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Subject: RWR

Dear Commissioners Laydon, Teal, and Thomas Regarding: RWR Proposal

With footprints in both regions...as a retired business owner/executive who operated in Douglas County, as well as the entire front range, and a landowner in the San Luis Valley, my perspective is entwined within the challenges facing both regions.

During decades of operation as a general contractor we repeatedly paid for water & tap fees and participated in multiple municipal commissions related to sustainable water programs for the front range from El Paso to Douglas to Larimer Counties. The word untenable comes to mind when reflecting on this first hand experience and your position, along with the challenges you face in this time, is not envied. Godspeed.

At the same time, as someone from the front range who has long enjoyed agriculture from the SLV, and is now a landowner in the Valley, my perspective encompasses a deeper understanding of the needs for this region. As well as an appreciation for the underlying, often unobserved, mutual dependency.

In short, recognizing your duty to source water for our Douglas County constituents, we also need to feed those constituents and it seems short sighted to effectively choke one to achieve the other.

As we've achieved with the Greenland Open Space grazing project, locally sourced Colorado agriculture (farm & ranch) is something we should collectively rally around and conserve. Correction: it is something we should seek to "grow" not choke. This is especially true after our experience with the global supply system shortcomings during these last two years. Colorado ag is a treasure that's already struggling with persistent drought conditions and the San Luis Valley, which receives less precipitation than most of Colorado, is acutely challenged. Why would we take something vital from an already struggling local food source that feeds us?

Yes, money can make water run uphill. Yes, we have a need. Yes, Commissioner Teal is correct, 'opportunities to bring water into the County do bear consideration' at some level. In my humble opinion, NO, this opportunity is not the solution. In fact, this proposal seems emblematic of the shortcomings of our system. With enough money and resources we 'rob Peter to pay Paul' and worry about paying Peter back some other day. We also have a need for locally sourced food and a responsibility to help sustain our Colorado neighbors. Not to mention, as Coloradans we should have a need to conserve the world class natural resources, great hunting grounds, wildlife, and recreational wonders of the Valley we all enjoy in one form or another. Yes, we can find a better way.

Let's find another way.

Respectfully,

Jay W

