

We Get Letters

Colorado water should be returned to state

Last week was a busy one. Friends were working to show the Bureau of Reclamation just how important it is for our basin to have continuation of the historic operational practice of the Aspinall Unit. They were also studying Colorado Supreme Court's decision on Arapahoe County's Union Park proposed project.

The Aspinall Unit stores and releases water to serve the many purposes set out for it by Congress. So far while doing this, it has successfully met the needs of existing downstream water users, as was anticipated in the initial design and in arguments given by those supporting the project. Historic operations of the unit have kept calls

by senior rights downstream of the unit from shutting off water users with junior rights in our Upper Basin above the unit. This makes sense, has worked since 1965, and given continuation of the historic use and depletion of water in our Upper Basin.

It should continue into the future. Importantly it also gives the Bureau valued flexibility in operating the three reservoirs in the Aspinall Unit.

The flexibility is likely to be more significant to the Bureau in the future as more peaking power is produced by the generators at Blue Mesa and Morrow Point Dams. It also helps the Bureau fit together new flows requirements for recovery of endangered fish and the Black

Canyon National Monument with existing requirements. Much farther downstream, the high quality water coming from our Upper Gunnison Basin helps to reduce the Bureau's very significant costs for dealing with salinity problems.

In short, water from our basin is used many times over and very beneficially, in stream and out of stream, as it flows westward. It then contributes toward satisfaction of our state's obligations under the Colorado River Compact.

The total economic value from these many uses, services, and purposes for water flowing downward through our basin is too often overlooked by proponents of new transmountain

diversions from our headwaters.

Before recent heavy snowfalls, some on the East Slope thought dry conditions and a prolonged drought would teach a lesson to Colorado's newcomers. When they experienced a real drought, they might then support building of more high altitude reservoirs

However, growth isn't always drawn to water. Many places now anticipating growth and scrambling for water on the Front Ranger seemingly have enough available for the very careful use appropriate in a dry climate. Do they really need more?

If more water is then really needed, its time to seriously consider returning water in the

major rivers from sites at the state's borders for reuse in Colorado. This is water to which Colorado is entitled. It could be pumped back and delivered where needed, as needed - but only after first flowing through its basin of origin. The return of this water for reuse in Colorado should be done by the state and from a statewide, not local, perspective to increase beneficial water utilization.

Taylor Trout

Resident questions rec center

Dear Editor,

I am of the opinion that those citizens of Gunnison and some members of the city administration are misinterpreting the results of the proposed recreation center survey sent out with recent utility bills and the telephone survey conducted by someone at WSC (Western State College).

It is difficult to arrive at a statement of either need or want by the populace when in the utility bill survey 580 questionnaires were sent out and only 206 responded; of those, only 126

How to reach them:
o President Bill Clinton
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20500
(202) 456-1414

o U.S. Sen. Ben Nighthorse
Campbell
1129 Pennsylvania St
Denver, Colorado 80203
(303) 866-1900/ fax 866-1919

o U.S. Sen. Hank Brown
1200 17th Street
Suite 2727
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 844-2600

o U.S. Rep. Scott McInnis
512 Cannon St.
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 226-0622/ fax 225 4761

Where to Write Officials

**WE'VE GOT THE MONEY
IF YOU'VE GOT THE TIME.**

POWER

3/9/95

Butch, Ramon PCK Paul Judy
Joe Gerald.

Tyler's letter to the Bd - 3-8-95.

Get ^{tyler} to obtain possession of Beechey
files

* Will permits can be brought up to date
to Gerald sheet from St Eury

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