

**For Immediate Release**

Save The Poudre Coalition

<http://www.SaveThePoudre.org>

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## **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "Objects" to NISP/Glade**

### **Comment letter says cities should consider other alternatives, including conservation Veto Likely?**

**Fort Collins, CO** -- In a 24-page stinging rebuke of the Northern Integrated Supply Project's Glade Reservoir Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the United States EPA has graded the project as having "Environmental Objections -- Insufficient Information." This grade is one of the worst the EPA can give. In fact, over the last year, the Denver regional office of the EPA has only given such a bad grade to 3 out of 133 DEIS documents. Stated differently, the NISP DEIS is worse than 98% of the DEIS documents EPA reviewed in the past year.

The comment letter says this: "EPA believes that the DEIS does not support the Proposed Action [NISP/Glade] as the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. EPA is concerned that alternatives exist that would have less adverse impacts to the aquatic environment, specifically alternatives which include agricultural-municipal leases and long-term transfers, and conservation." (page 10-11)

The U.S. EPA has final "veto" authority over NISP/Glade as it also had over a similar failed reservoir proposal called "Two Forks" in the 1990's west of Denver. Two Forks was vetoed by the EPA because Denver Water (the project's proponent) did not adequately address other alternatives -- including conservation -- to meet its water supply needs.

After EPA vetoed Two Forks, Denver Water began implementing water conservation programs. In its comment letter on NISP/Glade, EPA may foreshadow the ultimate demise of this project when it says, "Given the arid nature of the west, conservation will play an increasingly critical role in allowing for a sustainable water future...Other water utilities such as Denver Water have supported this perspective by identifying conservation as one area of focus for securing their future water supply." (page 11)

**"The NISP ship is sinking fast," said Gary Wockner, spokesperson for the Save The Poudre Coalition. "If I were a NISP-subscribing city, I'd take EPA's advice as soon as possible. Draining the Poudre River -- which is what NISP/Glade will do -- is not a viable alternative."**

The EPA comment letter also offers over 20 pages of intense scientific scrutiny of the DEIS. Every page contains phrases highly critical of the document, such as:

- DEIS may not adequately address
- exacerbate existing water quality impairments
- they do not address
- nor do they adequately document or analyze
- neither the DEIS nor supporting reports provided sufficient information
- may cause or contribute to further water quality standards exceedences
- has not provided sufficient information to determine compliance
- Etc.

"It's great to see sound scientific analysis of the DEIS," said Mark Easter, Chair of the Save The Poudre Coalition. "The NISP DEIS is so fatally flawed that it needs to be completely thrown out. They wasted 4 years and \$4 million -- they need to start all over again."

The Save The Poudre Coalition has offered an alternative to NISP/Glade that directly agrees with EPA's conclusion. Called the "Healthy Rivers Alternative" (HRA), the Coalition is requesting that the Army Corps of Engineers insert the Healthy Rivers Alternative into its future analysis of this project.

The HRA is cheaper than NISP, will better protect agriculture, will protect the Poudre River, and will allow cities to get the water they need through win-win solutions on a pay-as-you-go basis rather than a 30-year debt-ridden scheme.

The EPA's comment letter is signed by Carol Rushin, Acting Regional Administrator, US EPA Region 8, Denver CO, 800-227-8917.

**1. The EPA's comment letter and the Save The Poudre Coalition's Healthy Rivers Alternative is [available here for download](#).**

**2. The EPA's comment letter also available [here on the Army Corps' website, as comment #651](#) (you'll have to scroll down to get to it).**

**3. All of the public comments on NISP/Glade DEIS are posted [here on the Army Corps' website](#).**

The NISP/Glade DEIS has now generated extremely critical comments from the City of Fort Collins, City of Greeley, Larimer County, State of Colorado, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Save The Poudre Coalition is made up of 13 national, state, and regional groups including Clean Water Action, Defenders of Wildlife, American Rivers, Western Resource Advocates, Colorado Environmental Coalition, Environment Colorado, Sierra Club – Rocky Mountain Chapter, Fort Collins Audubon Society, Citizen Planners, Wolverine Farm Publishing, Poudre Paddlers, Friends of the Poudre, Cache la Poudre River Foundation. Membership in these groups totals over 2 million American citizens.

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