

From: susan [mailto:susmpierce@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 2:33 PM
To: bocc@douglas.co.us
Cc: info@slvec.org
Subject: RWR Proposal

Dear Abe Laydon, George Teal, and Lora Thomas,

Thank you for your service as Douglas County Commissioners. I would like to address the Renewable Water Resources (RWR) Proposal as someone who has lived in the San Luis Valley for 22 years and as a mother of 3 fifth-generation rancher kids. I am a fourth-generation Coloradoan and a scientist and educator by profession. The San Luis Valley is an extraordinary place that relies on its water to provide food, wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, and well-being. The population is diverse with originally many indigenous peoples, then Hispano families who arrived over 400 years ago, homesteading ranchers and farmers (like my family), Mormon, Amish, Mennonites, and immigrant communities mainly from Mexico and Guatemala. It is also one of the poorest regions (economically) in the Nation.

There is no "renewable water" in the San Luis Valley, simply because water input cannot keep up with use and drought. The people and wildlife of the San Luis Valley need what water they have for survival purposes. Douglas county is one of the richest (economically) counties in the Nation. I see this not only as a resource issue but as an equity issue. To take water from the basin of a poor region to use in a rich region.

Unfortunately, recent research published in Nature Climate Change has found that the drought conditions in southwestern North America are almost certainly going to continue and intensify. Soil moisture is extremely low. Is it right to take water from a region that uses their water to grow food rather than Kentucky Bluegrass? Please consider water conservation measures such as those that the City of Greeley is taking to replant parks in native, drought-resistant grasses. There are many measures that can be taken in the Front Range to conserve water. Please give careful consideration to projects such as those implemented in the Platte Valley Water Partnership.

I truly hope that the decisions you make will allow our family - my kids- to continue to ranch on their Centennial Ranch in Del Norte, allow small operation farms to operate, and allow the wetlands that provide critical habitat for so many species to flourish in the San Luis Valley by not taking the water that is our lifeline and was the lifeline for indigenous ancestors.

Sincerely,
Susan M. Pierce
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Greeley Colorado, 80643
(970) 518-6990

Note, I am currently in Greeley with my elderly mother, but my children's ranch is in Del Norte, Colorado