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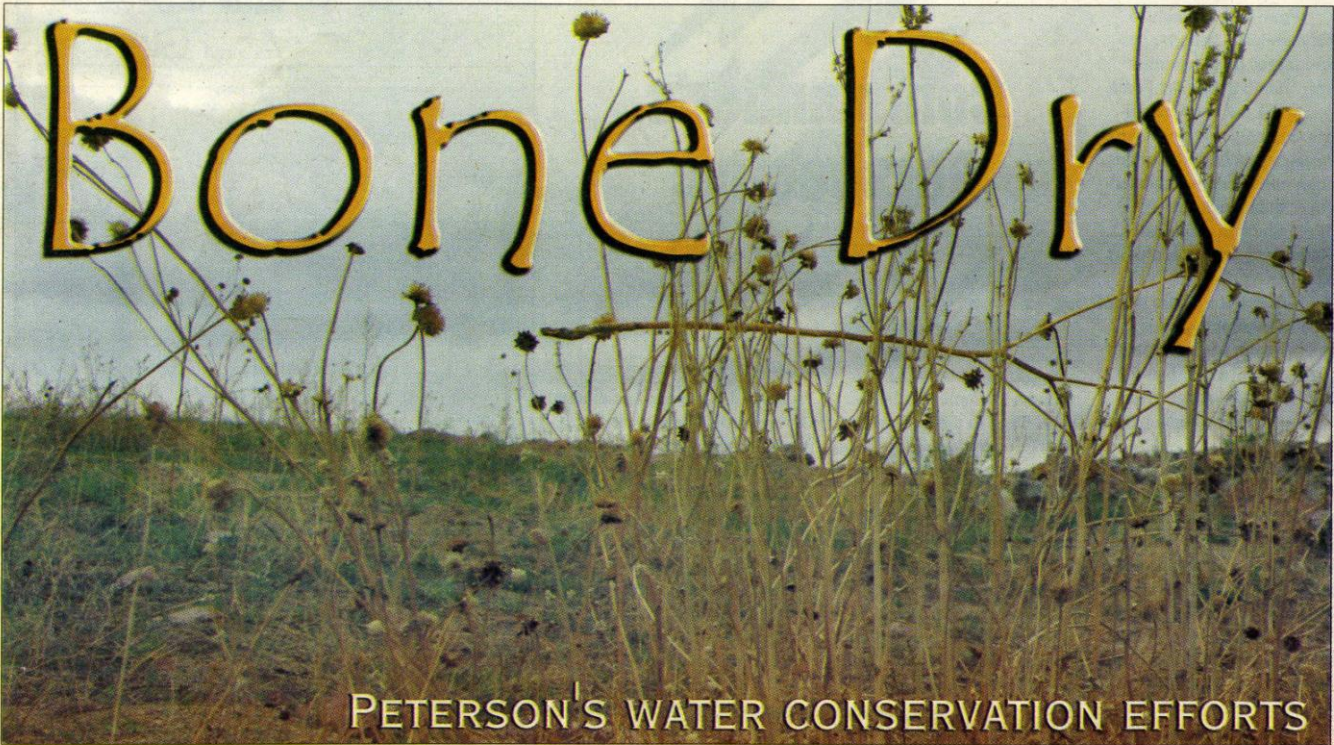


Photo and design by Staff Sgt. Josh Clendener

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A drought response plan, developed by Tim Pugh and other members of the 21st Civil Engineer Squadron, awaits approval from Colorado Springs Utilities.

The Peterson drought plan is to sustain essential mission requirements during the current increased drought conditions.

According to the new drought plan, the goal is to ensure there is adequate water to meet Peterson members' health and safety needs while protecting the environment at the same time.

Base and Colorado Springs water comes from the local Pikes Peak region or from riverbed areas as far as 200 miles away, according to Colorado Springs Utilities.

Colorado Springs Utilities relied on mountain snow from late spring and early summer to fill reservoirs, but this year, Colorado Springs is starving for water.

Water levels are so low that the old Pikes Peak Highway bridge running across Crystal Reservoir—submerged for decades—is now visible.

The base is following the city ordinance drought plan, which limits water supply at certain costs. The plan includes three stages of limited water use.

The city plan determines what stage the community and the base must abide by. Some of the stages interfere with the base's safety requirements needed to maintain industrial missions, such as maintaining aircraft and fire department training use. Other missions affected are service missions, such as lawn maintenance care. Once water is turned off for turf care, the grass can die and it takes more care, money and time to fix landscapes.

Peterson's new plan is now in the approval process and was submitted to Colorado Springs Utilities.

"Peterson's new drought response plan will save taxpayer money. Our plan still mirrors the city plan, including demands and restrictions. However, we say what is mission required and what isn't," said Tim Pugh, 21st CES.

Both the city utilities and civil engineer officials are working together in order to finalize Peterson's plan.

The new drought plan will ensure coordination with

local and state agencies during times of declared drought and conservation.

"We hope to have this new plan effective by mid-June," said Pugh.

Peterson's plan covers four categories of drought response.

The first stage creates public awareness and encourages conservation.

Stage one will limit water use, except that which is required for public health and safety reasons. Restricted use will affect hosing down sidewalks, driveways, and vehicles. Schedules will be announced to let people know when they can run sprinklers and irrigation systems.

Stage two will further restrict outdoor water use to specific hours and days, emphasizing night-time use. All residential and fund-raiser car washing will be prohibited and construction of new lawns and or landscapes will be pro-

hibited.

Penalties will be initiated at stage two. A 'customer hotline' will be available to report violations. The first violation will incur as a warning.

Second and subsequent violations will incur fines, which range from \$50 to \$100, depending on the number of times you are cited.

Stage three is a declared water emergency. Outdoor watering will be limited to sustain large trees only, or when specifically approved by the 21st Space Wing Commander. Stage three penalties incur fines that range from \$50 to \$400 in fines. After the last fine of \$400, city utilities will turn off the service or will restrict water flow.

Civil engineers have already taken proactive measures to work with city utility officials before the base's new drought plan is activated.

Engineers have bought testing kits for toilets and

shower-heads to prevent leaks. Lawn maintenance uses more rock landscaping in places where there is little need for pedestrian traffic and sprinkler systems have been updated to regulate pressure, which covers more area while minimizing the amount of water flow.

Other measures borrowed from the city plan include a golf course and main base restricted irrigation plan and using recycled water for the car wash facility.

According to Pugh, it takes a large amount of water to clean a glass and have it served to a table of patrons at base dining facilities, so we save water use by only providing water upon request during meals.

An effective drought response plan is the responsibility of all Air Force personnel, family members, government civilians and contractors performing work here, said Pugh.

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Tim Pugh
21st Civil Engineer Squadron