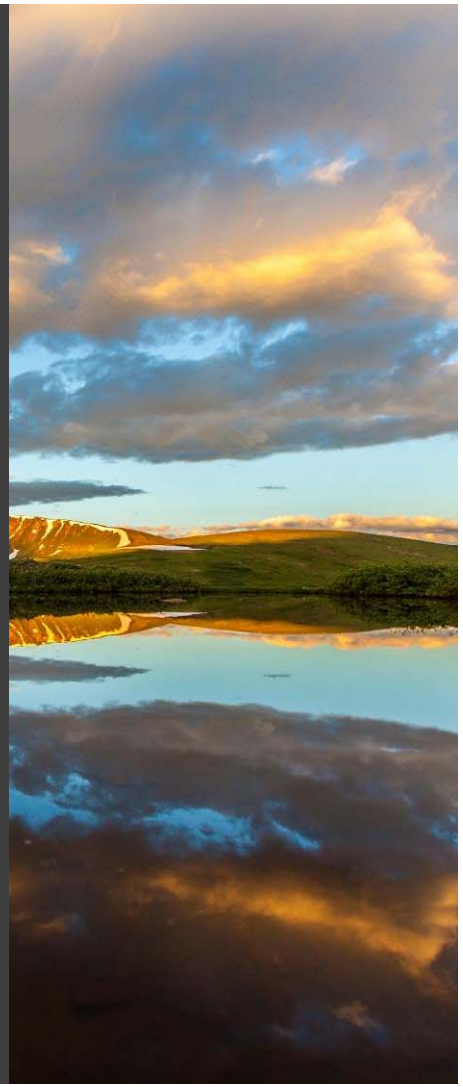
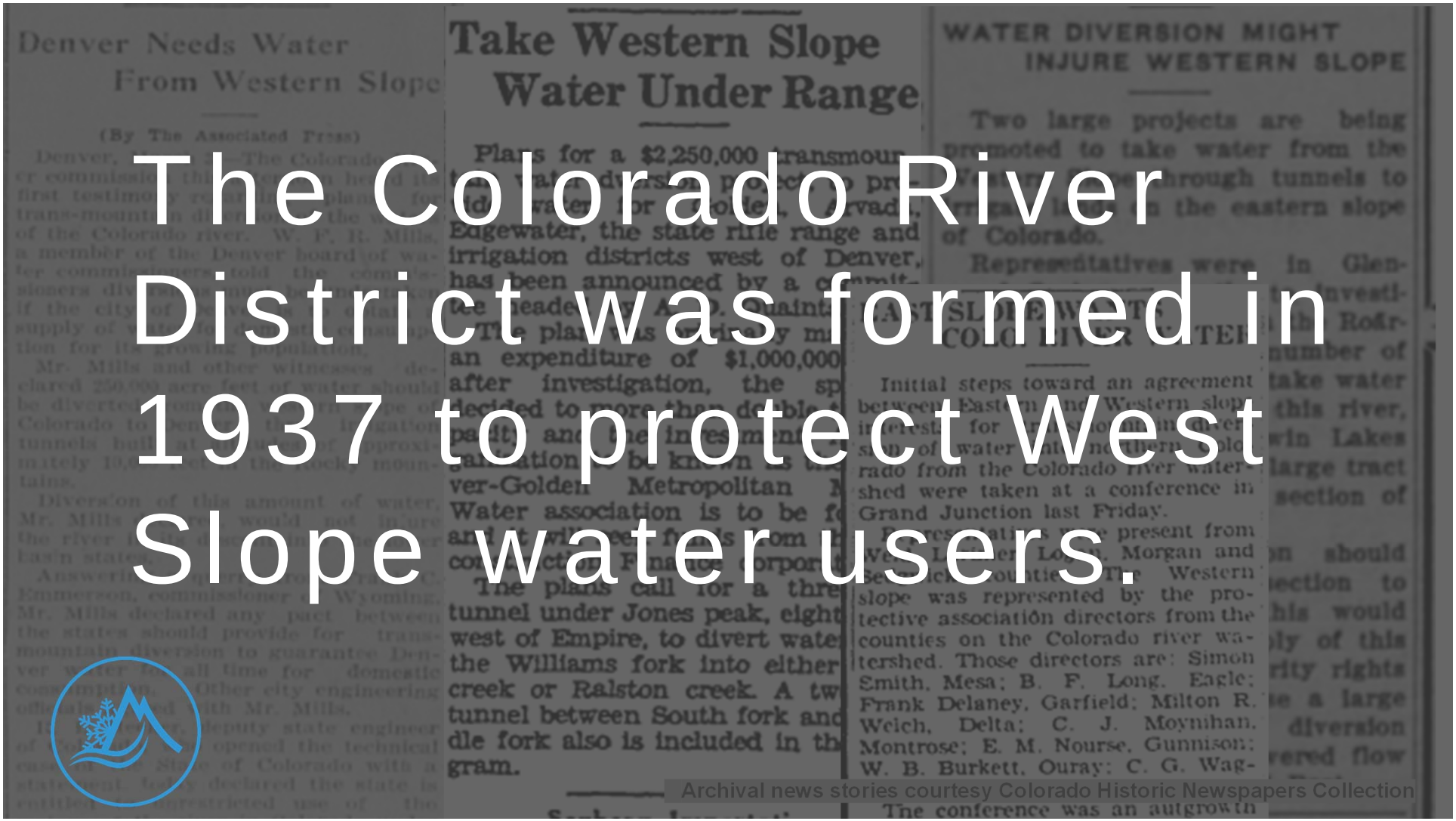
Protecting West Slope water in times of uncertainty

Jim Pokrandt
Director of Community Affairs
Colorado River District

COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT
PROTECTING WESTERN COLORADO WATER SINCE 1937





The Colorado River District was formed in 1937 to protect West Slope water users.


