

Remember Title XV

San Luis Valley Water Protection Act?

In 1992, the U.S. Congress under President George Bush passed the Omnibus Water Bill of which Title XV was part. Then Senator Tim Wirth introduced and carried the bill, also known as the "Wirth anti-American Water Development Bill". The bill was written to protect federal projects with water rights in the San Luis Valley including the Closed Basin Project, The Alamosa and Monte Vista Wildlife Refuges or the Great Sand Dunes National Monument.

Title XV, basically, gives the Secretary of the Interior the right to refuse any needed federal permits to any organization or business seeking to export water from the San Luis Valley if the Secretary feels the water loss will hurt federal water rights in the

projects mentioned above.

This bill does not absolutely prevent ground water development. The Secretary of the Interior could, after sufficient study, find that a particular development did not have adverse consequences on designated federal facilities and allow it to go forward.

Valley water exportation, because of its billion dollar profit potential, has not deterred other potential investors, such as Farallon Capital Management, Inc., who have a partnership with Stockman's Water Co., even though Title XV has been passed by Congress and signed by the President. Political influence in these matters is very delicate, and that is why more legislation is being introduced in the state. (see HB-1214)

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Landowners handbook available

A group of public and private agencies has produced "Landowning Colorado Style," a guide for rural landowners. Topics covered: getting along with rural neighbors, water rights and water quality, wildlife, homesite

planning, weeds, forest management, grazing and soils. Copies are available for \$1 each from the Colorado Association of Soil Conservation Districts, 3000 Youngfield, Ste. 163, Lakewood, CO 80215. (303) 232-6242.