

ARCHULETA COUNTY  
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PAGOSA SPRINGS, CO 81147



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
(970)-264-8300  
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November 5, 2018

Colorado Water Conservation Board  
Ms. Rebecca Mitchell, Director  
Board Members  
1313 Sherman St., Room 718  
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Drought Contingency Plan, Support for West Slope Conservation Districts Letter

Dear Ms. Mitchell and CWCB Directors,

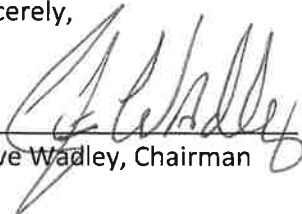
Archuleta County is a part of the Southwestern Water Conservation District, and our board member has informed us about the discussions on Drought Contingency Planning for the states in the Colorado River Basin. The Board of County Commissioners has reviewed and discussed a joint letter sent to the CWCB dated September 17, 2018 by the Southwestern Water Conservation District and the Colorado River District. We believe the two Districts have raised valid concerns on behalf of West Slope communities, and the BOCC would like to express our support for the guidelines that have been suggested in the letter.

Archuleta County has strong historic ties to agricultural water use, and also recognize the importance of reliable domestic drinking water supplies, as well as environmental and recreation uses. The health of our local economy depends on these water uses, as well as the geothermal aquifer underlying much of the area. The San Juan River and its tributaries are the principal source of water, and our reliance on these supplies is tied to the Colorado River and the interstate compacts allocating these flows. The continued drought conditions in the region resulted in a call on the San Juan River for the first time in recent history, and has increased the awareness of the severity of the recent hydrologic conditions and risk to our water supplies.

It is prudent for water managers to develop contingency plans in the event drought conditions in the Colorado River basin continues, but the plans should not result in disproportionate impacts to our western slope communities. Therefore, we encourage the CWCB to adopt State policy that adequately addresses the concerns raised by the two conservation Districts in their September 17th letter prior to endorsing federal legislation for a Drought Contingency Plan for Colorado.

We value the role the Colorado Water Conservation Board plays in advocating on behalf of Coloradoans statewide, and thank you for the consideration of Archuleta County's perspective.

Sincerely,



Steve Wadley, Chairman

cc: J.R. Ford, Southwestern Water Conservation District