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Save the Poudre: Poudre Waterkeeper

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Save The Poudre Requests New Public Comment Period for Windy Gap Firming Project

“Should we be draining the Colorado River so that sprawling Front Range cities can make millions of dollars selling water for fracking?” -- Gary Wockner

Fort Collins, CO -- Save the Poudre: Poudre Waterkeeper (STP) has contacted the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to request that federal agency open up a new public comment period for the Windy Gap Firming Project (WGFP) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Citing regulations in the Clean Water Act, STP believes that the FEIS omits important information, contains significant new information, and thus additional public scrutiny is both warranted and essential. Save the Poudre also asked the Corps to “supplement” the FEIS and conduct additional scientific analyses.

Save the Poudre’s letter to the Corps is here ([link to letter](#)).

“This extremely controversial project could have significant impacts to the Poudre River, and the Final Environmental Impact Statement contains significant new information,” said Gary Wockner of Save the Poudre. “We request that the Corps open up a new public comment period – we believe it is essential and in the public’s interest to increase the public’s scrutiny of this project.”

Last month, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) commented on the WGFP FEIS, pointing out errors and highlighting missing scientific information and inconsistent conclusions. In its letter to the Corps, Save the Poudre requested that the Corps address EPA’s concerns. Further, Save the Poudre requested that the Corps address the concerns that EPA stated in its original comment letter on the Draft EIS in 2008 which still have not been addressed in the FEIS over 3 years later.

Save the Poudre also requested that the Corps address the issue of water used for fracking. Recent [news reports](#) reveal that several WGFP cities are selling what they call “excess” water for fracking, and one WGFP city, Greeley, which is also in the Poudre River basin, made \$1.6 million selling water for drilling and fracking in 2011. In the 1,472 pages of the WGFP FEIS, water for drilling and fracking is not discussed.

“Should we be draining the Colorado River so that sprawling Front Range cities can make millions of dollars selling water for fracking?” asked Gary Wockner. “At a

minimum, the FEIS for WGFP needs to address and analyze this new industrial use of water – fracking – in its ‘Purpose and Need’ section of the document.”

In order for the project to move forward, federal law mandates that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issue a Clean Water Act section 404 permit for the project -- that permit requires the Corps to ensure that there is no alternative to WGFP that would cause less damage to Colorado’s rivers and wetlands. The Corps is also a cooperating agency that assisted the Bureau of Reclamation in the preparation of the FEIS.