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## Glade Project Suffers a Blow

BY [REBECCA BOYLE](#),

One of Colorado's most controversial water projects took a hit last week after federal authorities said they needed to take a second, closer look.

The Northern Integrated Supply Project, known as NISP or the Glade Reservoir project, could be set back another two years after the Army Corps of Engineers said its second study won't be done until June 2010.

The Army Corps said it will conduct a supplemental study of NISP, a \$420 million plan to divert spring runoff from the Poudre River and store it in a new reservoir to be built north of Ted's Place. A second reservoir planned in Galeton would allow additional use of South Platte River water, in a project designed to preserve agricultural land while providing drinking water to thirsty, growing Front Range cities.

"There are some areas in the original analysis that require revision and additional study," said Monique Farmer, a spokeswoman for the Army Corps.

The Corps spent several months reviewing more than 2,000 questions and comments about the plan submitted by residents, local governments and environmental activists.

The cities of Fort Collins and Greeley expressed concern about water quality; environmental activists worried about riparian wildlife; and hydrologists were concerned the initial Environmental Impact Study didn't adequately address the plan's potential cumulative impacts, among many other issues.

"The whole reason we are going back and doing the supplemental is because some of the issues that came up in the comments that were received, we hadn't considered," Farmer said. "So this is more of a time for us to refine some things."

Environmental activists said it was akin to putting lipstick on a pig, however.

"We believe there were major flaws with the EIS, but if they are just again re-analyzing the same project, we don't see this necessarily as a positive step," said Gary Wockner, spokesman for the Save the Poudre Coalition, which has been fighting Glade. "We believe that the diversion, the taking the water out of the river and building that reservoir, is the wrong thing to do."

The Poudre group favors a "Healthy Rivers Alternative," which would include conservation programs to avoid taking extra water out of the river.

Wockner said the group wants the Corps to study that alternative along with the four alternatives it initially studied.

Farner said the Corps would "primarily focus on the main four alternatives," but added elements of the healthy rivers plan had already been addressed.

Brian Werner, a spokesman for the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, which wants to build NISP, said the 15 communities and water districts involved are still energized and want to move forward.

But he acknowledged that a supplemental EIS was a setback.

"We're into our 5th year now of this environmental permitting process. The participants have spent almost \$6 million, and we're not there yet," he said. "Despite the frustrations of the process, which is just part and parcel of the process, we can't speed it up; this is what we live with. But we still have a project that can and should be built. That's the bottom line."

The Corps expects its supplemental study to be done in June 2010, followed by another three-month window for public input. Werner said if that's the case, it could be 2017 before water fills a new reservoir in Northern Colorado.

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