

For Immediate Release

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Draft South Platte/Metro Water Plan Would Destroy Rivers, Ignite Water War

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-- Gary Wockner

Fort Collins, CO: On Thursday, July 31, the South Platte and Metro Denver Roundtables are releasing their draft “Basin Implementation Plan” (BIP) to the public. Through a CORA request last week, Save The Poudre received a draft of BIP dated June 18 ([posted here](#)). That draft plan endorses every proposed river-destroying project on the drawing board (page ES-9), supports a new large trans-mountain diversion from the Colorado River (page ES-11), and even goes so far as to promote a Referendum A-like “State Water Project” (page 5-12).

“This is a river destruction plan, not a water plan,” said Gary Wockner, director of Save The Poudre. “Every conceivable bad idea is endorsed in this plan – it would kill our rivers and ignite a water war throughout the state.”

For four years, Save The Poudre has pointed out that the South Platte Roundtable which wrote the BIP is a corrupt process with no – zero – representation from environmental groups whose mission is to protect and restore rivers. ([see 2014 press release “Water developers try to hijack Governor Hickenlooper’s state water plan” here](#), and see [press release from 2010 here](#)) The very same actors that benefit from draining and destroying Colorado’s rivers were appointed to write the South Platte BIP.

“Governor Hickenlooper needs to know that his Colorado Water Plan process has been corrupted, and it has created a draft plan for the South Platte/Metro area that is completely distorted,” continued Wockner. “Governor Hickenlooper must fix this problem.”

In addition to supporting every conceivable bad river-destruction idea, the draft BIP also endorses “streamlining” State of Colorado permitting and water court processes (page ES-12) to fast-track dams and pipelines. It also relies on completely biased propaganda about the impact of water policies on farms. For example, the BIP regurgitates propaganda directly out of the debunked 2008 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP) suggesting that if NISP isn’t built, farms would be dried up (page 3-22). A later technical report from Save The Poudre indicated the exact opposite, that NISP would force the subdivision and pave-over of up

to 100,000 acres of farms in northern Colorado and the west slope (see “[Farms Facts About NISP](#)” here).

The rambling 275-page BIP document also espouses anti-environmental dogma and anti-science by actually saying that dams and reservoirs improve river health (page 3-23) and that returning to a more natural state is “undesirable.”

“Much of the South Platte/Metro BIP is offensive anti-science and anti-environmentalism,” continued Wockner. “This plan reads like a river-destroyer’s manifesto, not a science-based public policy document.”

The Colorado Water Plan is being created because Governor John Hickenlooper wrote an “[Executive Order](#)” in May, 2013. Nine roundtables are writing drafts for their basin. On July 31, the drafts go out for public comment. Afterwards, the Colorado Water Conservation Board must take the nine BIPs and meld them into one State Water Plan.