

August 6, 2025

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum:

We write as Republican Members of the Colorado General Assembly to express our strong and united support for federal investment in the Shoshone Water Rights Preservation Project. This project represents a generational opportunity to protect one of the most senior and critical water rights on the Colorado River and to deliver large-scale, systematic benefits to the Colorado River system.

For more than a century, the Shoshone Water Rights have provided reliable flows on the Colorado River – benefiting irrigators, rural municipalities, and industries that rely on stable and predictable river conditions. Without Shoshone’s call, Western Colorado water users – including multiple federal irrigation projects built and operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation – would be significantly more vulnerable to upstream diversions and drought-driven shortages.

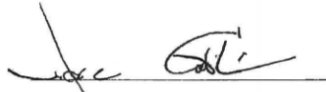
Recognizing this, the Colorado General Assembly made a landmark investment of \$20 million through the 2024 CWCB Projects Bill to help secure the permanent protection of these rights. This historic state appropriation passed the general assembly with near-unanimous support and reflects our bipartisan commitment to safeguarding the Colorado River’s flows and ensuring water security for the families, agricultural producers, and small businesses who depend on them.

We are also mindful of the importance of this project to the domestic energy sector. The Piceance Basin, a cornerstone of natural gas production in Western Colorado, depends on adequate Colorado River flows to support drilling operations, hydraulic fracturing, and transport infrastructure. Protecting Shoshone’s flows enhances regulatory certainty and aligns directly with President Trump’s *Executive Order on Unleashing American Energy* (January 16, 2025), which prioritizes infrastructure and water reliability for U.S.-based energy development.

This is a fiscally responsible, locally led, and strategically timed project. With over \$57 million in non-federal funds already committed, the previously awarded \$40 million in federal support would complete a powerful public-private partnership that protects water security, protects productive agriculture, and supports rural economic resilience.

We respectfully urge you to move forward with full federal funding for the Shoshone Water Rights Preservation Project. Doing so will preserve a vital resource for Western Colorado and advance our shared goals of drought resilience, rural prosperity, and American energy leadership.

Sincerely,



Senator Marc Catlin
Senate District 5



Representative Matt Soper
House District 54



Senator Cleave Simpson
Senate District 6



Representative Rick Taggart
House District 55



Senator Janice Rich
Senate District 7



Representative Larry Don Suckla
House District 58

CC:

The Honorable Jeff Hurd, U.S. House of Representatives
Scott Cameron, Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
David Palumbo, Acting Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation