

3587

City of Fort Collins

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Darin Atteberry

July 15, 2009

Ms. Rena Brand
EIS Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
Denver Regulatory Office
9307 S. Wadsworth Blvd.
Littleton, Colorado 80128-6910



Dear Ms. Brand:

1 [This letter is intended to provide City of Fort Collins scoping comments to the Army Corps of
2 Engineers (Corps) regarding the proposed Regional Watershed Supply Project (RWSP).
3 According to information provided to Fort Collins by the Corps, the RWSP is proposing a
4 pipeline that would occur on two City-owned properties, the 19,000-acre Soapstone Prairie
5 Natural Area (SPNA) and the 26,500-acre Meadow Spring Ranch. Fort Collins believes that the
6 proposed location of the pipeline on these properties is highly detrimental to natural resource
7 values as well as City utility operations.]

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8 [There are a number of natural and cultural resource issues that should be considered by the Corps
9 in its environmental impact analysis of the pipeline. SPNA and Meadow Springs Ranch occur
10 within a landscape that has been the focus of intensive conservation efforts for over two decades.
11 This effort is known as the Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains Project and comprises a
12 partnership of public and private conservation organizations and private landowners whose goal
13 is to conserve, through conservation easements and fee title, a connection between the mountains
14 and plains. To date, the partnership has conserved an essentially contiguous area extending 22
15 miles across, from the native grasslands along I-25 to the foothills and lower reaches of
16 Roosevelt National Forest (see attached map).]

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17 [In addition to SPNA and Meadow Springs, the City owns adjoining Round Butte Ranch and
18 Bernard Ranch. Moreover, conservation easements are held on Wire Draw Ranch, the Roberts
19 Ranch, and Red Mountain Ranch as shown on the attached map. Each of the conservation
20 easements specifically prohibits structures such as pipelines. Funds used to purchase fee title
21 and conservation easements are generated through a dedicated City of Fort Collins sales tax and
22 a Larimer County sales tax. In addition, Great Outdoors Colorado has participated in the
23 purchase of these properties and conservation easements. Additional partners at SPNA include
24 the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park
25 Service, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, The Nature Conservancy, Legacy Land Trust and
26 may other organizations and individuals.]

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1 [Properties are managed to not only conserve an important connection between the mountains and
2 plains, but also to protect habitat for many species in need of conservation. Recent inventory
3 efforts have revealed many species of plants and animals listed as federally or state threatened or (4)
4 of special concern, along with several rare plant communities. A cursory examination of the
5 pipeline location at SPNA reveals that it would disturb a federally listed plant species (*Gaura*
6 *Neomexicana ssp.*), a state-listed plant species (*Liatris ligulistylis*), black-tailed prairie dog
7 colonies, burrowing owl, mountain plover and other prairie ground-nesting birds, wetlands and
8 riparian areas.]

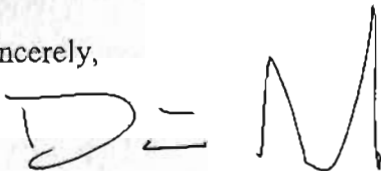
9 [In addition to biological resources, there are major efforts underway to conserve cultural
10 resources in the area. The Lindenmeier Archaeological Site, a world-renowned National Historic (5)
11 Landmark, occurs at SPNA along with hundreds of known cultural sites dating from pre-Folsom
12 to modern day ranching.]

13 [At Meadow Springs Ranch, the proposed routing could seriously impact water infrastructure (6)
14 critical to ranch cattle operations and would traverse acreage included in a formal Watershed
15 Protection Program designed to protect the local aquifer as a drinking water source.]

16 [The City recommends that the proposed pipeline alignment be located away from SPNA and
17 Meadow Springs, and more generally the entire Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains Project (7)
18 area. This is feasible as there are existing infrastructure corridors to the north and east. In short,
19 it makes little sense to bisect the heart of a previously undisturbed area with a major pipeline
20 when viable alternatives exist.]

21 Please contact Daylan Figgs, Senior Environmental Planner with the City's Natural Areas
22 Program at (970) 416-2418 for additional information or assistance.

