



ARKANSAS VALLEY CONDUIT MONTHLY REPORT

Thursday, January 16, 2025

This monthly newsletter summarizes activities related to the Arkansas Valley Conduit and is made available to the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District Board of Directors and Arkansas Valley Conduit stakeholders. To request a subscription to the Report, please contact info@secwcd.com or view it at <https://www.secwcd.org/>



AVC Committee

The Arkansas Valley Conduit Committee of the Southeastern Colorado Water Activity Enterprise holds monthly meetings at District Headquarters, 31717 United Avenue, Pueblo, CO. Check <https://www.secwcd.org/> for Zoom information. Next meeting:

10 a.m. Thursday, January 23, 2025

Want to learn more about the AVC?

If your organization would like a presentation on AVC, contact Chris Woodka, 719-289-0785 or email chris@secwcd.com



Reclamation Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton greets several members of the Southeastern District Board, from left, Bill Long, Kevin Karney, Howard "Bub" Miller, Andy Colosimo and Justin DiSanti.

AVC gets \$250 million boost

Camille Calimlim Touton, Commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, traveled to Pueblo on Wednesday, January 8, to announce an additional \$250 million for construction of the Arkansas Valley Conduit.

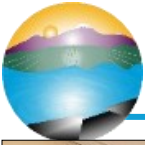
"We are proud to see the work underway because of President Biden's Investing in America agenda," Commissioner Touton said. "But there's much more work to be done and we are again investing in this important project to bring safe drinking water to an estimated 50,000 people in 39 rural communities along the Arkansas River."

The \$250 million is funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and is part of a \$514 package of water infrastructure investments throughout the western United States under the BIL.

The additional funding brings the total federal investment in the AVC to almost \$590 million since 2020, along with state funding guarantees of \$90 million in loans and \$30 million in grants.

"After 25 years, I still almost can't believe it's happening, but I drive by and can see it with my own

Continued on Page 2



Reclamation, Southeastern District and congressional staffers are all smiles after the announcement of \$250 million for the Arkansas Valley Conduit at Southeastern headquarters on January 8, 2025.

AVC gets an additional \$250 million

Continued from Page 1

eyes,” Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District President Bill Long told Commissioner Touton. “There are so many people who have worked so hard who would be so proud to see it being built. This money will get us to the area that has seen the most problems.”

The Southeastern District is the sponsor for the AVC, which is part of the 1962 Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Act. The 130-mile pipeline to Lamar will bring water to 50,000 people being served by 39 water systems when complete.

Several Southeastern Board members attended Wednesday’s announcement.

“You and your team are the ones who have gotten this off the ground,” said Kevin Karney, a La Junta rancher, and at-large Board member.

“People said it would never get built, but now

“This money really gets us further down the valley. It is very much appreciated.”

Bill Long

SECWCD President

we’re getting it done,” said Howard “Bub” Miller, who represents Otero County on the Board.

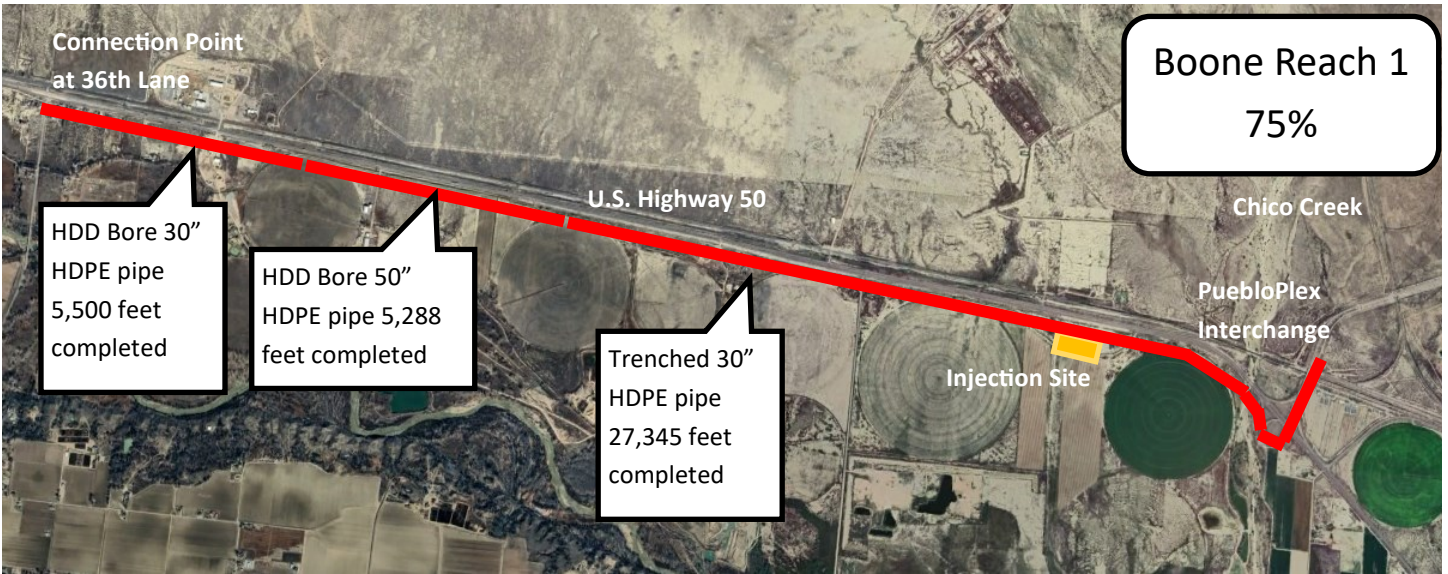
The AVC will help 18 water systems that face enforcement action for naturally occurring radionuclides in their groundwater supplies, as well as communities struggling to meet drinking water and wastewater discharge standards.