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

Denver Needs Water From Western Slope

(By The Associated Press)

Denver, March 21—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 querry from Frank C. Emmerson, 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 associated with Mr. Mills.

[illegible], deputy state engineer of [illegible] opened 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 dversion 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. Quainta

The plan was originally ma an expenditure of $1,000,000 after investigation, the sp decided to more than double t pacity and the investment. A ganization to be known as the ver-Golden Metropolitan M Water association is to be f and it will seek funds from th construction Finance corporat

The plans call for a thre tunnel under Jones peak, eight west of Empire, to divert wate the Williams fork into either creek or Ralston creek. A tw tunnel between South fork and dle fork also is included in th gram.

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.

Representatives were in Glen- to investi- the Roar- number of take water this river, win Lakes large tract section of

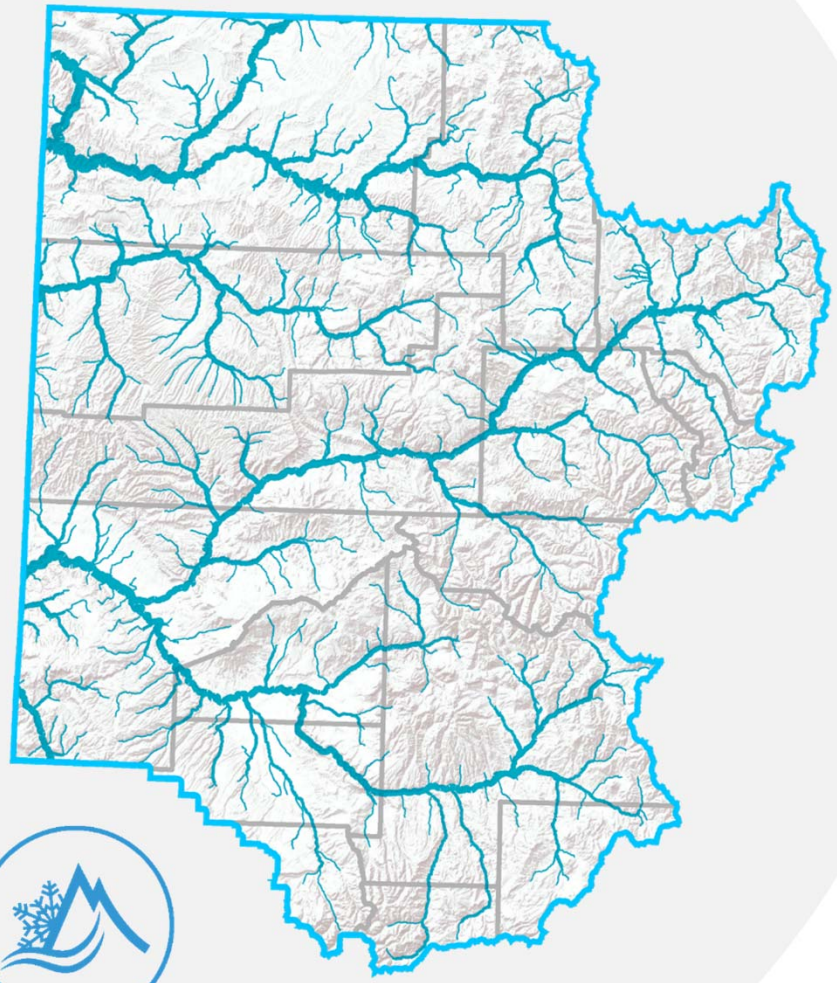
on should ection to his would ly of this rity rights e a large diversion ered flow