Sincerely,

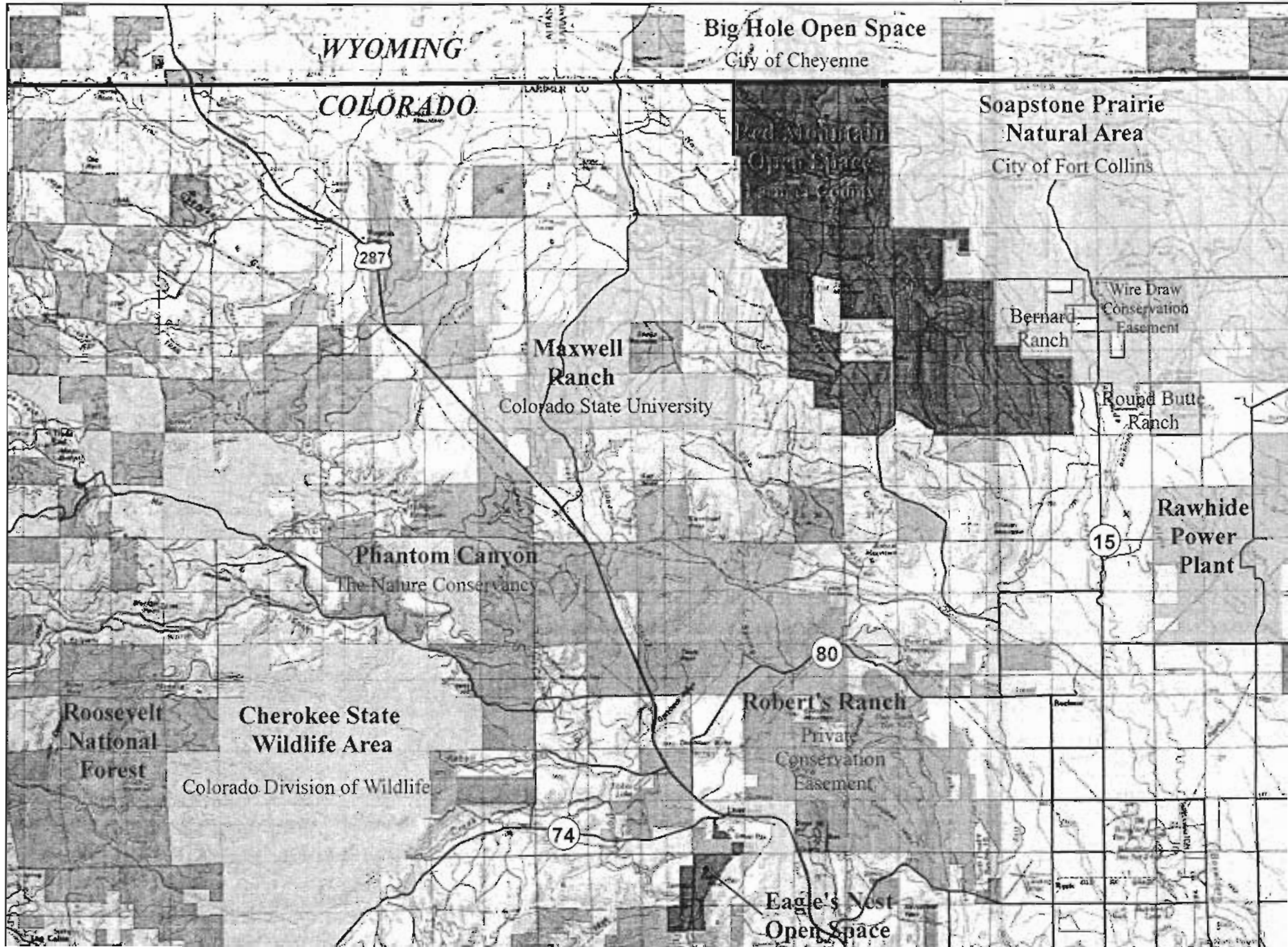


Darin Atteberry
City Manager

/du

cc: Gary Buffington, Director, Larimer County Open Lands
Heather Knight, Program Manager, The Nature Conservancy
Ryan Boggs, Director, Legacy Land Trust
Nancy Howard, Colorado Division of Wildlife

Map 3: Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains Project



From: [Holbert, Dora](#)
To: [MCRGEIS;](#)
Subject: Proposed waterline project
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2009 1:47:04 PM

Ms. Rena Brand,

I am very much against the proposed waterline project to Colorado. The diversion of water from the Green River could seriously impact our fish and wildlife habitat, tourism and businesses and the quality of life here in Sweetwater County. While it would appear we have an adequate water supply at the moment, southwest Wyoming is definitely prone to serious drought periods and I feel diverting this water from the area is not a wise thing to do. This project could jeopardize our water quality and dependability from our water treatment facility as well as increase costs for water treatment due to lower levels of water and increased salts. The possibility of future industrial growth could be hampered as well. Southwest Wyoming has finally seen some economic growth in recent years, though being based mainly on energy, that growth is very precarious. Limiting future possibilities would be irresponsible.

I realize Wyoming is a sparsely populated state and the wants and needs of its residents are often "lost in the shuffle", but those of us who do choose to reside here, do so for the quality of life Wyoming offers and I strongly oppose this proposed waterline project.