Construction of the AVC began in 2023, and three major construction contracts have been awarded.

“This money really gets us further down the valley. It is very much appreciated,” Long said.



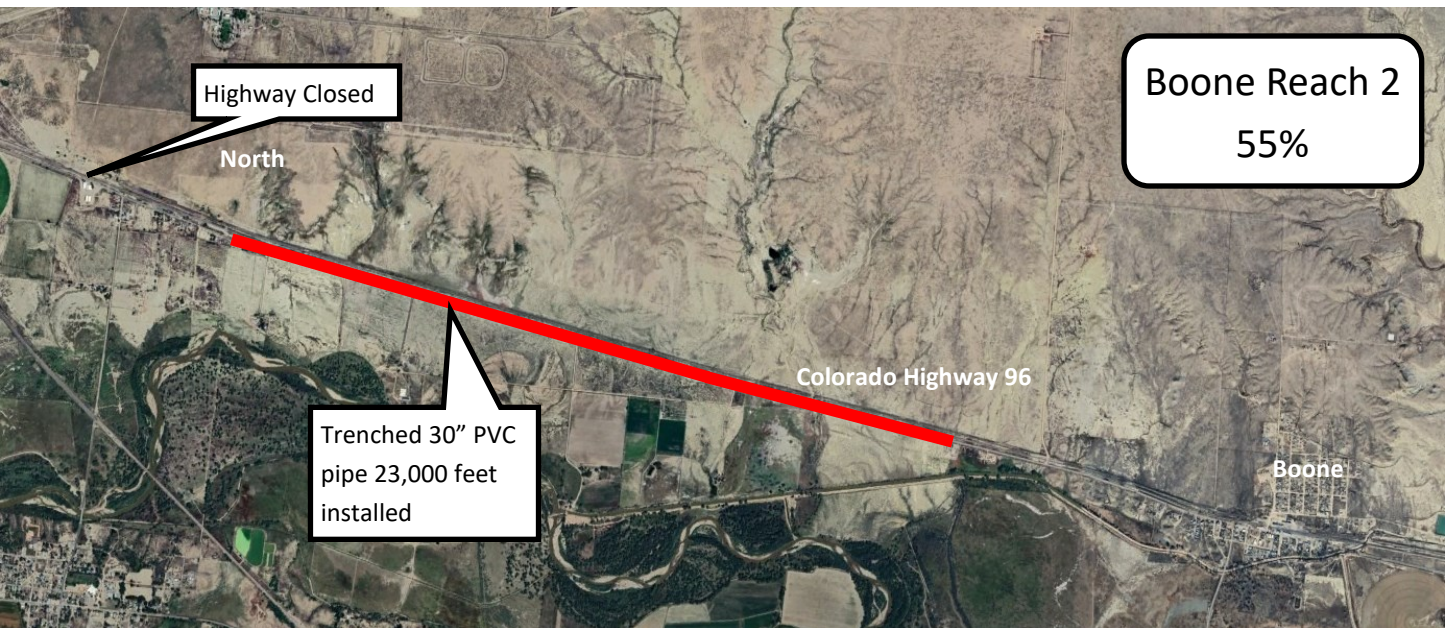
Federal AVC Construction Details



Boone Reach 1

The second leg of the horizontal directional drilling (HDD) is complete. A total of 27,345 feet (5.2 miles) of trenched 30-inch

pipe has been installed. Crossings at 46th Lane and the PuebloPlex interchange are complete.



Boone Reach 2

As of January 2025, Pate Construction has laid 23,000 linear feet of 30-inch PVC pipe in along Colorado Highway 96 and is starting to decommission some dewatering wells. The Colorado Department of Transportation has approved a full road closure on Highway 96 until the summer of 2025 as work continues.

Injection Site

Thalle Construction Company is on site and has set up ofices. Stripping of the site has started.

Design

A contract for design from Reg Tank 2 to Lamar is being prepared.



2025 focus remains on federal legislation

A key change in federal legislation for the Arkansas Valley Conduit did not pass prior to Congress adjourning in December 2024, and will continue to be the focus for the Enterprise in 2025.

The Enterprise and key members of the Colorado congressional delegation are working to extend the repayment period and lower the interest rate for the AVC.

In 2024, the “Finish the Arkansas Valley Conduit Act” was introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper. The legislation was sponsored in the House of Representatives by Representative Lauren Boebert.

The House Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries heard testimony from Bill Long, president of the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District; Representative Boebert and Reclamation Deputy Commissioner Roque Sanchez, on November 20, 2024.

The AVC Act was part of a larger package of water bills.

Similar legislation is being planned for 2025.

The legislation is being sought in light of the announcement of the Updated Cost Estimate in 2024 by the Bureau of Reclamation. The new cost estimate is \$1.3 billion, which is more than double the 2019 estimate for the AVC Project.

Under a 2009 law, PL 111-11, the local share of the project was changed to 35 percent. In addition, miscellaneous revenues from the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project can be applied to the local share, reducing the burden on individual systems.

During the November 20 hearing, Mr. Long noted that AVC communities are far below the state and national income levels, and must also pay for improvements within their own water systems, as well as paying for infrastructure costs of the AVC.

The AVC Enterprise Sub-Project is estimated to cost about \$75 million to build spur and delivery lines that will connect water systems to the Trunk Line being built by Reclamation. The Enterprise is working with the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority on a plan to fund the majority of those costs.

Read past newsletters

For Past issues of the AVC Report go to:

<https://www.secwcd.org/>

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