

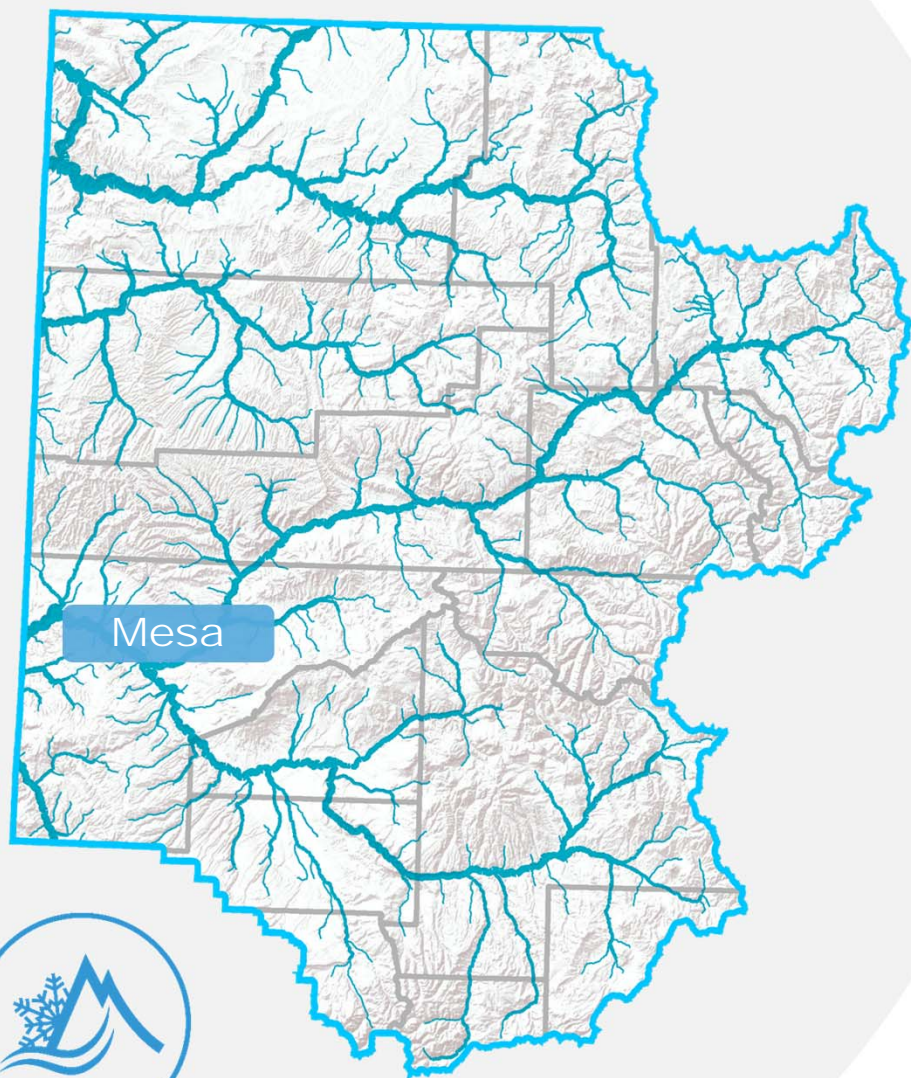
Protecting West Slope water in times of uncertainty

Andy Mueller
General Manager
Colorado River District



COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT
PROTECTING WESTERN COLORADO WATER SINCE 1937





To lead in the
**protection,
conservation,
use, and
development**
of the water resources of
the Colorado River basin.

Denver Needs Water From Western Slope

(By The Associated Press)

Denver, March 31—The Colorado River commission this afternoon heard its first testimony regarding plans for trans-mountain diversion of the waters of the Colorado river. W. F. R. Mills, a member of the Denver board of water commissioners, told the commissioners diversions must be undertaken if the city of Denver is to obtain a supply of water for domestic consumption for its growing population.

Mr. Mills and other witnesses declared 250,000 acre feet of water should be diverted from the western slope of Colorado to Denver thru irrigation tunnels built at altitudes of approximately 10,000 feet in the Rocky mountains.

Diversion of this amount of water, Mr. Mills declared, would not injure the river in its descent into the lower basin states.

Answering a query from Frank C. Emerson, commissioner of Wyoming, Mr. Mills declared any pact between the states should provide for trans-mountain diversion to guarantee Denver water for all time for domestic consumption. Other city engineering officials agreed with Mr. Mills.

