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Glade debate heats up at forum

Discussion centered on impact the project might have on Poudre as it courses through Fort Collins

BY KEVIN DUGGAN
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Sharply divided opinions on the need for and potential impact of the proposed Glade Reservoir flowed freely Monday during a forum on the controversial project.

A standing-room-crowd of more than 150 people packed a room at the student center of Front Range Community College for a panel discussion that featured Glade opponents and supporters. Audience members heard contradictory and sometimes emotional statements from participants.

Gary Wockner, a spokesman for the anti-Glade organization Save the Poudre Coalition, said the reservoir would take more water from the river during peak-flow periods than it can bear to lose.

"This project will make every year on the Poudre a dry year," he said.

Supporters of the reservoir said it is needed to meet the future water needs of growing Northern Colorado communities. If water can't be taken from the river, it will come from agricultural lands, said Brian Werner, spokesman for the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, which would build the reservoir.

Glade, which would be built north of Ted's Place and draw water from the Poudre using an existing diversion canal, will not have the dire consequences opponents claim, Werner said.

"This project can't and won't dry up the Poudre River," he said.

The reservoir is part of the Northern Integrated Supply Project or NISP. The project would include Galeton Reservoir, which would be built northeast of Greeley, as well as a network of pipelines and pumping facilities.

It would deliver 40,000 acre feet of water a year to the 15 communities and water districts participating in its development, including the Fort Collins-Loveland Water District.

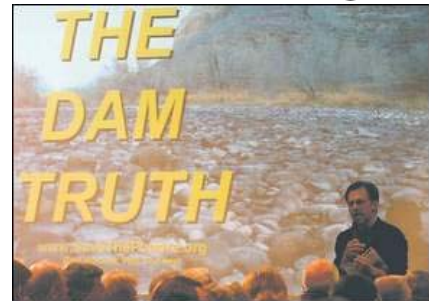
An acre foot is 325,900 gallons, enough to supply two urban households for a year.

Water would be taken from the river near the mouth of Poudre Canyon through the Poudre Valley Canal during periods of high flow in the late spring and early summer. Water would be carried to a holding bay before being pumped uphill to the reservoir.

The reservoir's water would be delivered to participating communities by pipelines or exchanges among Front Range water suppliers.

Galeton Reservoir would hold 40,000 acre feet of water pulled from the South Platte River. Part of Galeton's water would be pumped west to irrigation

Zoom Photo



Michael G. Seamans/The Coloradoan

Ecologist Gary Wockner, Ph.D., discusses ecological impact of damming the Poudre River for the proposed Glade Reservoir on Monday during his presentation to citizens at Front Range Community College's Student Center in Fort Collins.

Zoom Photo



Michael G. Seamans/The Coloradoan

Dolores Williams, from far left, Raedene Combs and Sheila Jardine listen to panel speakers Monday at Front Range Community College in Fort Collins during a community discussion about damming the Poudre River for the proposed Glade Reservoir.

By the numbers

Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP)

- > **170,000 acre feet** - capacity of Glade Reservoir
- > **40,000 acre feet** - capacity of Galeton Reservoir
- > **Five miles** - length of Glade
- > **260 feet** - depth of Glade
- > **\$193 million** - cost of building Glade
- > **\$37 million** - cost to relocate U.S. Highway 287



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ditches coming off the Poudre River in exchange for water diverted into Glade.

Much of Monday's discussion centered on the impact the project might have on the Poudre as it courses through Fort Collins. Opponents said taking away the high flows would harm the river's ecosystem.

"We need to improve the river, not further degrade it at this point," said Mark Easter of the Poudre Canyon Group of the Sierra Club.

Supporters, including Bill Brown, a Fort Collins water attorney and member of the conservancy district's board of directors, said the impact of lessened flow could be mitigated in a number of ways.

A draft environmental impact statement on the project is expected to be released by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on April 30. The document will detail what needs to be done if the reservoir were to be approved by federal officials.

"To the extent of the environmental impact on the river we are going to have to address those (issues) for this project to be built, and we fully recognize that," Brown said.

The panel discussion was sponsored by the Fort Collins Regional Library District.

> **\$405 million** - projected total cost of NISP

> **2015** - the year water could start flowing into Glade

Information

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

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

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STORYCHAT

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Comments by: **Scuba Diver**

Posted: Tue Apr 08, 2008 7:30 am

Thanks Snowyco, but I believe that immigration means inflow and emigration refers to people leaving. If I move to Canada I am an emigrant from the US and an immigrant as far as Canada is concerned - if I remember by grade school history class correctly.

Growth does seem to be an issue to many in this state but as a person who emigrated from Illinois to Colorado in 1994 it really seems ludicrous. There are fewer people in this state that is 400 miles by 300 miles in dimension than there were in a circle of 50 mile radius that had its center in the loop in Chicago for heaven's sake. Besides, if one really wanted to stop growth he would be screaming against the Democratic plan to have a single payer health insurance funded by taxes in this state. That will draw millions of immigrants from the other 48 who don't offer such a thing. Did you read the article in the NY Times about how Massachussets (never could spell that word) is floundering with theirs even with the enormous number of medical schools and doctors - and their program requires people to buy their own insurance, not just to be handed it by right. The influx of millions of immigrants will be complemented with the emigration of doctors who would be working far more hours with less pay of course. Forget that there is already a nursing shortage, they also will leave.

But I digress, the issue is growth because of water availability. Water is a precious Colorado resource and should not be allowed to freely flow out of the state to those who don't have rights to it - (I know they have rights but they get far more than they are owed since we have no way of apportioning it.) Last year, like this year, we had an above average snowpack. Then it got warm up there in May and much snow melted. The Colorado farmers/ranchers were not needing their shares yet so it flowed out of state. Later the farmers/ranchers took what they had rights to and we ended up in shortage again. We need places to store it. Very simple truth darn it, and it is time we quit letting stupid people with agendas get away with destroying our way of life in this state.

Comments by: **LostinParadise**

Posted: Tue Apr 08, 2008 7:24 am

As I have mentioned prior, this isn't about water, it is about money. They aren't going to be giving that water away for free. It is about growth, i.e. money. Developers can't develop the front range as much as the would like without further water supplies. They, including the City of FC aren't eager for us to conserve water to protect the environment, but rather to allow for further development. If you will notice, they want to penalize us for using too much water, but are more than willing to allow new development. The net conservation of water is then less than zero, or increased water usage.

It is illegal to sell beach front property in Colorado but perfectly legal to buy and sell water rights to water that doesn't exist.

Comments by: **snowyco**

Posted: Tue Apr 08, 2008 6:54 am

It may help clarify and better focus the discussion if the posters used the word emigration (citizens moving within a country) versus "immigration" (citizens moving from one country into another country). The Californication of Colorado is emigration.

Comments by: **mikeM**

Posted: Tue Apr 08, 2008 5:57 am

Immigration is a small percentage of the population growth of America. Try Catholics, Mormons and fundamentalists. Population growth on a local,