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## **Platte River Basin Study Comments--Colorado Water Conservation Board**

Daries C. Lile

Colorado Water Conservation Board

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# STATE OF COLORADO

## Colorado Water Conservation Board Department of Natural Resources

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Roy Romer  
Governor

James S. Lochh  
Executive Director

Daries C. Tille  
Director, CWCB

April 9, 1997

VIA FAX, MAIL, and EMAIL

Mr. Donald R. Glaser, Executive Director  
Western Water Policy Review Commission  
P.O. Box 25007, D-5001  
Denver, CO 80225-0007

APR 11 1997

Re: Western Water Policy Review Advisory Commission; Comments, "Draft Report - Platte River Basin Study", McLaughlin Water Engineers and David Aiken, dated March 1, 1997.

Dear Mr. Glaser:

APR 11 1997

This letter provides the comment of the Colorado Water Conservation Board ("CWCB") to the above referenced report. The CWCB is the state agency charged with the "protection and development of the waters of the state, for the benefit of the past and future inhabitants of the state..." Section 37-60-102 C.R.S. The CWCB's statutorily authorized duties include: promoting the conservation and development of water, prevention of floods, protecting the rights of the state of Colorado with respect to the waters of interstate streams, cooperating with federal water resource agencies, the appropriation of water rights to protect instream flows, assisting with mitigation to maintain a balance between development of the state's water and protection of fish and wildlife resources, and enhancing water use efficiency to assure adequate future supplies at a reasonable cost.

From these perspectives the CWCB has reviewed the "Draft Report - Platte River Basin" and finds that it provides a fair rendition of the critical water resource problems facing the State of Colorado and our neighbors in the Basin. We believe that the authors have fairly described the Basin and accurately quantified the dimensions of the unresolved water resource issues which will require that cooperative solutions be developed by the states and appropriate federal agencies. The draft report demonstrates an appreciation and proper respect for the primacy of state law in the allocation of water subject to preemption by Congress where necessary to meet federal interests. The draft correctly recognizes the need for additional data, research, and information management to develop technical, although not necessarily structural, solutions to the problems being discussed.

The draft report provides sound recommendations which the Western Water Policy Review Advisory Commission ("WWPRAC") can incorporate into its deliberations pursuant to the objectives identified in the Western Water Policy Review Act of 1992 ("Act") and the WWPRAC Charter signed by Secretary of the Interior Babbitt on May 16, 1996. The CWCB specifically concurs with

Mr. Donald R. Glaser

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each of the Findings and Recommendations presented in Section IV of the draft. We are pleased that the authors have focused on recommendations for the federal agencies that address real current needs and appear to be susceptible to implementation in the twenty year time-frame specified in the Act. The streamlining of federal agency procedures and funding authorizations would allow those agencies to improve their responsiveness and ability to be meaningful players in the cooperative solutions that need to be developed. The CWCB would also suggest that with ten or more federal agencies having water and related resource roles in the Basin there are opportunities to better coordinate and perhaps merge and consolidate some of those agency functions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Davies C. Lile". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Davies" being the most prominent.

Davies C. Lile, Director  
Colorado Water Conservation Board

cc: James Lochhead  
Gale Norton  
Hal Simpson  
Betsy Rieke  
David Harrison  
Ken Salazar