It is the duty of the state engineer of Colorado to open the technical case of the State of Colorado with a statement, today declared the state is entitled to unrestricted use of the

Take Western Slope Water Under Range

Plans for a \$2,250,000 transmountain water diversion project, to provide water for Golden, Arvada, Edgewater, the state rifle range and irrigation districts west of Denver, has been announced by a committee headed by A. D. Quintana.

The plan was originally made an expenditure of \$1,000,000 after investigation, the sponsor decided to more than double the capacity and the investment. A organization to be known as the Denver-Golden Metropolitan Water association is to be formed and it will seek funds from the construction Finance corporation.

The plans call for a three tunnel under Jones peak, eight miles west of Empire, to divert water from the Williams fork into either creek or Ralston creek. A two tunnel between South fork and Middle fork also is included in the program.

WATER DIVERSION MIGHT INJURE WESTERN SLOPE

Two large projects are being promoted to take water from the Western Slope through tunnels to irrigate lands on the eastern slope of Colorado.

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EAST SLOPE WANTS COLO. RIVER WATER

Initial steps toward an agreement between Eastern and Western slope interests for transmountain diversion of water into northern Colorado from the Colorado river watershed were taken at a conference in Grand Junction last Friday.

Representatives were present from Weld, Larimer, Logan, Morgan and Sedgwick counties. The Western slope was represented by the protective association directors from the counties on the Colorado river watershed. Those directors are: Simon Smith, Mesa; B. F. Long, Eagle; Frank Delaney, Garfield; Milton R. Welch, Delta; C. J. Moynihan, Montrose; E. M. Nourse, Gunnison; W. B. Burkett, Ouray; C. G. Wag-

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Archival news stories courtesy Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection

The conference was an outgrowth

Colorado River Basin

The map illustrates the Colorado River Basin, which spans across several states and countries. The basin is defined by a thick blue outline. Key features include:

- States and Countries:** Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico.
- Major Reservoirs and Lakes:** Flaming Gorge Reservoir, Lake Powell, Lake Mead, Lake Mojave, Lake Havasu, Navajo Lake, and Lake Mohave.
- Key Projects and Infrastructure:** Lee Ferry, Central Arizona Project, Imperial and Coachella Valleys, Colorado River Aqueduct, and San Juan Chama Project.
- Geographical Features:** Wasatch Front, Colorado Front Range, and Aspenall Unit.
- Administrative Divisions:** The basin is divided into several districts, including the Colorado River District (CRD) and the Southwest Colorado District (SWCD).

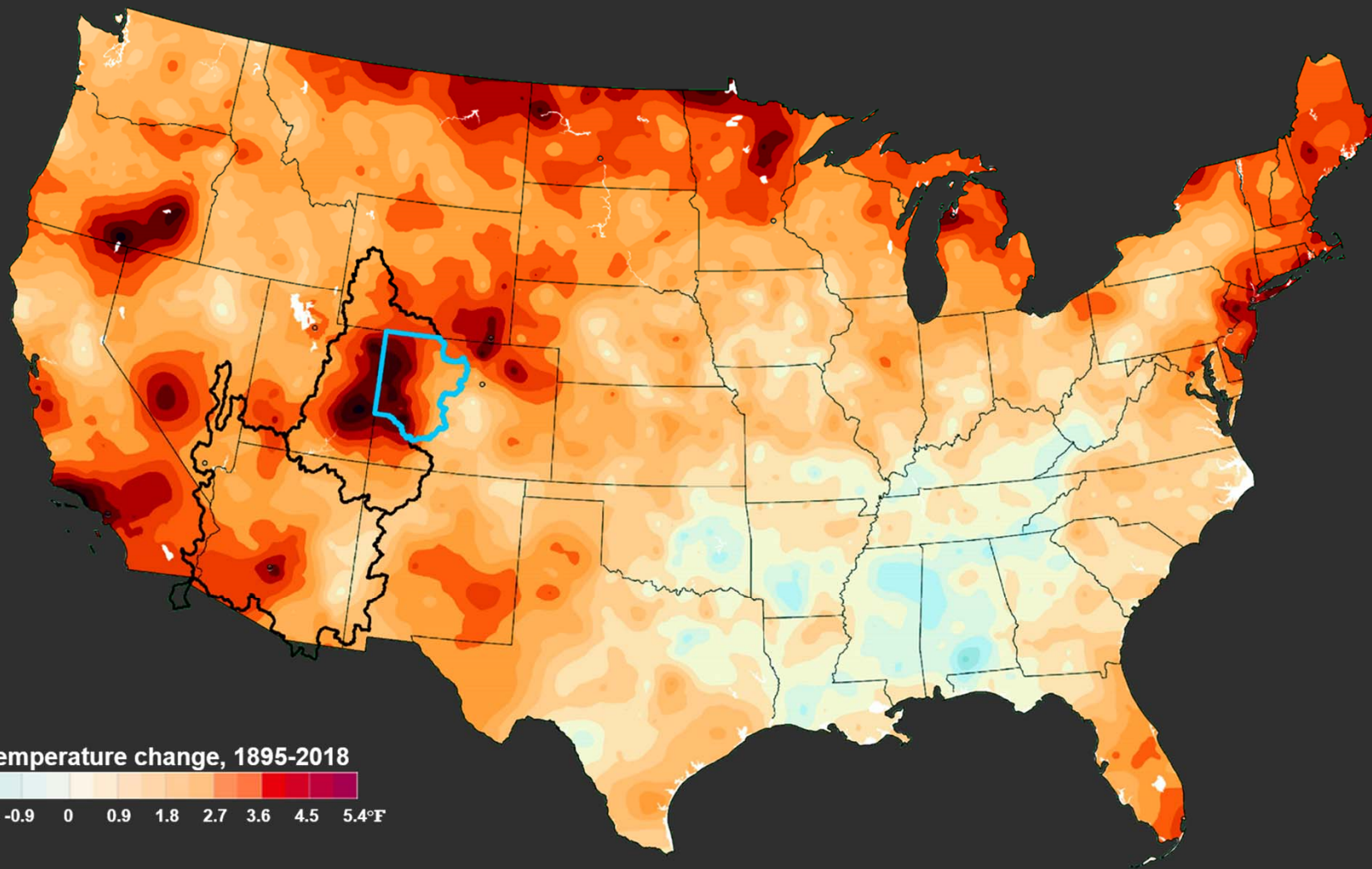
The map also shows the Colorado River and its tributaries, including the Gila River, Little Colorado River, and San Juan River. The Colorado River District (CRD) is highlighted in a darker blue, and the Southwest Colorado District (SWCD) is highlighted in a lighter blue. The map is credited to the Colorado River District, which has been protecting western Colorado water since 1937.



