

Colorado Counties

Shaping the States Water Future



American Rivers
Rivers Connect Us®



American Rivers

- The mission of American Rivers is to protect healthy rivers, restore damaged rivers, and conserve clean water for the people and nature.
- We combine national advocacy with field work in key river basins to deliver the greatest impact. We are practical problem-solvers with positions informed by science.
 - We build partnerships and work closely with local river advocates, business and agriculture interests, recreation groups and others to forge win-win solutions.
 - And with our expertise, outreach, and additional grants, we deliver the highest return on investment.



American Rivers and CCI

American Rivers Goal of Collaboration with CCI:

- ◆ Identify and better understand counties interest in water projects
- ◆ Identify and better understand barriers that currently exist to water related ballot measures run by counties
- ◆ Identify how American Rivers can best assist interested counties with water projects – partnerships, funding , research, campaign experience, tools
- ◆ Provide the greater water community with an understanding of county needs



The Colorado Water Plan

- ◆ Our population has ballooned from 1 million in 1930 to over 5 million today, and could nearly double by 2050. Sustaining this growth requires water.
- ◆ The plan is a roadmap to a productive economy, vibrant cities, productive agriculture, and a robust recreation industry.
- ◆ It sets forth the measurable objectives, goals, and actions by which Colorado will address its projected future water needs and measure its progress—all built on our shared values.
- ◆ The plan identified significant water supply gaps across the state and counties have a role in helping to implement the plan to close those gaps.



Why Implementation of the CWP Matters to Counties

- Implementation of the CWP matters to counties –local projects help achieve state–wide goals and address local needs
 - Counties helped shape the plan and can benefit from implementation
- Counties have considered a number of different types of projects in the past
 - Increased river health, water recreation opportunities, wildlife, storage, etc.
- These projects have benefited counties through increased tourism, recreation dollars, improved agriculture etc.
- More needs to be done to achieve the CWP and counties have the ability to make the CWP their own
- Find out more at:
<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cowaterplan/cwpimplementation>



County Initiated Water Related Ballot Measures

- ◆ Colorado Counties have successfully passed and implemented water related ballot measures
- ◆ Efforts and strategy that led to success or failure of the measure
- ◆ Social and constituent concerns that required attention



Barriers to a Water Ballot Measure?

American Rivers previous experience has taught us:

- 💧 Counties face a number of factors and barriers to running a water related ballot measure
- 💧 Limited resources available
- 💧 Other more pressing needs
- 💧 Passing funding measures with new taxes is a heavy lift
- 💧 Lacking the political infrastructure



Conclusion

- ◆ American Rivers stands ready to assist counties with water related ballot measures any way that we can
- ◆ We appreciate the role counties can play in achieving our shared water goals
- ◆ Is there interest in discussing next steps?
- ◆ How can you stay involved or further explore the option of a water related ballot measure.
- ◆ Contact:
 - ◆ Fay Augustyn - faugustyn@americanrivers.org
 - ◆ Matt Rice - MRice@americanrivers.org



Discussions Items

Help American Rivers Understand Your Counties Thinking of Water Ballot Measures:

- 💧 Were you aware of the CWP and the need for improved water conditions state-wide?
- 💧 Where do water related issues fall on a list of priorities among constituents?
- 💧 Has your county considered running a water ballot measure?
 - 💧 If so, what was the scope of project
 - 💧 What was the requested funding mechanism
- 💧 What barriers does your county face in running a water ballot measure?
- 💧 Does your county have the resources necessary to pass a water ballot measure?



Discussion Items

- What assistance would be required to consider running a water ballot measure?
- Would regional approaches make sense?
- How can American Rivers best help empower communities to pursue their own efforts?
 - Research and policy expertise
 - Data sharing, management and best practices
 - Meeting and coalition facilitation
 - Development of county tool kits
 - Financial assistance
 - Political assistance