

24 August 2020, 2:00 PM, MDT
In Person

Larimer County Board of county Commissioners
Honorable John Kefalas, Dist 1
Honorable Steve Johnson, Dist 2
Honorable Tom Donnelly, Dist 3

Larimer County Colorado
200 W Oak Street
Fort Collins, Colorado

Dear Board of County Commissioners,

I appreciate your service during this difficult time. And thank you for all your commitment to our county that we call home - Larimer County, Colorado.

The Cache La Poudre River is being threatened by yet another ill-conceived water project. The Northern Integrated Supply Project is being touted as a way to provide water to north Denver suburbs and as far away as Fort Morgan.

It seems like the Poudre has a target on its back. There are some who will never be satisfied until the river is dammed, dewatered, channelized, piped, diverted, polluted, or turned into a Denver metro water source -- leaving us -- the citizens of Larimer County NOTHING but a dry riverbed and virtually no flowing water for significant times of the year.

For a time in the mid-90s, American Rivers identified the upper Poudre from La Poudre Pass to the Big South, as one of America's most endangered and threatened rivers. This while the river had Wild and Scenic protection! How ironic!

Larimer County, its people and its elected officials and the Cache la Poudre river are on the cusp of unfathomable choice - one leads to a Cache la Poudre river that is protected and preserved -- and still, as a "working river" be able to deliver water for the benefit of people, agriculture, industry and wildlife & plant life for future generations. While the other choice is the harbinger of the death of our river and the diminution of our quality of life and our legacy that we owe to the future.

In any given year, the Cache La Poudre River already has approximately 60% of its water diverted before the river reaches

downtown Fort Collins. If NISP were to be built, another 30% of the annual flow would be diverted, leaving only about 25% of the river's natural flow in Fort Collins. The massive new proposed diversion of water from NISP would dramatically harm the ecosystem of the river, deplete wetlands surrounding the river, dry up the the mature cottonwood forest along the river through its reach, as well as greatly decrease the viability of the City's new whitewater park in downtown Fort Collins.

Currently, many segments of the river downstream of the NISP diversion point are on the State of Colorado's water quality watch list because high pollution levels, yet the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIUS) fails to acknowledge the potential impact on existing pollutants. Because of the these low water levels and higher pollution levels, the city of Fort Collins (our, my city!) might be required to upgrade its wastewater treatment facilities, costing many millions of dollars. Since there is no compensation provided to the city for this, these upgrades would cause higher utility fees for ALL residents.

These impacts and many others have not been given full consideration with respect to the actual cost of building NISP, now pegged at approximately more than one billion dollars.

Dams are so last century! How true, and how tragically unfortunate that Northern Water and their partners cannot look beyond behemoth dam building projects of the past. Today we need better solutions than destroying a river and its ecosystem: thus, affecting our community that depends – for SO, SO....many reasons — on a healthy, flowing, and vibrant river. What is wrong with Northern. I have lived n Fort Collins for almost 40 yeas and since the day I arrived, in 1978, I have heard of a million attempts to irrevocable damage, and even in stronger language, actually destroy the Cache La Poudre River.

IT IS TIME TO LET THE RIVER, THIS TOWN, AND ALL THE SERVICES THE RIVER BRINGS TO US, FROM WILDLIFE HABITAT, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, RECREATION, ECONOMIC ENHANCEMENT, FLOOD MITIGATION, SOCIAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, AND PEACE AND CALM.

The Cache La Poudre River is being asked to take an aspirin for Denver's northern suburb's headache. AND WE GET NOTHING IN RETURN!

Finally, NISP is, in my opinion of ~35 years of environmental activism in this community, is by far the most controversial

project in the history of Larimer County. Why? Many reasons -- all of them valid, in my opinion -- due to the severe negative environmental impacts which simply CANNOT be mitigated -- we lose the June Rise flow of the river for all time. As I read it, the best available science confirms that the proposed mitigation plan for NISP is a largely irrelevant document and would have little impact against the overwhelming environmental devastation caused by NISP. Finally, NISP towns have other alternatives to get water that don't include destroying Fort Collins' and Colorado's beloved Poudre River.

Northern Water betrays the people of Larimer County and all of Fort Collins whom they serve and to whom we, as citizens who pay the taxes to allow them to operate -- without my (our) tax money they would not be viable.

I object to NISP taking water out of the Poudre River which is already depleted. There are deficiencies found by No Pipe Dream, Save Rural NoCo, and Save the Poudre's attorney in the NISP 1041 application. A formal appeal was filed with the Larimer County land use director requesting a reversal of the county determination that Northern Water's NISP application is complete.

Thank you for your support of this precious and one-of-a-kind river and the ONLY Wild and Scenic River in ALL of Colorado! Do this for the future of the Cache la Poudre River, Larimer County, and the citizens you represent.

Respectfully,
Philip H. Friedman



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