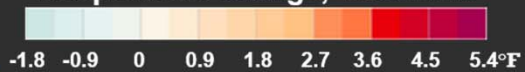
COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT
PROTECTING WESTERN COLORADO WATER SINCE 1937

Annual lower basin overuse:
1.1 to 1.3 million acre feet

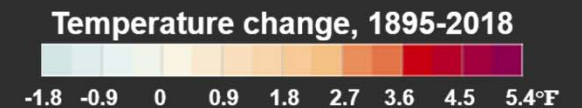
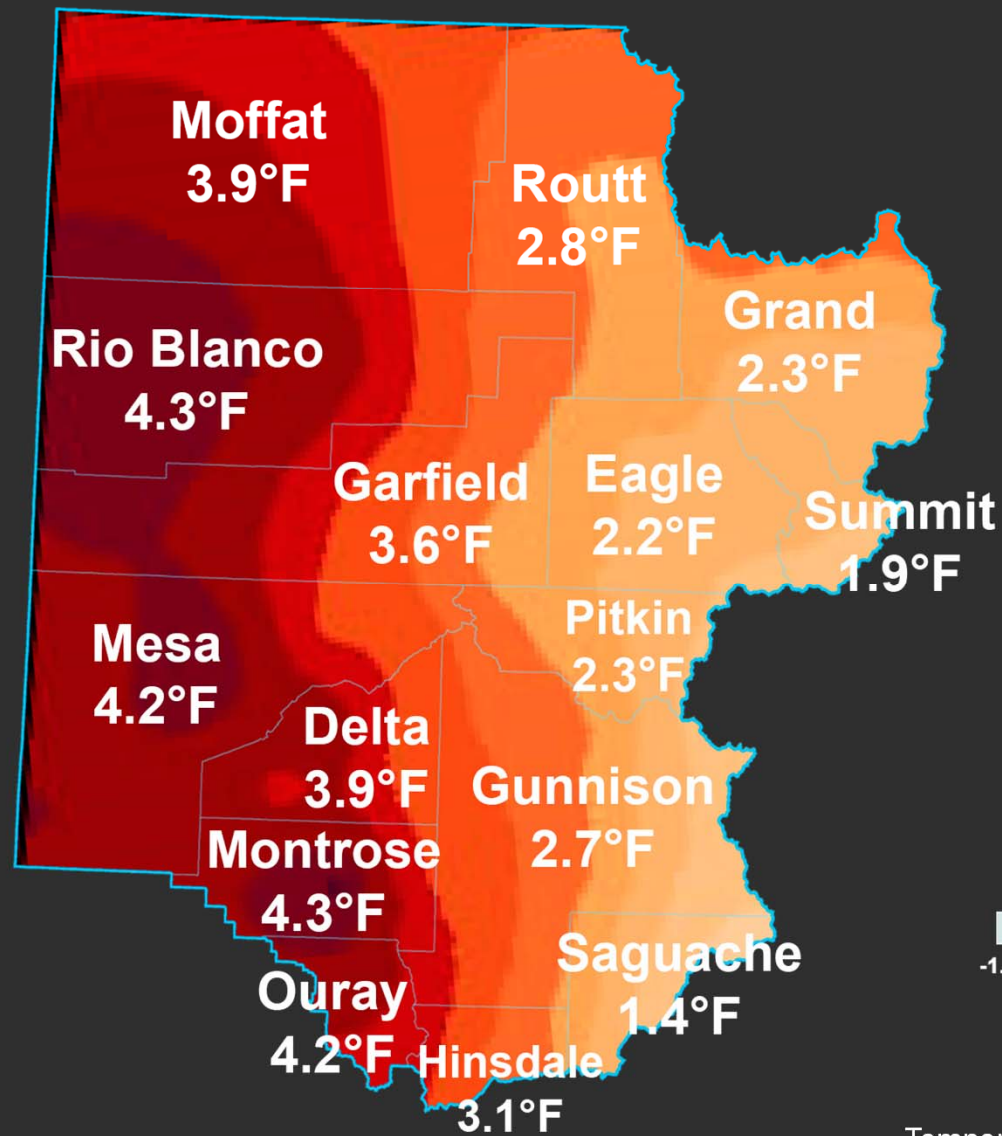




