



Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

220 Water Avenue • Berthoud, CO 80513 • 970-532-7700 • fax 970-532-0942 • www.ncwcd.org

WATERNEWS

Brian Werner, Public Information Officer • direct 970-622-2229 • e-mail bwerner@ncwcd.org

Cell 970-481-2927

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BERTHOUD – Citing a desire to combat low soil moisture conditions, the Board of Directors of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District declared at its meeting Friday an 80-percent quota for Colorado-Big Thompson Project water. This is an increase of 20 percent from the initial quota set in November 2005.

Friday marked the 50th time the Board has declared quota in April.

The 80-percent quota means C-BT allottees will receive eight-tenths of an acre-foot for every unit they own. The 80-percent quota will make available 248,000 acre feet of Colorado River water in the coming months for agricultural, municipal and industrial users in the District. An acre foot equals nearly 326,000 gallons of water, which is approximately the amount used by two urban families in one year.

The Board set the initial quota at 60 percent in November. On Friday, the Directors discussed balancing the desire to build up C-BT storage versus the immediate needs of water users within the eight-county District service area.

The Board indicated a desire to help farmers who are dealing with low soil moisture conditions. Board member Bill Emslie said, “We’ve got pretty dry conditions here on the plains. It just makes more sense to replenish the soil moisture.”

With the ongoing drought the Board has had to set the quota considering water availability in recent years. This year they were able to return to the traditional method. Board President Mike Applegate noted, “The Board was able to set the quota the old-fashioned way based on demand.”

C-BT storage is above average for the first time since 2000. As of April 1, snowpack in the Upper Colorado River basin was 101 percent of average. Overall inflows to the C-BT’s west slope collection system are projected to be 99 percent of average.

Lake Granby, the system’s largest collection reservoir, was at 53 percent of total capacity April 1, up from 24 percent at the same time last year. Total storage in the project as of the beginning of April was 512,651 acre feet, which is 2 percent above average.

The initial C-BT quota is set in November each year and revisited the following April. The board considers snowpack, runoff and estimated direct diversions while striving to balance the region’s water needs with the amount available in the C-BT Project and local storage reserves.