



County Commissioners:

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Board of County Commissioners

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County Administrator:

Melissa A. Brunner

October 16, 2018

CWCB Board Members
CWCB Director Mitchell
(James Ecklund, Colorado Commissioner to the UCRC)
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman St., Room 718
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Drought Planning on the Colorado River

Dear Colorado Water Conservation Board of Directors and Commissioner Ecklund;

The Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners have been briefed on the Drought Plan through the webinar hosted by CWCB, we have also heard from the public through the Southwest Basin Roundtable, and we are becoming deeply concerned about the possible implementation of a program to reduce consumptive uses in Colorado. We now feel compelled to write to you on behalf of the citizens of our county.

The Mancos and Dolores Rivers coming out of the San Juan Mountains provide the lifeblood for Montezuma County residents. The agriculture that is served by the water that flows through McPhee Reservoir to Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company and Dolores Project users from the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe north into Dolores County is the real foundation of our area's economy and vitality. We have been following the discussions about Drought Contingency Planning for the states that rely on Colorado River supplies. We are evaluating the possible impacts to the water uses and supplies that our communities rely on and our concern is growing.

The Commissioners have also been provided a copy of a letter and draft resolution sent to the CWCB by the Colorado River District and the Southwestern Water Conservation District regarding the Drought Contingency Plan. We support the request made by the Districts and respectfully ask the State to adopt those principles and sideboards, prior to Colorado's approval of the Drought Contingency Plan, and before seeking federal or state legislation.

At a minimum, any program implemented by Colorado should be limited to voluntary participation, with adequate compensation provided for the reduced water uses and to offset economic impacts to our communities. Any voluntary reductions should also include contributions from trans-mountain diversions for uses on the east slope. The Commissioners do not support mandatory reductions for Demand Management, as has been suggested by some entities on the front-range, unless the Upper Basin States have not met Compact requirements.

Thank you for considering our comments, and once again we are expressing our support for the letter submitted by the west slope Conservation Districts.

The Montezuma County Board of County Commissioners

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