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-

The conference was an outgrowth



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


Keeping water flowing to farms and ranches


Securing legal protections to keep water on the West Slope


Maintaining healthy rivers


Ensuring adequate drinking water supplies


Colorado River Basin
Wyoming
Cheyenne
Flaming Gorge Reservoir
Green River
Wasatch Front
Colorado River District
Colorado Front Range
Nevada
Utah
Colorado
Colorado River
Aspinall Unit
San Juan River
SWCD
Lake Powell
Lee Ferry
Navajo Lake
Lake Mead
California
Lake Mojave
Little Colorado River
San Juan Chama Project
Lake Havasu
Arizona
Colorado River Aqueduct
Central Arizona Project
New Mexico
Imperial and Coachella Valleys
Gila River
Mexico
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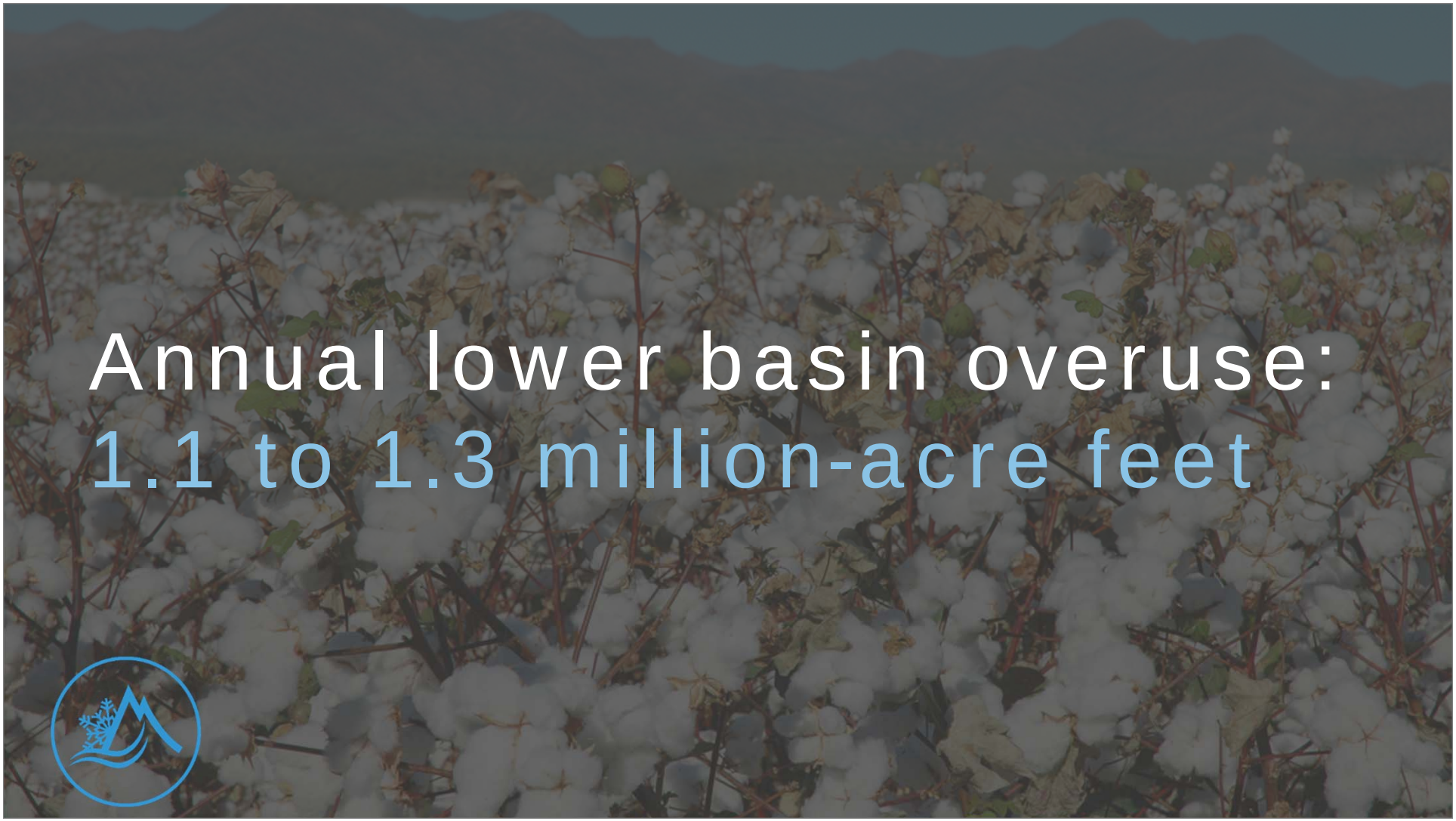
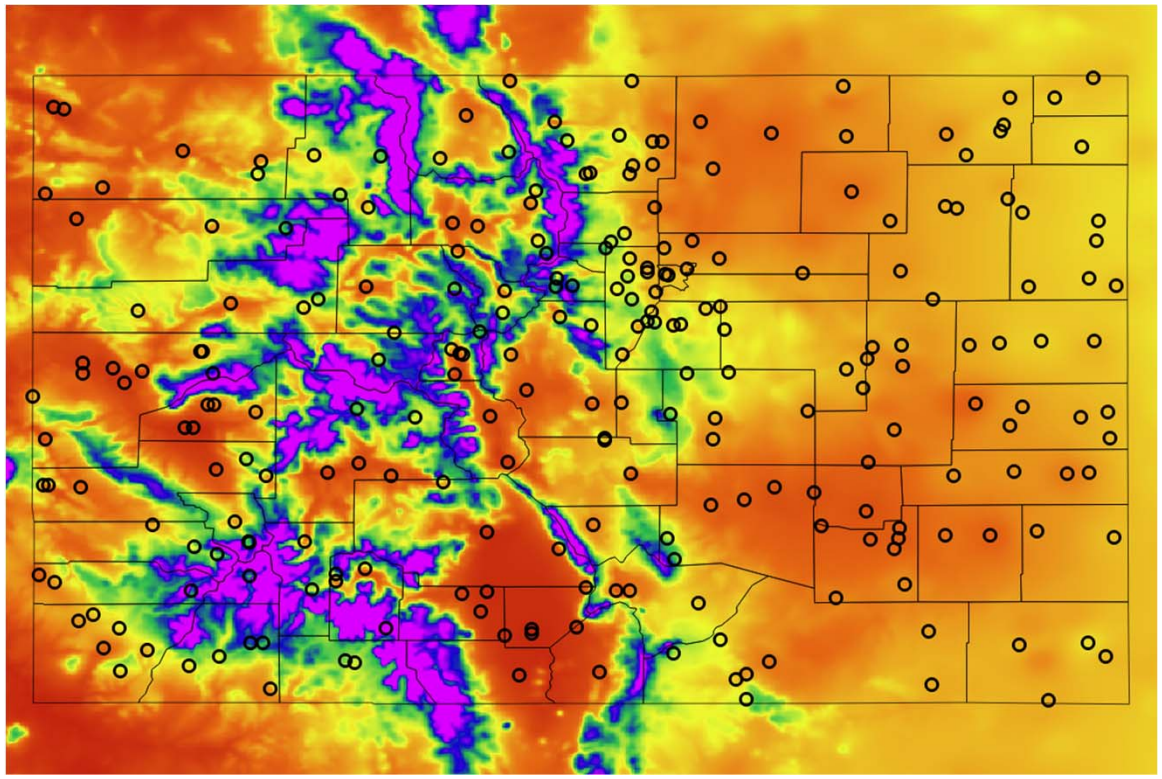

