

Arkansas Valley Conduit



1,000 linear feet of 30-inch diameter HDPE pipe has been welded for the Arkansas Valley Conduit trunk line. It will be placed in a trench 9 feet deep, which is being excavated by heavy equipment on Thursday, July 27, 2023. (Photo by Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District.

AVC Spurs & Delivery Lines Progress Report

A contract to construct water delivery lines for Pueblo County water systems in the Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC) was approved by the Southeastern Colorado Water Activity Enterprise (SECWAE) Board of Directors Thursday, July 20, 2023.

The successful bidder on the project was K.R. Swerdfeger Construction LLC of Pueblo, at \$862,547.60 for construction of delivery lines to the town of Boone and the Avondale Water and Sanitation District. Costs were within the budgeted cost range for the project. The delivery lines will connect the two water systems to the 130-mile AVC trunk line, which is being built by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

The construction work, along with the design approved earlier this year, is being funded under a \$1.2 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant from Pueblo County Commissioners, which was awarded in March 2022. The Commissioners also committed \$3.2 million to Avondale and \$1.5 million to Boone for internal improvements to their water systems.

Future spur delivery lines designs will be complete by the end of 2024. SECWAE's goal is to complete all the spur and deliver lines in advance of the AVC trunk line being built by Reclamation in order to expedite water deliveries, particularly for those communities whose primary water supply is contaminated by naturally occurring radionuclides.

The state of Colorado has pledged \$120 million toward the AVC, Southeastern has contributed \$4.8 million and counties and participants have contributed or pledged \$3 million in American Rescue Program Act (ARPA) funds, and participants have contributed about \$2 million.

Trunk Line Progress Report

The Bureau of Reclamation has begun construction of the first 6-mile stretch of the AVC. Contractors WCA Construction LLC has begun welding pipe to be installed in a 9-foot-deep trench along U.S. 50 in Pueblo County. The first 10,000 feet of AVC pipeline will be installed via a horizontal directional bore near U.S. 50 and 36th Lane. The trunk line will connect to Pueblo Water's system, providing AVC participants with filtered water that is ready to use with simple re-chlorination.

Final design for future segments of the AVC is under way, and Reclamation is working toward completing the trunk line by 2030.

On July 27, 2023, the Department of Interior and Bureau of Reclamation announced an additional \$100 million in funding for the AVC. This brings total federal funding of AVC to \$221 million since 2020, on top of \$30 million previously allocated for the AVC.

Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC) water will be conveyed from Pueblo Reservoir, treated and delivered by Pueblo Water, to a point approximately 15 miles away at 36th Lane and U.S. Highway 50 in Pueblo County.

From there, a trunk line being built by the Bureau of Reclamation will deliver the water supply to 39 water systems serving 50,000 people. Trunk Line construction began in July 2023, and is expected to be complete in 2030. Reclamation also will build a facility to remove residual ammonia from the water and two regulating tanks along the AVC route.

SECWAE is leading the construction efforts for all of the spur and delivery lines that will connect the trunk line with service to the participants. SECWAE is currently in the design phase for the spurs and delivery lines. We anticipate several additional bid packages going out starting in late 2023 through the end of 2024. The goal is to have the spurs and delivery line construction completed by the end of 2026, with the trunk line construction completed by 2028-2029, ahead of the arrival of the trunk line.



Description

The Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC) is a 130-mile pipeline with spurs that would serve as many as 40 communities and 50,000 people east of Pueblo. It will deliver filtered water ready for treatment from Pueblo Reservoir. The AVC will supplement existing water supplies, which face state compliance issues because of salinity or radionuclide contamination. Most of the participants rely on groundwater and need a reliable supply of fresh water.

