



---

## General Assembly State of Colorado Denver

October 6, 2009

Colonel Robert J. Ruch  
Omaha District Commander  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Omaha District  
1616 Capitol Avenue  
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Colonel Ruch:

As Colorado legislators, we strongly believe Colorado must address the water shortages that have been identified by Colorado's Department of Natural Resources in its ongoing Statewide Water Supply Initiative (SWSI). Fortunately, the Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP) will make a significant contribution to addressing the water shortfall in Northern Colorado, save many acres of agriculture and is "shovel ready."

NISP has been carefully planned for more than two decades. It has broad community support, including a commitment of \$450 million in financing, and is now in the final stages of environmental review. NISP will provide 40,000 acre-feet of firm yield water in two off-stream reservoirs, preserving 60,000 acres of irrigated farmland and helping meet the municipal and industrial water needs in the region. The project is the result of cooperation among 15 local water providers representing more than 200,000 Northern Colorado residents.

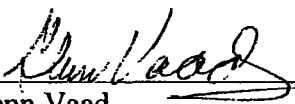
In late June, more than 300 farm families and organizations representing the state's multi-billion dollar agricultural industry met in Weld County to endorse the project and encourage its swift approval to preserve Colorado agriculture. A key point voiced at the rally was that even though the wet spring and summer this year resulted in thousands of acre-feet of surplus water, without reservoirs to store the water for use in our more typical dry years, that water flowed out of the state and was lost as a resource. The point was confirmed in a recent study showing that more than 50,000 acre-feet of Colorado water could have been stored in the two proposed NISP reservoirs.


The project has been carefully planned and designed to address the region's water shortage while protecting and enhancing the riparian environment. The NISP participants support the environmental study process and have authorized independent studies by a nationally respected engineering firm that show no negative impact on water quality. The project proponents believe correctly, in our view, that a collaborative approach is best.

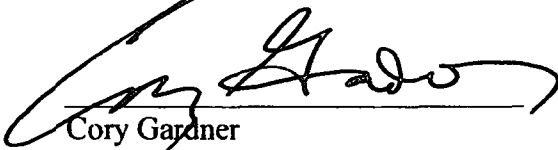
We urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies responsible for the environmental reviews to avoid delay and complete their work in an expeditious manner. Environmental reviews have already consumed \$6 million of legal and engineering expenses and taken six years.

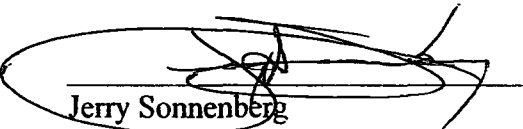
We strongly believe NISP is essential and will provide Northern Colorado another important tool to address the future water needs of the region. Much like the foresight of the region's residents more than a half century ago when the Colorado-Big Thompson Project was constructed, NISP will address Northern Colorado water needs for years to come. We need NISP now.

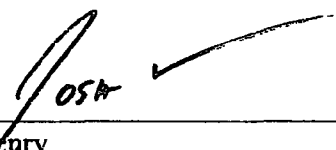
Sincerely,

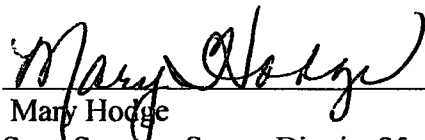
  
Glenn Vaad  
State Representative, House District 48

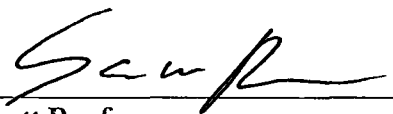
  
B.J. Nikke  
State Representative, House District 49


  
Cory Gardner  
State Representative, House District 63

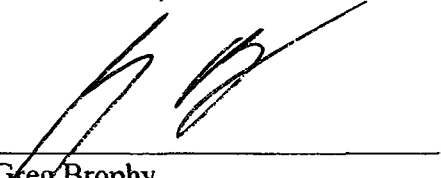
  
Jerry Sonnenberg  
State Representative, House District 65


  
Josh Perry  
State Senator, Senate District 7

  
Mary Hodge  
State Senator, Senate District 25

  
Scott Renfro  
State Senator, Senate District 13

  
Kevin Lundberg  
State Senator, Senate District 15

  
Greg Brophy  
State Senator, Senate District 1

  
Kevin Priola  
State Representative, House District 30

Lois Tochtrop  
Lois Tochtrop  
State Senator, Senate District 24

Jim Riesberg  
Jim Riesberg  
State Representative, House District 50

Bruce Whitehead  
Bruce Whitehead  
State Senator, Senate District 6