



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Legislators Press Interior for Release of Federal Funding for Shoshone Water Rights

Glenwood Springs, Colorado — On Thursday, Aug. 6, Colorado state Senator Marc Catlin, on behalf of six Colorado General Assembly members, [sent a letter to the Department of the Interior](#) requesting the release of \$40 million in federal funding previously awarded to the Shoshone Water Rights Preservation Project. The letter was signed by state Sens. Marc Catlin, District 5; Cleave Simpson, District 6; Janice Rich, District 7, as well as Reps. Matt Soper, District 54; Rick Taggart, District 55; and Larry Don Suckla, District 58.

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

In 2024, the Colorado General Assembly appropriated \$20 million with near unanimous support through the annual Water Projects Bill (HB24-1435) towards the \$99 million purchase price of the Shoshone Water Rights. These funds, in addition to contributions from other local governments, water entities and regional organizations, have brought the total amount raised to over \$57 million. The \$40 million awarded by the federal government in January will bring the total to \$97 million but is still under review by the Trump administration.

“The Shoshone water rights are vital not just to our way of life on the western slope, but to water security across our entire state,” said **Senator Catlin**. “Our agriculture, recreation, and energy industries rely on consistent flows in the Colorado River. The \$20 million from the state of Colorado, along with the funds committed by local governments and water providers shows how important this project is for our community. Now it’s time for the federal government to do their part.”

“On behalf of the Colorado River District, our regional coalition partners, and the many people who have worked tirelessly on this for decades, we are grateful for the unwavering support from our elected officials,” said **Andy Mueller, General Manager of the Colorado River District**. “All of our local economies, including agriculture, energy, and tourism, depend on the Shoshone water rights. Securing it permanently is securing the future of rural Colorado and the way of life we cherish.”

These funds, awarded through the Inflation Reduction Act's Upper Colorado River Basin Environmental Program, known as B2E, were dedicated to projects which will mitigate the impacts of drought and support ecosystems throughout the Colorado River Basin. Permanent protection of these senior water rights will protect drinking water for small communities, and irrigation water essential for the production of food and fiber.

A durable solution and multi-generational investment, Shoshone permanency will ultimately provide priceless benefits for water users on both sides of the divide. More information about the Shoshone Water Right Preservation Campaign & Coalition can be found at: www.KeepShoshoneFlowing.org.

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