Dora J. Holbert
Housing Accounting Coordinator
Rock Springs Housing Authority
233 C Street
Rock Springs, WY 82901
307-352-1471
Dora_Holbert@rswy.net

From: [Lansang, Dave](#)
To: [MCRGEIS](#);
Subject: Proposed Water Project
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2009 7:35:15 AM

Ms. Rena Brand,

Let me first say that I am strongly opposed to the idea of taking water from the Green River and moving it to the front range of Colorado.

As an avid recreational enthusiast and a proponent of all types of recreational opportunities here in southwest Wyoming, I see no local benefits by removing massive amounts of water from anywhere near us. I, along with virtually every other resident of Southwest Wyoming, only see adverse impacts. Until the regulatory commissions can assure Wyoming that no negative impacts will result, this proposal must be stopped.

Can you assure our residents that water levels will be maintained in the Green River and the Flaming Gorge? Can you assure us that the quality fisheries in this drainage will not be harmed whatsoever? Can you assure us that other forms of recreation relating to this local water resource will not be impacted? Can you assure us that the water supply in our community will not be depleted to a point at which we must ration water supplies as a result of this ridiculous proposal? Can you assure us that the cost to treat our potable water will not increase as a result of this project? Can you assure us that our quality of life here will not be negatively impacted by this project?

These and many more local concerns / questions must be answered and fully satisfied first.

Please consider my concerns, and those of other locals, before considering adversely affecting Wyoming forever!

David M. "Dave" Lansang

Director - Parks and Recreation

City of Rock Springs

3900 Sweetwater Drive

Rock Springs, WY 82901

ph - (307) 352-1440

fax- (307) 352-1444

email: dave_lansang@rswy.net

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From: [McCarron, Jana](#)
To: [MCRGEIS](#);
Subject: Colorado Waterline Project
Date: Monday, May 18, 2009 10:22:56 AM

Dear Ms. Brand:

I am sending this email in opposition to the proposed Colorado Waterline Project, which would take water from western Wyoming and divert it to Colorado. As you are aware, western Wyoming has a high desert climate. Fish, wildlife and humans rely upon the existing water supply for survival in this harsh region. Specifically, the proposed project will:

1. Decrease water levels on the Green River and the Flaming Gorge. The decreased water levels will adversely impact fish and wildlife habitat especially, salmon and lake trout.
2. Impact water quality and dependability for drinking water to residents of this area and significantly constrain future growth.
3. Negatively impact tourism and businesses that rely upon Flaming Gorge and the Green River, including marinas, guides services and other recreation-related businesses.
4. Increase the cost of water treatment for cities and industry due to the lowered water levels and increased salts if the point of diversion is in the area of the Big Sandy River confluence.
5. Severely restrict expansion of existing industry in southwestern Wyoming, thereby making this yet another resource that is mined from this area, with no return given to the residents and existing industries.

It is my opinion that there are no benefits of this proposed project for the residents, businesses and visitors to southwestern Wyoming.

Regards,

Jana McCarron

Jana McCarron, City Planner
City of Rock Springs
212 D Street
Rock Springs WY 82901
307.352.1540 (ph) ~ 307.352.1545 (fax)
<http://www.rswy.net/Services/Zoning.htm>

#3632

COUNCIL MEETING

CITY OF LARAMIE

DATE: July 21, 2009

1 TITLE: Resolution in opposition to "Million Resources Group Watershed Supply
2 Project" to divert water from the Green River in Wyoming to Colorado.

3 ITEM: This proposed resolution would oppose the proposed project by the Million
4 Resources Group to divert some 250,000 acre feet of water from the Green River at
5 a point in Sweetwater County, Wyoming, and transport that water through a
6 pipeline across Wyoming, going through Albany County, eventually taking the water
7 to the Front Range of Colorado for use.

8 The proposed project raises issues of the diversion of water rights in the State
9 of Wyoming and assigning them for use in Colorado. In addition, there are a
10 number of concerns raised about the impacts on the various locations, including
11 Albany County, with the importation of aquatic species that are undesirable.

- 12 OPTIONS: 1. Approve the Resolution opposing the proposed project by the Million
13 Resources Group for the diversion of Green River water.
14 2. Approve the resolution with amendments.
15 3. Not Approve the resolution.

16 RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION: Approve the resolution opposing the Million
17 Resources Group Watershed Supply Project and recommending the denial of any and
18 all permits for such project.

19 STRATEGIC GOAL MET: To insure protection of the environment.
20 BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPACT: Zero

CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: David C. Clark, City Attorney

REVIEWED BY:

CA	<u>2/17</u>	PW	_____	PD	_____	PLN	_____
FIRE	_____	ADM	_____	OCM	_____	ENG	_____
CM	<u>BMO</u>	OTHER	_____	Name / Title			

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Proposed Resolution.

