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<http://SaveThePoudre.org>

SAVE THE POUUDRE SEEKS IMPROVEMENTS IN INTERBASIN COMPACT COMMITTEE PROCESS AND PRODUCT

STP Letter to Governor Ritter and Governor-elect Hickenlooper Says IBCC Lacks Diversity, Needs More Environmental Input

Fort Collins, CO -- Last week, a much-awaited draft report of the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) was delivered to Governor Ritter and Governor-elect Hickenlooper. The IBCC was established by the Colorado state legislature in 2005 and has been working since to create a plan for Colorado's water supply future. The letter and IBCC draft report to the Governor and Governor-elect are here:

<http://cwcwebelink.state.co.us/weblink/0/doc/146566/Electronic.aspx?searchid=e0e845ca-f8c6-4efd-8e75-df2d9bf3a9d9>

Save the Poudre: Poudre Waterkeeper followed the IBCC process and reviewed the report, and then offered recommendations to the Governor and Governor-elect for how the IBCC's future work can be improved.

Save the Poudre's letter to the Governor and Governor-elect is here: <http://savethepoudre.org/stp-correspondence/2010-12-17-stp-letter-to-govs-ritter-and-hickenlooper-about-ibcc.pdf>

First, Save the Poudre (STP) informed the Governor and Governor-elect that the IBCC's policies would likely impact the Poudre River more than any other river in the state. Several new dam and reservoir projects are proposed that will impact the Poudre River including the Northern Integrated Supply Project, the Halligan Reservoir Project, the Seaman Reservoir Project, the Bellvue Pipe, and the Windy Gap Firming Project.

"The Poudre River is at 'Ground Zero' for river destruction in the Southwest U.S.," said Gary Wockner, Director of Save the Poudre. "We want the Governor and Governor-elect to know that the IBCC's words may have serious impacts on the Poudre River -- this is very real to us; it's not just some nebulous state-level policy document."

Second, STP said that the makeup of the IBCC, and its local basin committee, the South Platte Roundtable, lacks diversity. Of the 27 people appointed to the IBCC, only [2 represent environmental groups](#) (7%); and of the 51 people appointed to the South Platte Basin Roundtable, [only 2 represent environmental groups](#) (4%). Still, the IBCC report says it has "...all the diverse interests at the table..." (page 1).

"It is absolutely not true that the IBCC or the South Platte Roundtable represent "all the diverse interests," said Wockner. "Unfortunately this statement conveys false information to elected officials and the public. That fact is that of the 19 environmental groups partnering in the [Save the Poudre Coalition](#), none -- *zero* -- are represented on either committee. As the IBCC and the South Platte Roundtable move forward, they must include more diversity or it will likely represent a fatal flaw in their process and product."

Third, as an example of a flaw that occurs when environmental input is minimal on these committees, Save the Poudre requested that the IBCC focus more on water conservation as a solution to future water supply. "The IBCC report avoids putting hard numbers on the role of water conservation to meet the 'gap' in future water supply," said Wockner. "Water conservation can, and should, play a lead role in Colorado's water supply future. If more environmentalists are included at the table, water conservation is a theme that would be drilled home."

And finally, as an additional example of why more environmental input is needed on the IBCC, Save the Poudre requested that the IBCC focus more on population growth issues. "The ability to manage population growth is the gorilla in the room that the IBCC report glosses over," said Wockner. "Colorado needs to better manage population growth, and needs to make sure that population growth pays its own costs rather than having current Colorado citizens' taxes subsidize new population growth."

"Including more environmental groups at the table could dramatically improve the IBCC's work as well as better reflect the values of the citizens of Colorado and help avoid future water conflicts," said Wockner

2011 may be a make-or-break year for future health of the Cache la Poudre River. In 2011, all of the proposed projects will release federal environmental impact statements including:

- the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Halligan Reservoir and Seaman Reservoir proposals, which will include two larger dams and reservoirs on the North Fork of the Poudre River.
- the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Northern Integrated Supply Project proposal which will drain tens-of-thousands of acre feet of water out of the main channel of the Poudre River.
- the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Windy Gap Firming Project proposal which will divert more water from the Colorado River and send it to sprawling northern Colorado cities including to the Rawhide Energy Station, a coal-fired powerplant just north of the Poudre River.

"Our mission is to protect and restore the Cache la Poudre River and its ecosystem," said Wockner. "2011 will be a huge year for the Poudre River. Can Colorado protect its rivers, or will Colorado continue to drain and destroy every river in the state including the Cache la Poudre?"

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Save The Poudre: Poudre Waterkeeper is a coalition of 19 national, state, and regional groups including: Waterkeeper Alliance, National Wildlife Federation, Clean Water Action, Wild Earth Guardians, the Xerces Society, Defenders of Wildlife, American Rivers, American Whitewater Association, Western Resource Advocates, Colorado Environmental Coalition, Lighthawk, Environment Colorado, Sierra Club – Rocky Mountain Chapter, Fort Collins Audubon Society, Citizen Planners, Wolverine Farm Publishing, Poudre Paddlers, Friends of the Poudre, and the Cache la Poudre River Foundation. Membership in these groups totals over 3 million American citizens.