



SHOSHONE
WATER RIGHT PRESERVATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, October 7, 2024

CONTACT:

Lindsay DeFrates, Deputy Director of Public
Relations - 970.456.8973

**Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper, along with congressional
representatives, offer letter of support for federal funding application**

*Representatives Neguse, Pettersen, Crow, and DeGette also signatories on a letter in support of the
Colorado River District's application for funding to support protection of Shoshone water rights.*

Glenwood Springs, Colorado — On Monday, October 7, U.S. Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper, along with U.S. Representatives Joe Neguse, Jason Crow, Brittany Pettersen, and Diana DeGette, submitted a letter to the Bureau of Reclamation in support of the Colorado River District's federal funding application to support the permanent protection of the Shoshone water rights.

The funding, made available through the Inflation Reduction Act's "Bucket 2 Environmental Drought Mitigation" (B2E) program, supports public entities and tribes working on projects that provide environmental benefits or restore ecosystems and habitats impacted by drought. In the letter, lawmakers stated, "Preserving the Colorado River's historical flow regime as intended by the Shoshone Permanency Project will benefit the Colorado River ecosystem every year, and especially in dry years."

On behalf of a diverse coalition of local water providers, governments and stakeholders, the district entered into a purchase and sale agreement with Public Service Company of Colorado (a subsidiary of Xcel) for the water rights last December. Since then, the coalition has raised almost \$56 million towards the \$99 million purchase price. "This strong show of funding reflects the local recognition of the Shoshone Water Rights' importance to the health of western Colorado's environment and local economies," the letter states.

"We are thankful to both our Senators and our congressional representatives from across the state of Colorado who recognize the vital importance of protecting Shoshone water rights and are willing to stand with us to preserve the historic flows of the Colorado River," said **Andy Mueller, general manager of the Colorado River District**. "Their support highlights the broad-reaching commitment to safeguarding water that brings significant benefit to the Colorado River during its driest times and will help to ensure multi-generational water security for millions of Coloradans."

"All of our economies in Grand County, including agriculture and recreation, depend in some way on the flows commanded by the Shoshone water rights," said **Merrit Linke, Grand County Commissioner**. "I'm grateful to our Senators and congressional delegation for their support of the Shoshone Permanency effort."

"Residents in Eagle County depend on healthy, flowing rivers to sustain their way of life," said **Kathy Chandler-Henry, Eagle County Commissioner**. "We are fortunate to have the strong backing of our

Senators and congressional representatives in securing the Shoshone water rights, and their leadership on this will help ensure future water security for our valley and the entire western slope.”

“River recreation forms the backbone of our local economy. Consistent flows in the Colorado River provide the certainty needed by small business owners to be able to invest in their business and continue to operate in a sustainable manner. I appreciate that our federal delegation recognizes the important role played by the Shoshone water rights in sustaining this critical industry,” said **Glenwood Springs Mayor Ingrid Wussow**. “It's gratifying to see support for this effort trickling up – from the local level all the way up to our nation's capitol.”

###