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RESOLUTION NO. 2009 - 66

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED "MILLION CONSERVATION RESOURCES GROUP WATERSHED SUPPLY PROJECT" IN THE STATE OF WYOMING.

WHEREAS, a group identified as the Million Conservation Resources Group has proposed a project of transferring 250,000 acre-feet of water from the Green River upstream of Flaming Gorge Reservoir in Sweetwater County, Wyoming across the State of Wyoming, including a portion of Albany County, to be disbursed along the "Front Range" of Colorado; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed project entails utilizing Lake Hattie in Albany County as a storage facility of the water on its route to Colorado; and,

WHEREAS, such a water pipeline connecting the Green River with the Laramie River watershed could facilitate the influx of invasive species such as zebra mussels or quagga mussels, which could cause millions of dollars in damage to local water and sewer systems connected to the Laramie River; and,

WHEREAS, the removal of 250,000 acre-feet of water from the Green River is likely to have major negative impacts on trout fisheries in the Green River and on kokanee fisheries in Flaming Gorge Reservoir, and is further likely to impair recreational opportunities for boating, swimming, and other recreation in Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area; and,

WHEREAS, the removal of 250,000 acre-feet of water from the Green River is likely to imperil the survival of four species of Endangered fishes downstream in the Green and Colorado Rivers, specifically the Colorado pikeminnow, bonytail, humpback chub, and razorback sucker;

WHEREAS, the construction of a pipeline corridor through the Laramie River Basin may become an avenue for noxious weed invasion, and noxious weeds such as cheatgrass and kosha could spread into surrounding lands to the detriment of local agriculture; and,

WHEREAS, the construction of a pipeline connecting Lake Hattie, into which the flow of the Laramie River can be diverted via canal, with Colorado Front Range water markets could make it easier for water speculators to buy up and remove water from the Laramie River basin for sale to Colorado communities, to the detriment of the interests of the City of Laramie and surrounding agricultural operations in Wyoming; and,

WHEREAS, the removal of a large proportion of the flow of the Green River could alter the balance of salinity in the system, both in the Green River and downstream; and,

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WHEREAS, the creation of a private for-profit corporation as a water broker in Wyoming and Colorado does not serve the best interests of water users anywhere within the State of Wyoming;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY the City Council of the City of Laramie that the City hereby expresses its opposition to the construction of the Million Conservation Resource Group's Regional Watershed Supply Project and recommends that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Wyoming Board of Control withhold any and all permits and approvals for the proposed project.

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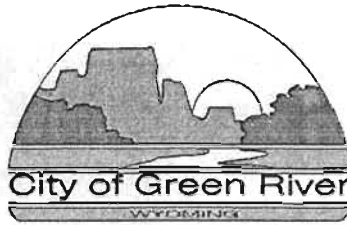
PASSED AND APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF July, 2009.

Jodi Guerin, Mayor and President
of the City Council of the City of
Laramie, Wyoming

ATTEST:

Sue Morris-Jones, CMC
City Clerk

1201



Office of the Mayor

May 8, 2009

RENA BRAND, PROJECT MANAGER
ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
DENVER REGULATORY OFFICE
9307 S WADSWORTH BLVD
LITTLETON CO 80128-6901

RE: REGIONAL WATERSHED SUPPLY PROJECT

Dear Ms. Brand:

09-57

Enclosed is a copy of the Resolution passed by the Green River City Council on May 5, 2009, opposing the Regional Watershed Supply Project, requesting an extended coping period and requesting cooperating agency status pursuant to 40CRF 1508.5.

I was informed yesterday the scoping period has been extended to July 27, 2009.

I request that you add me to your distribution list for all notices and documents regarding the Regional Watershed Supply Project. My email address is castilhgr@wyoming.com.

Sincerely,

Hank Castillon
Mayor

gl



Commissioners, expressing their opposition to the Regional Watershed Supply Project, and are in agreement with matters raised therein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF GREEN RIVER, STATE OF WYOMING:

That the Governing Body of the City of Green River, Wyoming, unanimously opposes the Regional Watershed Supply Project, or any other diversions of water from the Green River Basin.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governing Body of the City of Green River, Wyoming, is opposed to the Army Corps of Engineers requirement that all written comments be submitted by May 19, 2009, and requests that the scoping period be extended so that additional scoping meetings can be held to allow all southwest Wyoming citizens potentially impacted by this proposal the opportunity to express their views on the issues and alternatives.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governing Body of the City of Green River, Wyoming, requests *cooperating agency status* pursuant to 40 CFR 1508.5.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governing Body of the City of Green River, Wyoming joins with the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners and the Sweetwater County Board of Commissioners in opposing the Regional Watershed Supply Project for the reasons stated in their letters to Rene Brand, Project Manager for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

APPROVED this 5th day of May, 2009.



H. Castillon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeffrey V. Nieters, City Clerk