

STATE OF COLORADO

Colorado Water Conservation Board Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Tom Browning, Chief
Watershed & Flood Protection Section

DATE: March 4, 2011

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item 23, March 15-16, 2011 Board Meeting**
Watershed & Flood Protection Section
Chatfield Reservoir Reallocation Update

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Mike King
DNR Executive Director

Jennifer L. Gimbel
CWCB Director

Staff Recommendation

This is an informational update only, and Board action is not required.

Background

Chatfield Reservoir was constructed in the 1970's by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) at the confluence of the South Platte River and Plum Creek to control flooding in the Denver Metro area. Although the main purpose of the reservoir is for flood control, it also provides storage space for conservation (or "multipurpose") water, maintains fisheries and wildlife habitat, and is home to one of the most important and highly utilized recreation areas for Colorado State Parks.

Years ago, the CWCB contracted with the Corps to investigate the "reallocation" of existing storage space in Chatfield Reservoir. The concept behind reallocation is to re-assign storage space currently reserved for flood control purposes to space for joint flood control *and* conservation purposes, effectively increasing capacity for water supply. The Corps is preparing a detailed Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (FR/EIS) to evaluate the potential impacts, mitigation strategies, and costs of four alternatives: two options for reallocation and two alternatives for water users if no action is taken at Chatfield. The Corps plans to release the Draft FR/EIS for public review later this year. The water providers' preferred alternative is to reallocate up to 20,600 acre-feet of existing storage space in the reservoir for M&I and agricultural water needs.

The Corps is the lead federal agency in partnership with the Colorado Department of Natural Resources and several of its Divisions. Currently, thirteen water provider entities are working closely with the State and the Corps to obtain various amounts of storage space within the proposed reallocation pool. Staff will present information to the Board regarding study status, schedule, costs, and remaining tasks.