



PROTECTING THE WEST'S LAND, AIR, AND WATER

Time to Implement Colorado's Water Plan to Secure Our Water Future

Colorado's Water Plan was finalized in November 2015. It can set a course for a secure water future to preserve what we love about Colorado. But we must ensure implementation of the plan, especially those parts that reflect the overwhelming public support for protecting our rivers, accelerating urban conservation, improving aging agricultural infrastructure, and making water management more flexible. State leaders must take five essential actions in 2016.

Accelerate Water Conservation

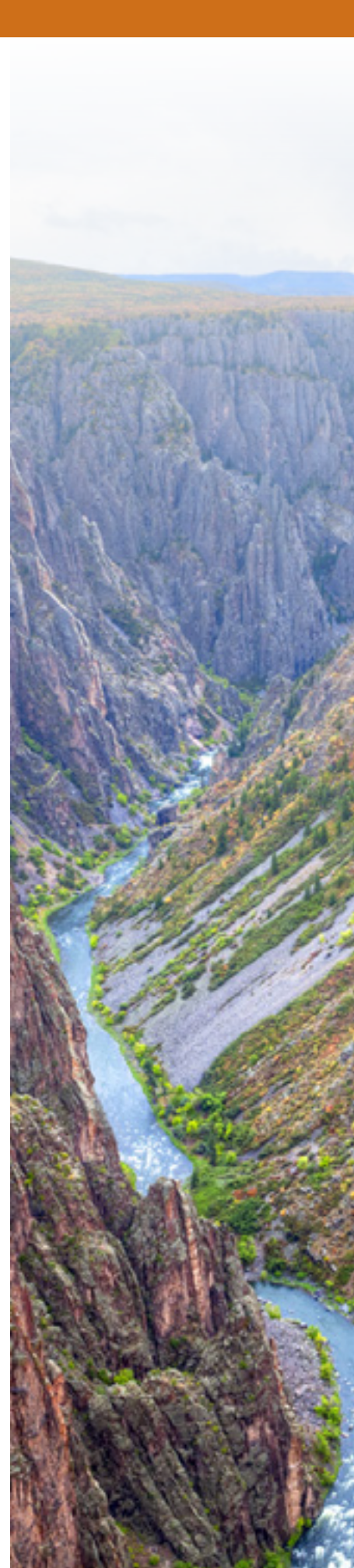
Governor Hickenlooper says: "The conversation starts with water conservation!" Colorado's legislature and agencies must increase conservation funding fourfold to provide technical assistance for water utilities to help reach the plan's urban conservation goal of 400,000 acre-feet, equal to 3 million households per year. The state can lead by example if it implements the Governor's Executive Order to reduce state facility water use by 7% within the next 5 years. Local governments can accelerate water-smart land use planning, and water utilities can reduce water loss and accelerate other water conservation programs.

Improve the Health of Our Rivers

River health provides the foundation for our environment, wildlife, and a multi-billion dollar recreation economy. To protect healthy rivers—a key priority for Coloradans—we must increase annual funding to \$3 million for communities to create stream management plans that identify ways to protect their local rivers. Then Colorado and community stakeholders need to put these plans into action, which will take additional funds and political will.

Use Water Plan's "Criteria" Checklist to Focus State Funding

The state funds water projects each year—and we need to ensure those projects are good for our rivers, economy, and communities. The state should use the Colorado Water Plan's full criteria checklist to ensure state-funded projects protect our rivers, incorporate local communities' input, and are cost effective.





8 in 10

western voters say low levels of water and drought are greater problems than the economy in the West today

93% of colorado voters are willing to
REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION BY 20%



77%
of Colorado voters support using our current water supply more wisely through
CONSERVATION AND RECYCLING

Source: **The Colorado College** State of the Rockies Project, *2016 Conservation in the West Poll*

Keep Our Agricultural Heritage

Colorado agriculture is a key part of the state's heritage and Coloradans feel strongly about preserving rural economies with working landscapes. By providing incentives to improve aging water infrastructure and new policies such as water banking, Colorado can improve flexibility in voluntary water management and support our rich agricultural tradition. The state should support increasing the use of alternative water transfer programs that benefit irrigators, communities, and the environment.

Ensure Storage Does Not Mean Large Trans-Mountain Diversions

Colorado does not need, nor do a majority of Colorado voters want, additional large dams and diversions, especially not diversions from the West Slope to the Front Range. We must instead use already-developed resources more wisely, expand some existing storage, increase conservation, and implement more flexible approaches to water management.

Implementation Requires All of Us and Requires Action Now

It's a key time for our leaders—from Governor Hickenlooper, to Colorado Legislators, and the Colorado Water Conservation Board—to implement the plan. At the same time urban residents, business owners, recreationists, and farmers are critical in shaping our water future. We are all in this together and have a role to play. This first year will set the course for reaching the plan's goals. It's time to get to work—to turn the plan and our resources into action.

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