Annual lower basin overuse:
1.1 to 1.3 million-acre feet

COLORADO
HISTORICAL AVERAGE ANNUAL STREAM FLOWS

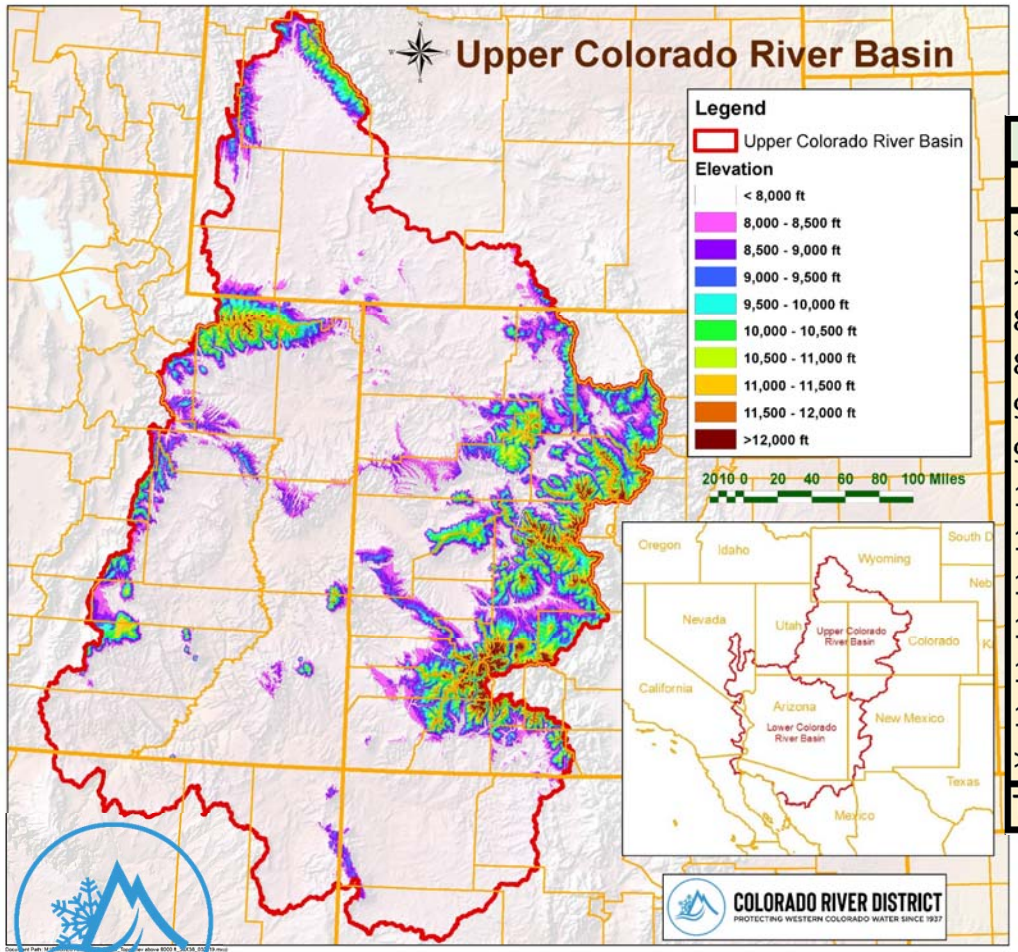
[Revised 2011 - all values in acre feet (AF)]

OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER
COLORADO DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES

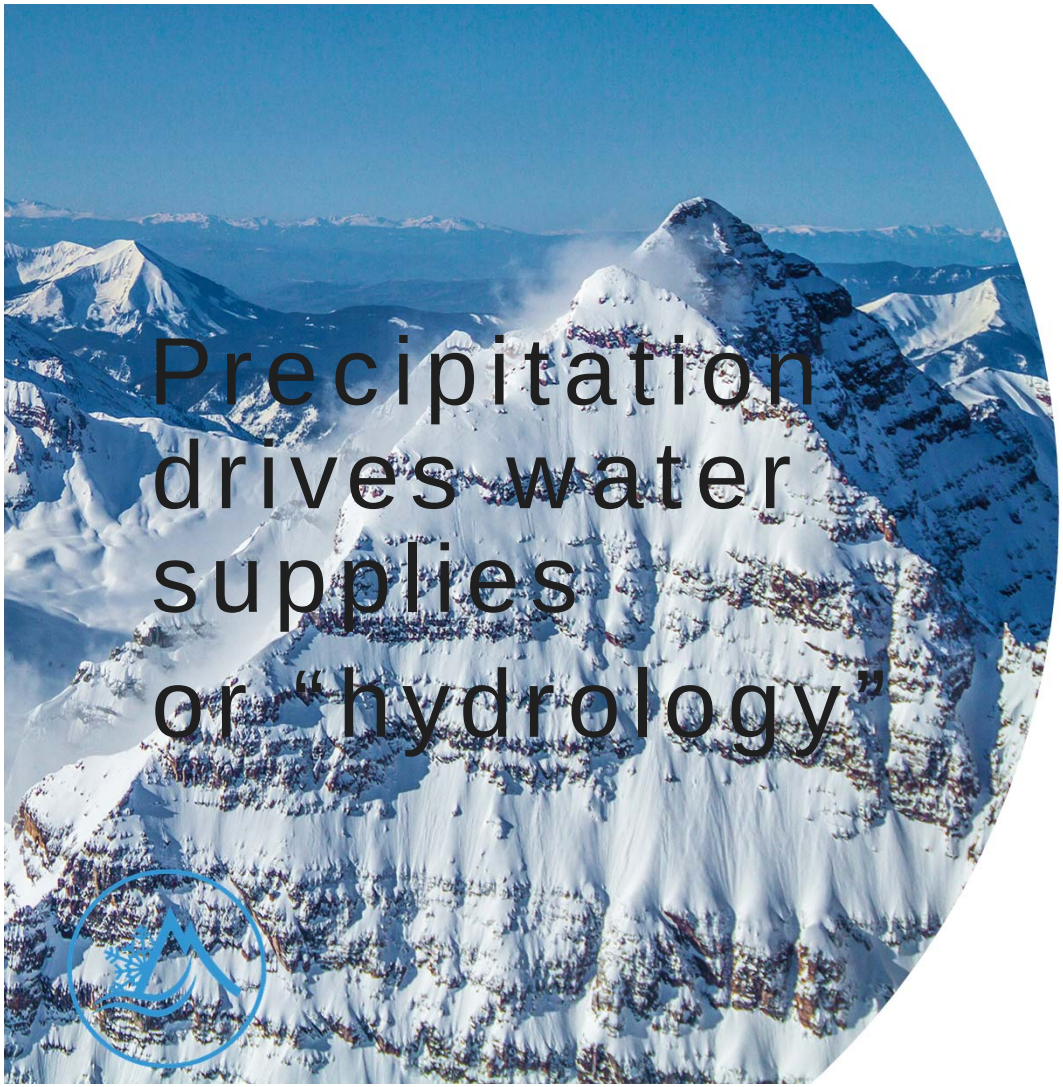
Average annual average precipitation in Colorado