History

The cities of the Lower Arkansas Valley in Colorado have awaited the construction of the AVC for decades. The AVC was authorized by Congress as part of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project in 1962. It never was built largely because of the inability of participants to repay construction costs. In 2009, Congress amended the original Fry-Ark legislation. The amendment featured a cost-sharing plan with 65 percent federal and 35 percent local funding. The locally funded portion will be repaid by the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District (District) to the federal government over a period of 50 years.

Milestones

April 28, 2023 – Reclamation and the SEWCD celebrate the beginning of construction of the AVC with a groundbreaking attended by about 150 people.

September 29, 2022 – Reclamation announces the first construction contract for the AVC with WCA Construction LLC.

March 18, 2022 – A three-party contract between Reclamation, SECWAE and Pueblo Water will provide conveyance, treatment and transmission of AVC water to a point 15 miles from Pueblo Reservoir.

October 3, 2020 – AVC Ceremonial Groundbreaking Ceremony at Pueblo Dam.

June 29, 2020 – Colorado Governor Jared Polis signs a bill authorizing \$90 million in loans and \$10 million in grants for the AVC.

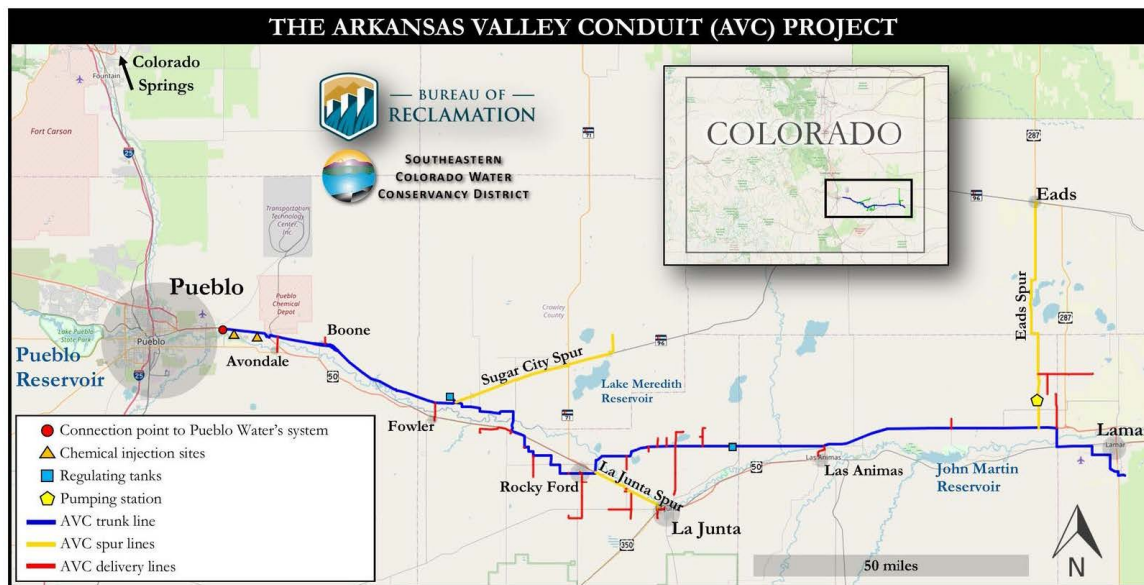
2020 - The AVC receives \$28 million in federal funding to finish design and begin construction of the long-awaited pipeline. Funding since then totals \$221million.

2014 – Reclamation issued a Record of Decision for the AVC, which established a route (Comanche North) and scope of work for the project.

2013 – The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) completed a Final Environmental Impact Statement for the AVC.

2009 – P.L. 111-11 passed, allowing miscellaneous revenues (excess-capacity contract payments) from the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project to be applied to AVC construction and repayment. These payments will be available beginning in 2022 and initially total about \$3.5 million annually, increasing in future years.

1962 – The AVC is authorized by Congress as part of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Act.



Arkansas Valley Conduit Participants

Click Here for the [Final Environmental Impact Statement](#)

For more information: <https://www.usbr.gov/gp/ecao/avc/>

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