Eagle State of the River
May 9, 2018. Andy Mueller, General Manager

Western Slope: Water Challenges & Priorities
Minding the source for more than 80 years:

Colorado River Water Conservation District

1937 state statute
15 northwest & west-central counties
28% of Colorado
Board director from each county
Mill levy & water activity enterprise

ColoradoRiverDistrict.org
Colorado River District: Sources of Water Supply

Wolford Mountain Reservoir
Ruedi Reservoir
Eagle Park Reservoir
Protecting the Flows: Shoshone Hydro
Protecting the Flows: Cameo Ag Rights
Restoring the Flows:
Hartland Dam, Gunnison River

Nothing was getting by
Improving the Flows:

Salinity Control
Selenium Task Force
Good Samaritan initiatives
Impaired Waters, 303(d)

Colorado River District
Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937
Snowpack: It all starts here
Why it’s all important
Snowpack: Ends up here

Colorado River District
Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937
Depletions from the Colorado River Basin

East Slope M&I, 360,313 AF
East Slope Ag, 180,486 AF
West Slope M&I, 77,445 AF
West Slope Ag, 1,355,763 AF

1.1 maf pre 1922 compact*

Division of Water Resources

Colorado River District
Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937
Back to Powell: 2018 is not looking good

Glen Canyon Dam

Colorado River District
Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937
April - July Unregulated Inflow into Lake Powell
As of 2018-05-01

Average Streamflow Contribution

- Green: 33.6%
- San Juan: 12.5%
- Colorado/Cameo: 26.8%
- Gunnison: 16.8%
- Other: 10.3%

May Final Forecast

- Green: 46.3%
- San Juan: 5.6%
- Colorado/Cameo: 35.3%
- Gunnison: 12.5%
- Other: 0.3%

5/1/18 Forecast
42 percent of av.

Historical Min (year): 964 KAF (2002)
Historical Avg: 7160 KAF
Historical Max (year): 15316 KAF (1984)

Averages are over the 1981 - 2010 period

Colorado River District
Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937
We have a long-term problem
Who stole the Colorado River?

Scientists say rising temperatures

Recently published estimates of Colorado River flow sensitivity to temperature indicate that continued business-as-usual warming will drive temperature-induced declines in river flow, conservatively −20% by midcentury and −35% by end-century.

-- Brad Udall, Jonathan Overpeck
“The twenty-first century Colorado River, Hot drought and implications for the future”
Consequences: Buy and Dry
West Slope ag must NOT be the sacrificial lamb
Not just ag.
Drought Contingency Planning

Lower Basin is working on one;

Upper Basin is working on one
Testing temporary fallowing:

- Reduce water use
- Involve a range of partners
- Scale-up
- Test the nuts and bolts
- Help finance infrastructure improvements for ongoing benefits
- Address community concerns
Questions?