Graphic and data from the Colorado Climate Center

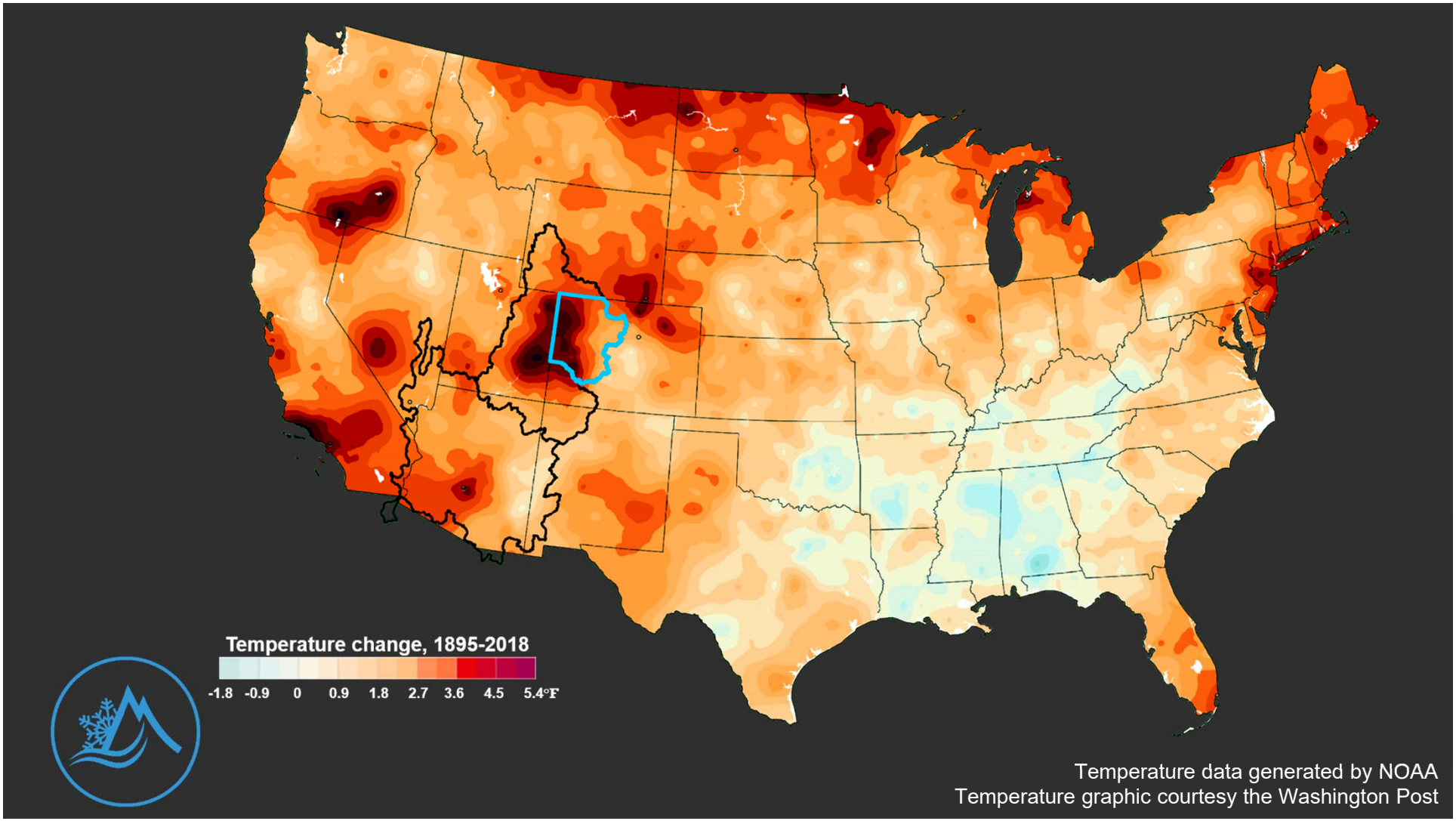


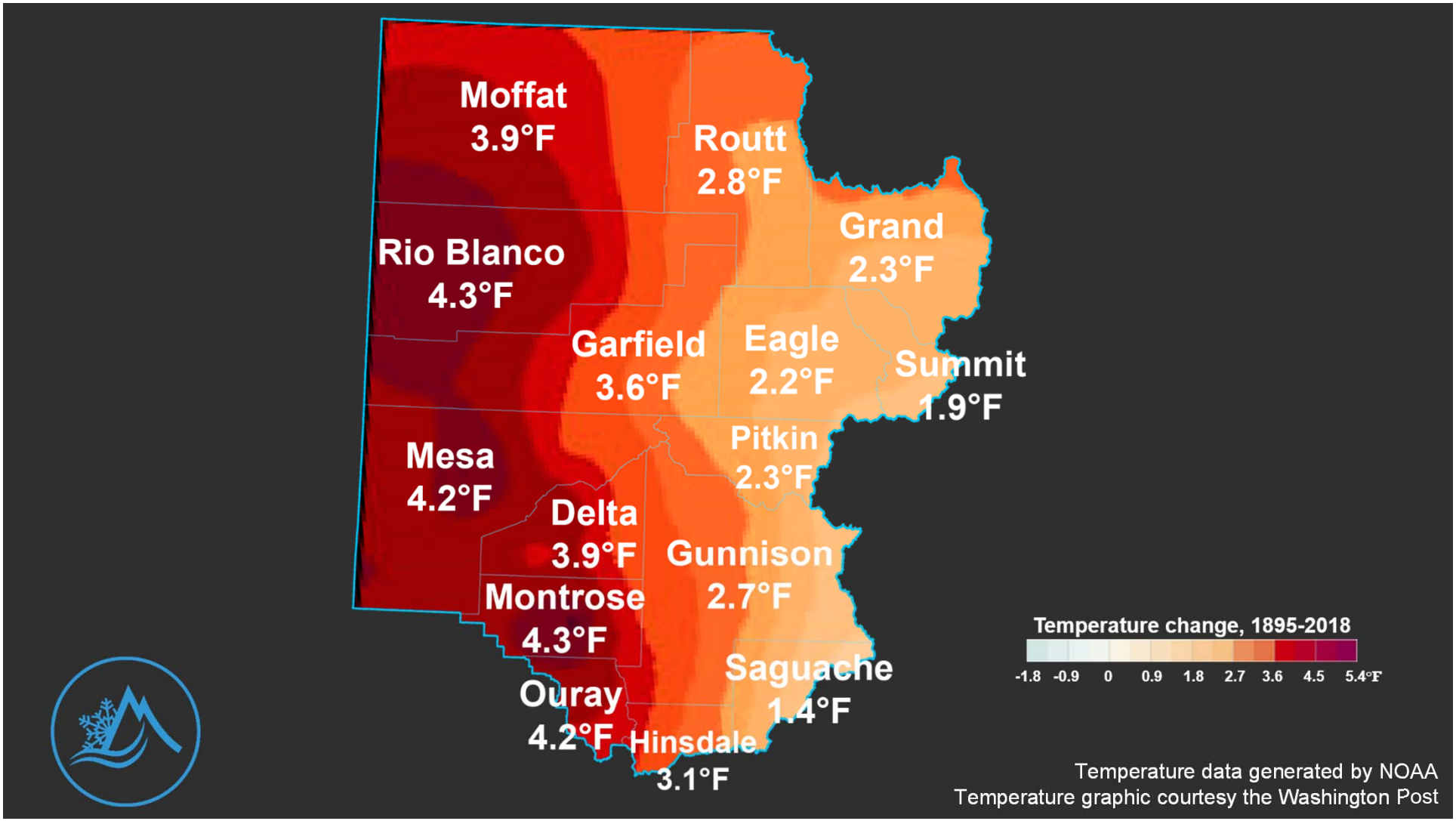
Areas and Elevations within UCRB			
Elevation Interval	**Sq Miles**	**Acres**	**Percent**
< 8,000 ft	79,582	50,932,713	75.3%
> 8,000 ft	26,071	16,685,139	24.7%
8,000 to 8,500 ft	6,323	4,046,495	6.0%
8,500 to 9,000 ft	4,862	3,111,906	4.6%
9,000 to 9,500 ft	3,944	2,524,432	3.7%
9,500 to 10,000 ft	3,147	2,013,920	3.0%
10,000 to 10,500 ft	2,594	1,660,224	2.5%
10,500 to 11,000 ft	2,035	1,302,654	1.9%
11,000 to 11,500 ft	1,432	916,293	1.4%
11,500 to 12,000 ft	664	425,253	0.6%
12,000 to 12,500 ft	777	497,016	0.7%
12,500 to 13,000 ft	228	145,724	0.2%
> 13,000 ft	64	41,222	0.1%
TOTAL	**105,653**	**67,617,852**	**100.0%**



- Three parts of 'water supply equation' in River District

1. Snow accumulation, melt, runoff (~80%)
2. "Monsoonal" input (~10%)
3. Groundwater input and baseflow (~10%)


Temperature change, 1895-2018
-1.8 -0.9 0 0.9 1.8 2.7 3.6 4.5 5.4°F
Temperature data generated by NOAA
Temperature graphic courtesy the Washington Post


