

# STATE OF COLORADO

---

## Colorado Water Conservation Board Department of Natural Resources

1313 Sherman Street, Room 721  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Phone: (303) 866-3441  
Fax: (303) 866-4474  
www.cwcb.state.co.us



TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Tim Feehan, Deputy Director, Resource Management

DATE: November 8, 2013

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 28f, November 19-20, 2013 Board Meeting  
Construction Fund Non-Reimbursable Investments - Referred  
South Platte Groundwater Level Data Collection and Analysis

---

John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor

Mike King  
DNR Executive Director

James Eklund  
CWCB Director

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board approve this request for the General Assembly to authorize this project and appropriate \$500,000 from the Construction Fund to the Department of Natural Resources for allocation to the Colorado Water Conservation Board, for the Board to install and monitor various devices; collect and analyze data; perform groundwater model updates enhancements, and simulations utilizing the South Platte Decision Support System (SPDSS); conduct public outreach; and complete other efforts as necessary to assist in determining the cause and possible remediation to high groundwater levels in the South Platte River Basin.

### Background

At the November 2011 Board Meeting the Board directed staff to request the General Assembly to appropriate up to \$500,000 in the 2012 Projects Bill. Additionally, at the November 2012 Board Meeting the Board directed staff to request the General Assembly to appropriate up to \$250,000 in the 2013 Projects Bill, for a total funding amount of \$750,000. These funds over the past few years have been used to collect and analyze data, update and make enhancements to the SPDSS alluvial groundwater model and to perform two pilot projects in the Sterling and Gilcrest/LaSalle areas, to assist in determining the cause and possible remediation to high groundwater levels in the South Platte River Basin. Additionally the General Assembly approved House Bill 1278 that directed the Colorado Water Institute (CWI) to collect and analyze existing groundwater data within the South Platte Basin to provide an independent review of what might be contributing to high groundwater levels. CWI's efforts related to HB 1278 are being funded out of the Construction Fund at an estimated total cost of \$907,000, with a draft report due to the General Assembly by December 2013.

The Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), Department of Water Resources (DWR) DWR, and CWI have been coordinating efforts to ensure that all pertinent information that is being collected is available for review and use by all interested parties. DWR has completed

installing monitoring devices in the Sterling area and is currently collecting data from those locations and at existing wells in the Sterling and Gilcrest/LaSalle areas.

**Discussion**

Staff anticipates that the \$750,000 appropriated under the 2012 and 2013 Projects Bills will be fully encumbered or expended by July 1, 2014. The \$500,000 requested under the 2014 Projects Bill would allow staff to be prepared to act on the anticipated HB 1278 recommendations related to groundwater monitoring and modeling, in order to further evaluate the causes of high groundwater levels in the basin.