns show signs of leakage.**

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Question 9

9. There are 133 homeowners and the HOA is asking for $2800 each for a total of $372,400. The estimate is $364,052, which also includes a $47,485 contingency. This means you are collecting more than the estimate plus collecting the contingency of which we don't know if it will be needed, plus it appears that you do not intend to use any of our reserves which are supposed to be used for this purpose

- **The approach we used is one of caution. A 15% contingency should provide a sufficient buffer against the unexpected. Note that an additional $8,348 collected above estimate is planned for restorative landscaping.**
- **Reserves need to be available for maintenance of all HOA property. A portion of the reserves may be used for any unforeseen engineering or rehabilitation of existing cisterns.**
- **Disposition of any excess funds will be voted on at the Annual HOA meeting.**

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Question 10

10. In May of 2020, you stated the cost per homeowner would be less than $1,000, the stated cost now is 3 times as much. Construction costs at this time are at the highest ever, if we have a few years left on the current cisterns then perhaps we can wait for costs to subside a bit.

- **The detail and design in the estimates from years ago were vastly different.**
- **The figures we were considering didn't include three-phase power. We found as we went along that it was necessary to provide the flow rate and pressure required by fire authorities, 250GPM at 100-150# pressure. That alone added more than $40,000 to the budget.**
- **Inflation is a factor, but the board doesn't believe prices will actually come down as inflation eases.**

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Question 11

11. "A past house fire in Wissler Ranch demonstrated the importance of having adequate water available" This demonstrated nothing. The water was available and the responding departments did not access it. They were well aware of the cisterns and the needs to use it, and the proper equipment necessary.

- **As we have noted in earlier communications, the El Paso County dispatch called it a brush fire. The result was that Tri-Lakes Fire and others arrived with inadequate equipment and resources. That is an issue that certainly contributed to the loss. But the three cisterns required two fire trucks (or more) plus a tender, an unusual and inefficient deployment of equipment. The new proposal would allow the firefighters to utilize the Wissler Ranch Cisterns to more quickly extinguish fires.**

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Question 12

12. I don't recall giving the board permission to set what is "a reasonable time frame" for my budget. What gives you this right?

- **The homeowners will determine whether a special assessment is called. Not the board**

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Question 13

13. ***"In addition, the presence of cisterns contributes to the insurance ISO rating which is the foundation for our insurance premiums."*** Is "our" each individual homeowner or is "our" the HOA's insurer?

- **This statement refers to the individual homeowner's premiums.**

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Appendix 2 - Documents

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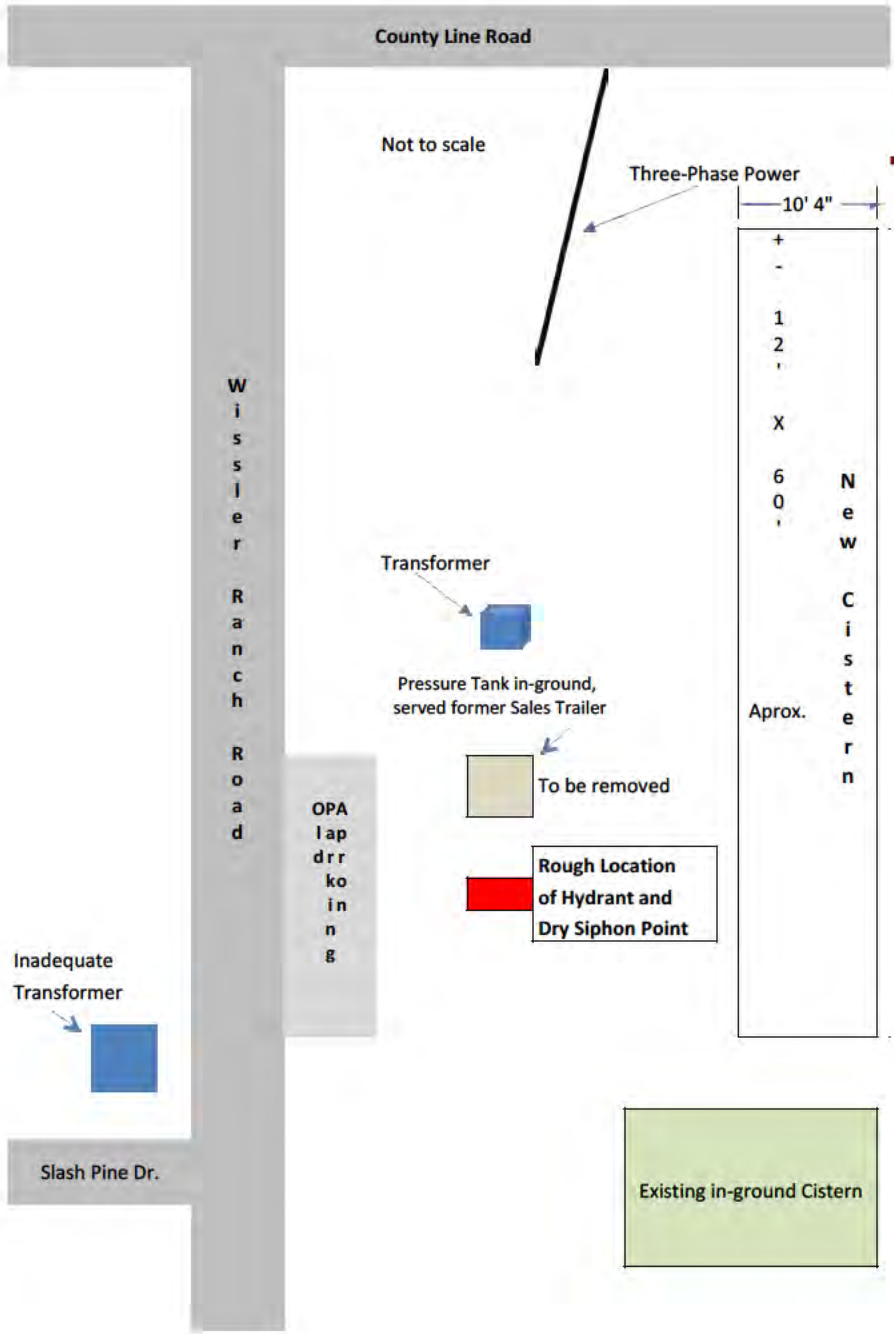
Cistern Placement



