October 5, 2020

Storm Mountain Area Residents/Owners and Visitors,

This letter is to support efforts by individuals in our community to retain and repair the Cedar Springs Reservoir and adjoining community owned properties. Though only a few live on or close to this valuable asset to our community, its existence benefits all within our small neighborhood and those in the surrounding areas as well. To allow it to fall into further disrepair and/or potentially allow it to be fully decommissioned would be a terrible mistake we all share responsibility for.

As I Storm Mountain resident of 10 years, I have seen the lake provide the opportunity for our local fire department to save our neighbor’s homes and adjacent structures from further damage from house fires. I have also witnessed its convenient location provide for the quick response and return time for our local fire department and federal fire resource when responding to wildfires in our neighborhood. There is no question in my mind that it’s location and existence prevented the Bobcat fire from burning entirely through our community in 2000. The lake has undoubtedly saved countless homes over the years since from wildfires that have started in the area.

Unfortunately, we have all been subject to the ash and poor air quality from both the Cameron Peak and Mullen fires that are so close to our back doorstep. The existence of the lake will not prevent wildfires or future fires that may force us to evacuate our homes. Speaking from a wildland firefighter’s perspective, I can say with confidence that the lake’s current and future existence will save homes and assist greatly at fighting any fire that starts nearby. It’s extreme value as a water source for fire engines, helicopters and as a pump site to provide for protection of nearby structures cannot be denied. The next viable and close water source would be our cisterns and wells. As many of us know, those are very much finite and limited. The next closest is the Big Thompson River which has few access points for engines and few if any dip sites deep enough for helicopters to use, if they can even fly in the canyon during a fire. The Cedar Springs Reservoir is our water source.

Efforts have been made by the Filing 3&4 Board along with other community members to seek options outside of our own pocket books to repair and maintain the lake and surround properties. One of these options is through grants sought out and managed by a local non profit. Any solution that is found will require our help. As they say, there are no free rides. I am confident that if we all see the multifaceted value of this community resource, we can all help through our donations of dollars or sweat to help retain the lake.

It is my hope that our combined effort along with vested parties outside the community can repair the lake. I also think it is a great opportunity to create plans to preserve the lake for our community well into the future. It has provided for the saving of homes and local forest as well as decreased cost and more effective road maintenance. Cedar Springs Reservoir provides a year round water source for local wildlife that we watch walk through our yards and neighborhood. The lake needs to be repaired and maintained. For what it has provided over the years, I believe we can give a bit back.

Sincerely,

Aaron D. Klee