

February 3, 2009

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

RE: South Platte River Chatfield Reservoir Reallocation Project

The Nature Conservancy is pleased to send this letter of support for the South Platte River Chatfield Reservoir Reallocation Project effort.

The project would create storage space for an additional 20,600 acre-feet of water in Chatfield Reservoir, a U.S. Army Corps flood control project. The additional storage space would be shared by a number of water users both upstream and downstream of the reservoir. The project also includes five instream partners – City and County of Denver, City of Littleton, Denver Water, The Greenway Foundation and Metro Wastewater – who would potentially benefit from increased downstream flows in the South Platte River resulting in environmental benefits along the river.

While The Nature Conservancy has not engaged in the detailed environmental analysis of impacts at the Chatfield State Park or the downstream environment of the South Platte River, we commend this project for two primary reasons: 1) the project proponents have found a creative use of existing infrastructure rather than resorting to building damaging new infrastructure; and 2) the process for the Chatfield Reallocation Project can serve as a model for water supply planning in Colorado, in that it is inclusive of all stakeholders and that it seeks to provide multiple project benefits, including environmental.

The Chatfield Reservoir Reallocation Project will contribute to solving critical multi-use water supply and environmental challenges in Colorado. While we cannot comment on the specific environmental impacts of the project at this time, we commend this project and the project proponents for the creative and inclusive approach to designing water supply solutions. The project represents the type of multi-jurisdictional resource management effort that needs to occur along the river to balance traditional water uses with environmental benefits. We will continue to work with project partners to learn more about the specific downstream flow regime and environmental mitigation at the reservoir site as the project moves forward.

Sincerely,



Tom Iseman  
Water Program Manager  
The Nature Conservancy of Colorado