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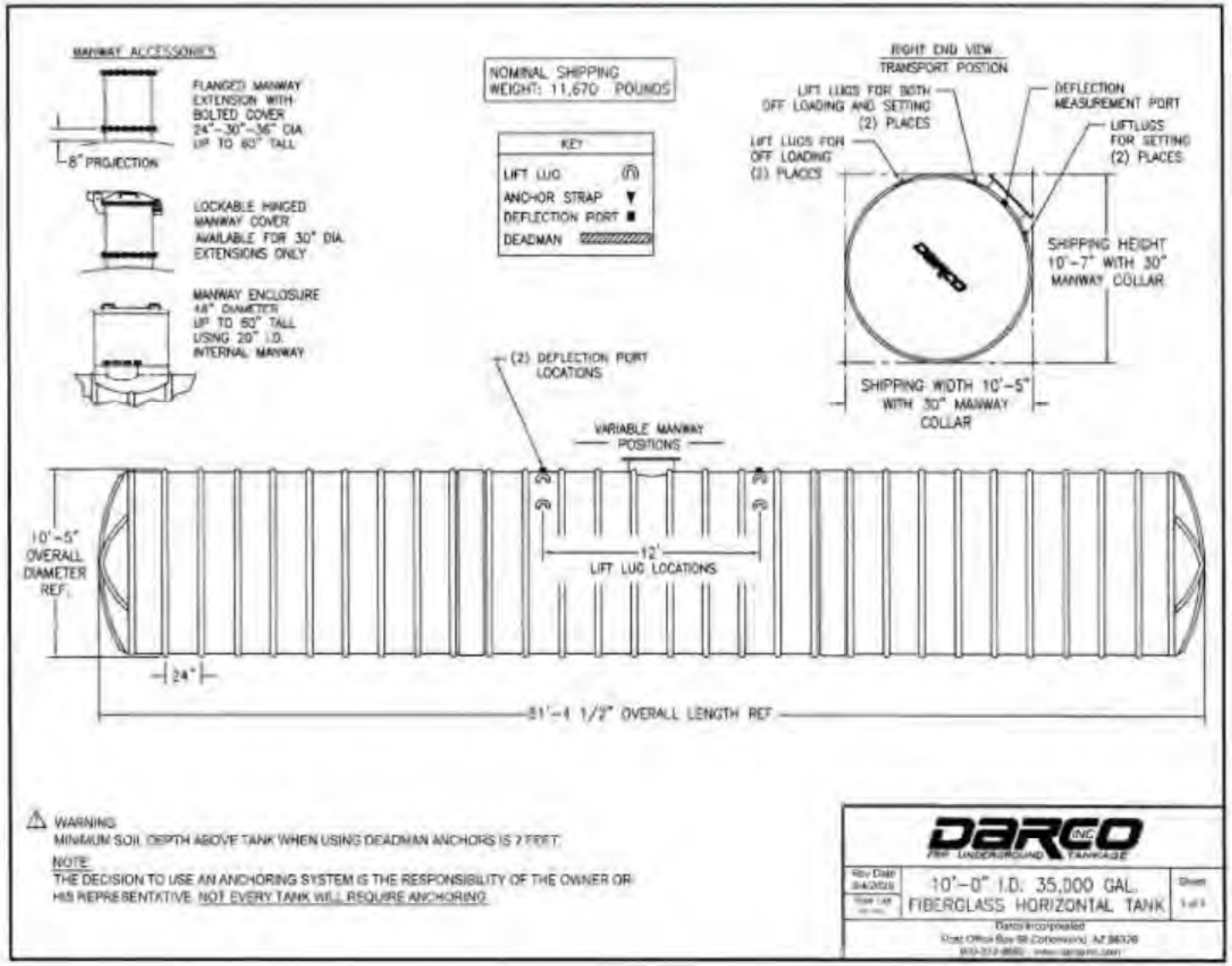
Proposed New Cistern Specs



