

STUDY SHOWS DIVERTING YAMPA WATER COULD HELP COLORADO MEET FUTURE WATER DEMAND

Investigation commissioned by Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District suggests more than 300,000 acre-feet of water could be delivered annually

- This summer, the NCWCD board of directors commissioned the consulting firm of Black & Veatch to conduct a multi-basin investigation as the District looks for ways to minimize the dry-up of farmland in northeastern Colorado.
- The investigation looked at the possibility of diverting water from the Yampa River below Maybell. The diversion point would be downstream of all major Yampa water rights for irrigation, municipal and industrial uses.
- The Statewide Water Supply Initiative projects the South Platte Basin will need an additional 400,000 acre-feet of water for municipal and industrial use by 2030. The same study predicts between 133,000 and 226,000 acres of farmland in the South Platte Basin will be dried up by 2030. The study identifies a potential alternative that would meet some of the demand and prevent some of the dry-up.
- The study suggests the project could yield more than 300,000 acre-feet of water annually. That water would be delivered through a series of pumps, pipes and tunnels. A 500,000 acre-foot off-channel reservoir would be built near Maybell to produce the firm yield.
- This project could benefit at least five river basins within the state – Yampa, North Platte, South Platte, Arkansas and Colorado – by providing additional water directly or by exchange.
- The study estimates it would cost \$3.2 billion, or about \$11,000 per acre-foot, to deliver 300,000 acre-feet of water to the northern Front Range and \$3.9 billion, or about \$13,000 per acre-foot, to deliver the water to the Denver area. This compares very favorably to cost projections for projects Denver metro water suppliers are considering.
- The project would only take water out of the Yampa that is currently flowing out of state. It would divert about 20 percent of the Yampa River water that now leaves Colorado.
- The District does not intend this to be an NCWCD project but believes in order for the Yampa diversion to become a reality, it will require the cooperation of many entities and likely the State of Colorado.

ISSUES/CONCERNS WITH DIVERTING YAMPA WATER

- Q: Will the proposed project dry up the Yampa River at the point of diversion?
A: The project would never divert water if it meant flows in the river would be less than 1,000 cubic feet per second. During spring runoff, the Yampa's flow often exceeds 6,000 cubic feet per second. The project would never divert more than 2,000 cubic feet per second.

Q: What would the quality be of the water delivered by the project?

A: The study indicates the supply would be of high water quality – comparable to the quality of the water in the tributaries to the South Platte River.

QUOTES

“The District is committed to searching for ways to prevent more and more farms from being dried up while at the same time providing benefits for the state as a whole. We believe this study shows real promise, and the project definitely warrants further consideration.” – Eric Wilkinson, General Manager, NCWCD

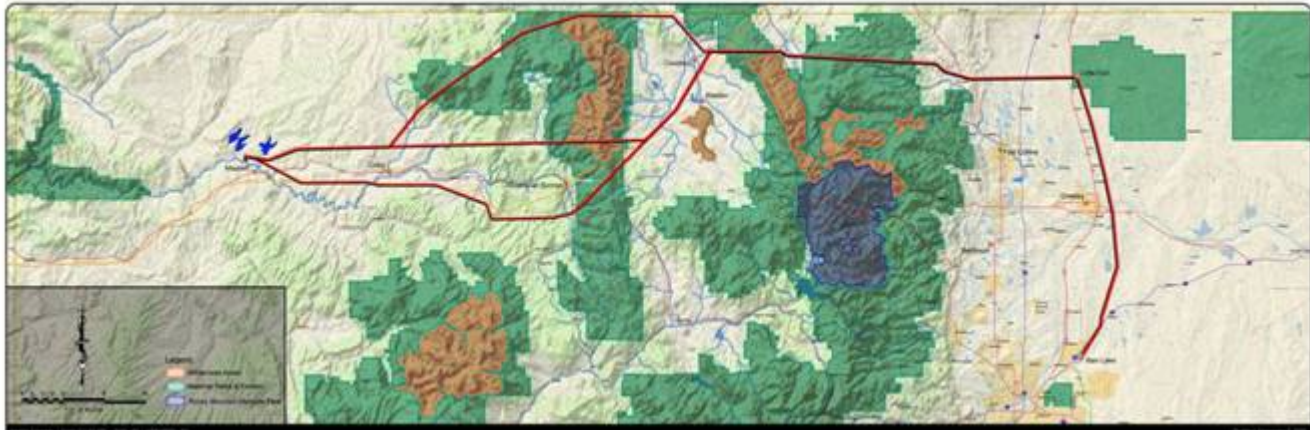
“Because of the volume of water involved, even though the price tag for the project is large, the cost of the water per acre-foot is what folks are paying right now – and in some cases much cheaper.” – Carl Brouwer, Project Manager, NCWCD

“These sorts of projects, transporting water hundreds of miles, are done in other western states. We’re looking at doing what other states have been doing for a long time.” – Carl Brouwer, Project Manager, NCWCD

The executive summary of the Black & Veatch study will be available for download at www.ncwcd.org by Jan. 2. If you want a disc containing the full report, please contact Brian Werner after Jan. 2.

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The pictures below are also attached as jpegs.



Pictured are three possible pipeline routes to bring water from the Yampa River near Maybell to the Front Range.



This is the spot on the Yampa River the study identifies as the possible diversion point.



This is the location the study identifies as the potential dam site.