



Water Augmentation Plans: What and Why

A King's Deer HOA Primer on Water Augmentation

First come, first served.

That's the basic idea behind water rights. The person who made first claim to the water has a water right senior to a person who makes a later claim.

But, having a water right does not mean having *exclusive use* of the water. Water can be used and reused, and thus someone who has junior rights to water can still use the water claimed by someone with more senior rights as long as the water remains available and suitable (e.g.: non-polluted) for the person with senior rights.

For example, you and I might have rights to the same water source, but your rights are senior to mine. Your water is in your pond, fed by a stream that first runs by my ranch that's up the hill a mile or so. You use the water for irrigating your field in the spring and summer. I want to use the same water, upstream of your pond, to turn a waterwheel to produce mechanical motion; my use of the water will not cause harm to you because after turning my waterwheel the water will still be available to you in your pond for irrigation.

However, if instead of using the stream to turn a water waterwheel, I use it to water my garden, I will be consuming some of the water from the stream and thus the water filling your pond will be depleted somewhat. Now, you have been harmed by my use of the water and because you have senior water rights, I'm obliged to restore to your pond the amount of water I've consumed from the stream. This restoration is the essence of *water augmentation*.

Water augmentation is the process by which a person having junior water rights restores water lost to a person having senior water rights.

Continuing with the example, I might agree to dig a well and pump water from the well into your pond. If acceptable to you, we write up an agreement to explain all the details. We now have a water augmentation plan!

All King's Deer wells are permitted and operated under the terms of court-approved water augmentation plans. These plans are available for review on the King's Deer web site, under Library > Governance Documents. If you don't know which plan applies to your well, send an email to water@kingsdeer.org and include your King's Deer property address. We'll let you know the plan that governs your well operation. 