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Advanced Septic Solutions

1135 Beta Loop
Colorado Springs CO 80905
Phone: (719) 257-1250

WORK ESTIMATE

Work Estimate

ESTIMATE #	DATE
2311	9/1/2022

TO

Wissler Ranch HOA / Harold Goldback
20325 Wissler Ranch Rd
Colorado Springs, CO 80908
(719) 488-1012

Design by innovative Process engineering

This is a design build - prices and design subject to change

ITEMIZED COSTS	QTY	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
Excavation for Darco tank, including base preparation materials & backfill,	1	15,920.00	15,920.00
import Gravel & encase tank apprx 3 ft width (per-manufacturer specifications)	1	23,450.00	23,450.00
Furnish & install 8x8x14 Vault with ladder access to pump & controls	1	9,500.00	9,500.00
Trench & install pipe from pump vault to hydrant;			
Excavate to below frost line, (apprx 6ft depth) pipe to be 4 in. sch 40 - vault			
connection approximately 12' below grade	1	7,500.00	7,500.00
6' Med nst spec fire hydrant 5-1/4 3W nst 1-1/2 pol red - fire hydrant	1	5,250.00	5,250.00
35,000 Gallon fiberglass tank delivered / offloaded and set by crane	1	110,000.00	110,000.00
Pipe to connect existing cistern includes excavation & installation 3 in.sch 40	1	4,290.00	4,290.00
Booster pack (2 pumps) 250GPM 2STG Centrifugal pumps 3phase:			
Grundfos Boosterpaz Model HYDRO MPC EC 100kA SCCR 2CR32-2-1			
3x460V 60Hz -See Datasheet for Details			
Transfer pump 150 gpm @ low head - (connecting existing cistern)			
Grundfos CU 352 Pump Controller			
Pumps & controllers	1	52,420.00	52,420.00
Tank fittings bulkhead tank tee, components for water system connections	1	4,225.00	4,225.00
intallation cost for tank connections, hydrant etc.	1	7,950.00	7,950.00
Electrical for pumps & controllers - includes trenching & conduit from main panel			
to vault & existing cistern	1	13,625.00	13,625.00
Per county requirements road base and asphalt to be installed to widen existing			
pull off (approved design) no parking signs were also required	1	12,937.00	12,937.00
200 amp 3 phase service including any neccasary upgrades, pprb permits etc	1	16,000.00	16,000.00
3 phase power upgrade from County line Rd. (Mountain view Electric)	1	33,500.00	33,500.00
*Additional soils may be needed for tank backfill - soils to be cut & fill onsite			
*Note; a geotechnical investigation was not performed prior to this estimate, no			
guarantee of constructibility is implied			
Contingency (15% total budget cost)	1	47,485.05	47,485.05
Thank you for your business!	**TOTAL ESTIMATE**	**$**	**364,052.05**

Note: This estimate is not a contract or a bill. It is our best guess at the total price to complete the work stated above, based upon our initial inspection. If prices change or additional parts and labor are required, we will inform you prior to proceeding with the work.

To schedule a time for us to complete the work, or if you have any questions, please contact
David Carlin (719) 257-1250 / email: 2dcarlin@gmail.com

Owner

Contractor

Adjourn

Thank you for coming and helping to maintain Wissler Ranch as a great place to live!

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