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EPA has Glade concerns

Foes say it could devastate project; supporters say they're a step ahead

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An environmental study of Glade Reservoir and the Northern Integrated Supply Project offers "insufficient information" and does not adequately describe the project's impacts, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for NISP, which would include Glade Reservoir, EPA officials said they are concerned about the project's impact on water quality, stream morphology and wetlands.

Opponents of Glade said the EPA's comments validate what they've been saying all along: Scientific analysis doesn't support the project.

"The EPA is saying the same thing," said Gary Wockner, spokesman for the Save the Poudre Coalition.

"There are major environmental problems with this project, and participants should be considering alternatives that are less damaging."

Wockner said the agency's comments could portend a veto of the project if it is permitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

But Glade supporters say the comments are just part of the process of developing a final EIS for the project, which would provide water for 15 regional municipalities and water districts.

"We're already working with EPA to address their concerns," said Brian Werner, spokesman for the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District. "There is no fatal flaw here."

Glade Reservoir would be built north of Ted's Place and draw from the Poudre River, primarily during times of peak flow. The reservoir would hold 170,000 acre-feet of water, about the same as Horsetooth Reservoir.

The EPA's comments are among several hundred received on the project. The agency takes issue with several areas of the draft EIS, including its analysis of impacts of Glade on the Poudre, the South Platte River and Horsetooth Reservoir.

The draft document also does not support the contention that Northern Water's plan for Glade is the "least environmentally damaging practicable alternative" for NISP, according to the EPA.

Studies by the city of Fort Collins and other entities have raised concerns about how the project would affect the Poudre's water quality through the city and on to its confluence with the South Platte at Greeley.

Werner said Glade proponents "are very comfortable the water-quality issues can be dealt with" in the final EIS for the project.

The draft EIS is so flawed the Corps "should start all over" with a new analysis, Wockner said. The EPA's view of the document is "extremely significant," he said.

"I think this is potentially devastating for the entire project," he said. "The participants would do well to pay attention to what the EPA says."

Additional Facts

On the Internet

> **Draft EIS documents on the Northern Integrated Supply Project, including comments:**
www.nwo.usace.army.mil/html/od-tl/eis-info.htm (Note: Link may require you to install a "DoD Certificate" to view the site.)

> **Northern Water:** www.ncwcd.org

> **Save the Poudre:** www.savethepoudre.org

> **Coloradoan's special report on Glade:** www.coloradoan.com/glade
