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Disagreement over Glade spills to commissioners

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Disagreement over the proposed Northern Integrated Supply Project and Glade Reservoir spilled over to the Larimer County commissioners Monday.

The commissioners were far from unanimous while discussing which comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for NISP should be formally sent by the county to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which ultimately will decide whether to issue a permit for the project.

In reviewing comments offered by various county departments and advisory boards, the commissioners clashed on several issues, including whether NISP would conflict with the county's Master Plan.

A section of the plan identifies the mouth of the Poudre Canyon and the U.S. Highway 287 corridor, which would be relocated if Glade were built, as important natural resource areas.

Commissioner Glenn Gibson said NISP should be weighed against the entire plan, which also calls for intergovernmental cooperation. The plan is "extremely broad," he said.

"I think you can find as many negatives as positives in the Master Plan," he said.

Commissioner Randy Eubanks said the comment is fair reflection of an important portion of the plan.

"It's not comment on the overall purpose of the Master Plan - it's a very specific comment," he said.

The commissioners put off making a decision on the Master Plan issue, as well as stating a preference for rerouting U.S. 287.

Comments the commissioners agreed to pass along included:

- > The impacts associated with various pipeline routes need to be more fully evaluated.
- > The issue of chemical leakage from a former Atlas missile site needs to be more carefully evaluated.
- > Analysis should be conducted to evaluate how changes in river flow would impact mosquito populations along the river with emphasis on species that transmit West Nile virus.

Supporters say NISP and Glade, which would draw from the Poudre River, is needed to meet the water demands of regional growth.

Opponents say the project would cause irreparable harm to the river and that other means of boosting water supplies should be pursued.

County staff members will draft a letter with comments for the commissioners to consider at their Sept. 2 meeting.

Adoption of the letter is likely to come Sept. 9.