Moffat
3.9°F
Routt
2.8°F
Grand
2.3°F
Rio Blanco
4.3°F
Garfield
3.6°F
Eagle
2.2°F
Summit
1.9°F
Pitkin
2.3°F
Mesa
4.2°F
Delta
3.9°F
Gunnison
2.7°F
Montrose
4.3°F
Saguache
1.4°F
Ouray
4.2°F
Hinsdale
3.1°F
Temperature change, 1895-2018
-1.8 -0.9 0 0.9 1.8 2.7 3.6 4.5 5.4°F
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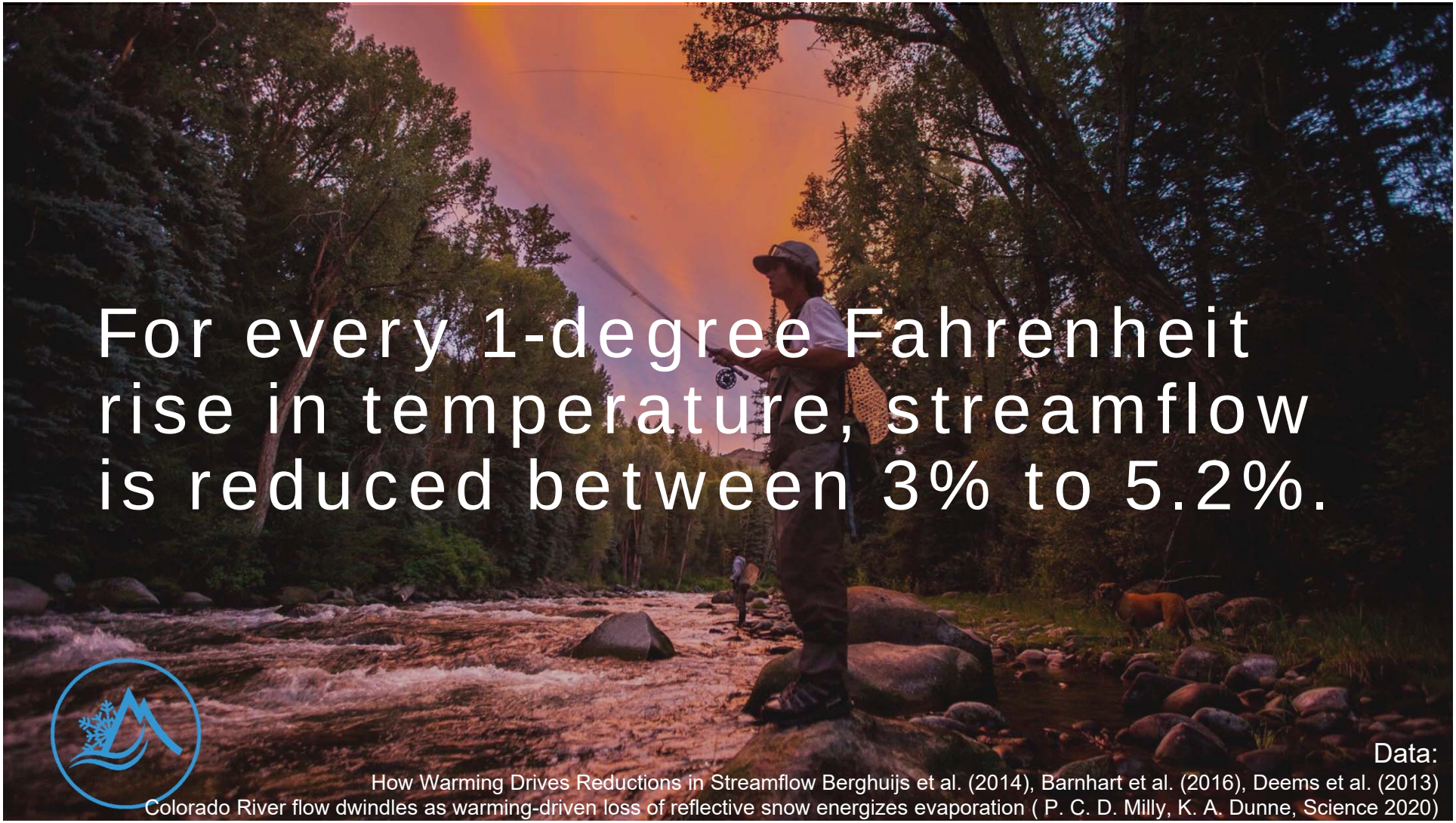
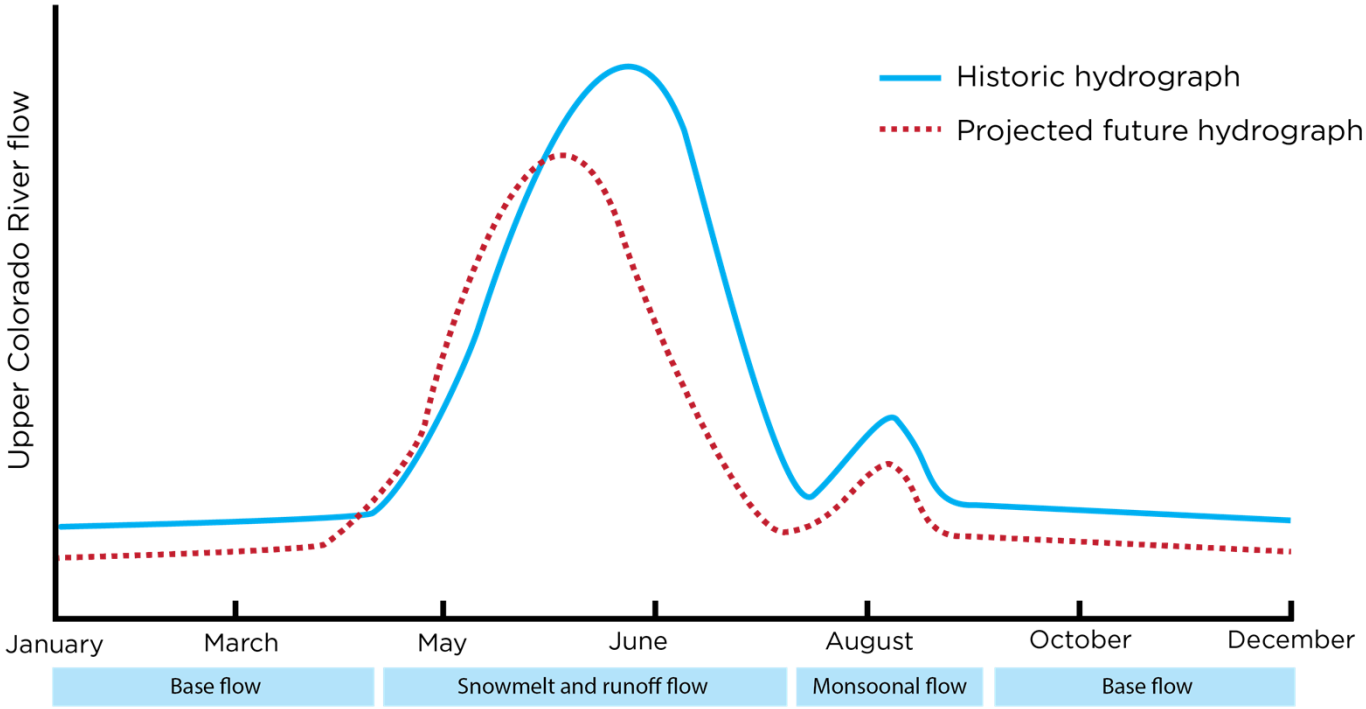