Temperature change, 1895-2018



Temperature data generated by NOAA
Temperature graphic courtesy the Washington Post



Temperature data generated by NOAA
Temperature graphic courtesy the Washington Post



For every 1 degree Fahrenheit rise in temperature, streamflow is reduced between 3% to 5.2%.



Data:

How Warming Drives Reductions in Streamflow Berghuijs et al. (2014), Barnhart et al. (2016), Deems et al. (2013)
Colorado River flow dwindles as warming-driven loss of reflective snow energizes evaporation (P. C. D. Milly, K. A. Dunne, Science 2020)



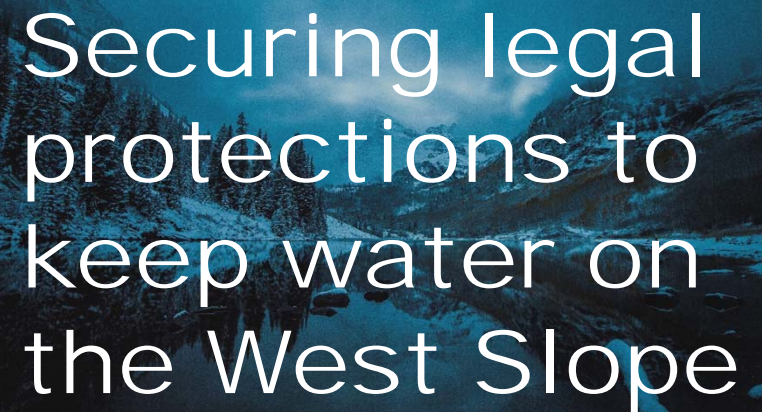
- **More fall and spring precipitation falling as rain instead of snow**
- **More snowpack lost to sublimation**
- **Earlier snowmelt**
- **A longer growing season**

We work to protect
West Slope water
and keep your water
on the West Slope.



A person in a plaid shirt stands in a field, looking towards a bridge in the distance. The image is slightly faded, emphasizing the text overlay.

Keeping water
flowing to farms
and ranches

A scenic view of a mountain range with a river flowing through a valley. The image is dark and moody, with the text overlay in white.

Securing legal
protections to
keep water on
the West Slope

A close-up shot of a fish swimming in clear, greenish water. The fish is the central focus, with its scales and fins clearly visible.

Maintaining
healthy rivers

A person is shown from the side, washing their hands in a kitchen sink. Water is running from the faucet. The background is slightly blurred, showing a typical kitchen setting.

Ensuring
adequate
drinking water
supplies



Financial challenges



Three key issues:

- **Declining tax revenue from the energy industry**
- **Revenue ratcheting down due to the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights**
- **The Gallagher Amendment's reduction in assessment rates**



Proposal under consideration:

Increase of up to half a mill



The owner of a median-valued home in Mesa County would pay an additional

\$4.14
per year

to the Colorado River District,
based on 2019 assessments.





Productive agriculture



Conservation and efficiency



Healthy rivers



Watershed health and water quality



Infrastructure



coloradoriverdistrict.org



Colorado River District



@ColoradoWater



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