Data:

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)

Upper Colorado River conditions under projected warming



COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT
PROTECTING WESTERN COLORADO WATER SINCE 1937

Generalized conditions for illustrative purposes only.

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

Key issues:

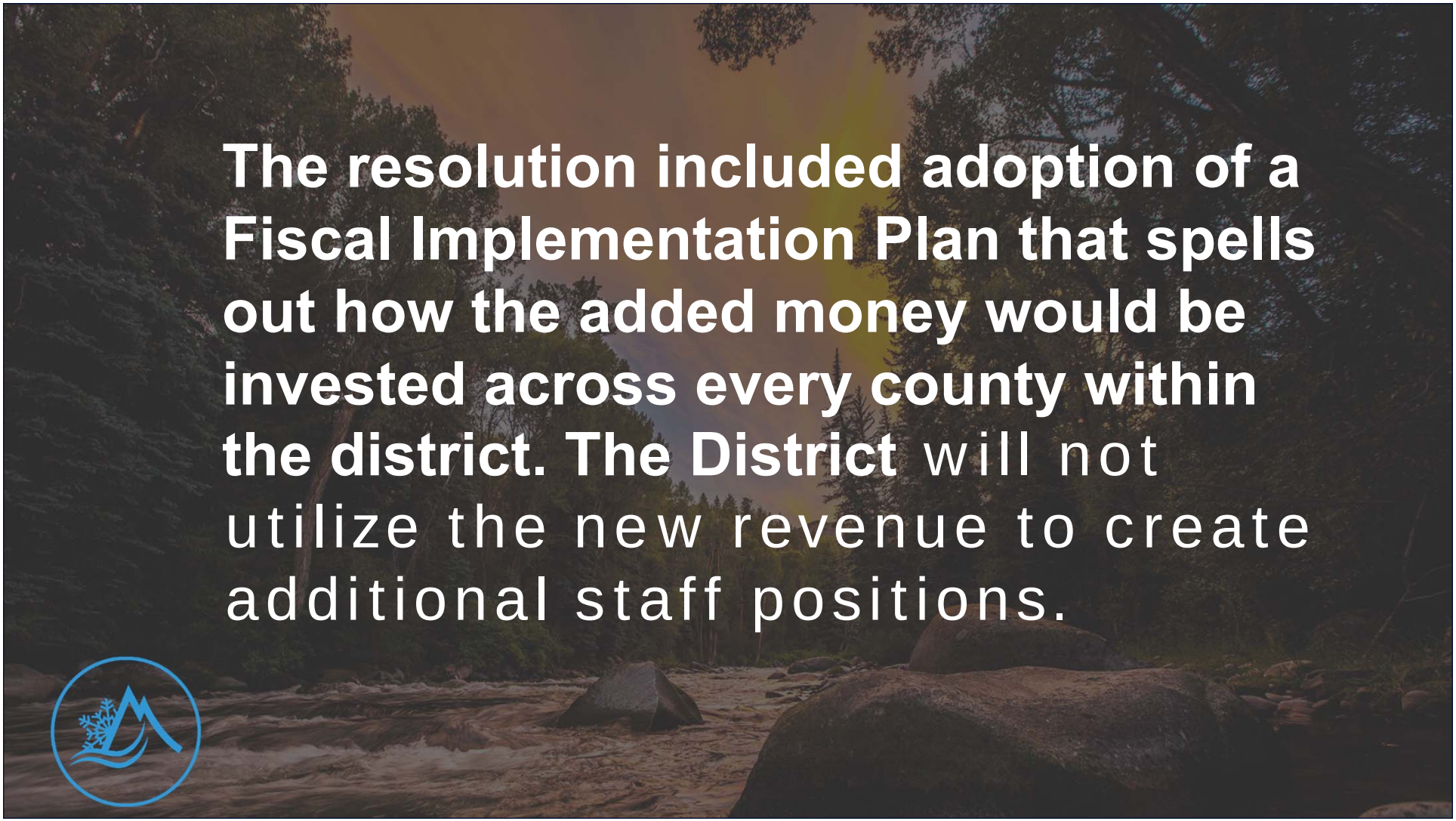
- Declining tax revenue from the energy industry

- Revenue ratcheting down due to the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights

- The Gallagher Amendment's reduction in assessment rates

- Expense trends: District has cut four full time employees and reduced expenses 15%


On July 21, the Colorado River District’s Board of Directors adopted a resolution to ask voters in November to support a property tax increase to 0.5 mills.


The resolution included adoption of a Fiscal Implementation Plan that spells out how the added money would be invested across every county within the district. The District will not utilize the new revenue to create additional staff positions.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