



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

BEFORE THE COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD

STATE OF COLORADO

Prehearing Statement of the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife

IN THE MATTER OF AN INSTREAM FLOW APPROPRIATION ON THE DOLORES RIVER, IN WATER DIVISION 4

Pursuant to Rule 5n(2) of the Rules Concerning the Colorado Instream Flow and Natural Lake Level, 2 CCR 408-2 ("ISF Rules"), the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife ("CPW"), hereby submits its prehearing statement in support of the Colorado Water Conservation Board ("CWCB") Staff's recommendation for an instream flow ("ISF") appropriation on the Dolores River in Mesa and Montrose counties between the confluence with the San Miguel River and the confluence with West Creek in the amounts set forth in CWCB staff recommendation (see CWCB staff recommendations at:

<http://cwcbweblink.state.co.us/weblink/0/doc/174123/Electronic.aspx?searchid=ea100ba0-da72-4c95-860e-b847ae02e33f>

A. FACTUAL CLAIMS

1) Pursuant to Title 33 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS):

§33-1-101 - "It is the policy of the state of Colorado that the wildlife and their environment are to be protected, preserved, enhanced, and managed for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of this state and its visitors ... that there shall be provided a comprehensive program designed to offer the greatest possible variety of wildlife-related recreational opportunity to the people of this state and its visitors and that, to carry out such program and policy, there shall be a continuous operation of planning, acquisition, and development of wildlife habitats and facilities for wildlife related opportunities."

§33-2-102 - "... it is the policy of this state to manage all nongame wildlife, recognizing the private property rights of individual property owners, for human enjoyment and welfare, for scientific purposes, and to insure their perpetuation as members of ecosystems; that species or subspecies of wildlife indigenous to this state which may be found to be endangered or threatened within the state should be accorded protection in order to maintain and enhance their numbers to the extent possible ..."



§33-2-106 - "(1) The division shall establish such programs including acquisition of land or aquatic habitat as are deemed necessary for management of nongame, endangered, or threatened wildlife. (2) ... the division may enter into agreements with federal agencies or political subdivisions of this state or with private persons for administration and management of any area established under this section or utilized for management of nongame, endangered, or threatened wildlife."

§33-5-101 - "It is declared to be the policy of the state that its fish and wildlife resources, and particularly the fishing waters within the state, are to be protected and preserved from the actions of any state agency to the end that they be available for all time and without change in their natural existing state, except as may be necessary and appropriate after due consideration of all factors involved."

- 2) Based upon field surveys conducted by the CPW (and the former Colorado Division of Wildlife ("CDOW") prior to the 2011 Parks - Wildlife merger) and Bureau of Land Management ("BLM"), there is conclusive evidence that there is a natural environment that can be preserved on the subject reach of the Dolores River.
- 3) The natural environment on the subject reach of the Dolores River: (a) will be preserved to a reasonable degree with the proposed ISF water right; and, (b) can exist without material injury to water rights.
- 4) The Dolores River instream flow recommendation satisfies criteria identified by the CWCB for instream flow appropriations including:
 - The recommendations have broad public support;
 - The proposed appropriations will have a positive impact on state or local economies;
 - Includes native and introduced fishes, aquatic macroinvertebrates, and riparian communities; and
 - The recommendations are part of a collaborative solution to a unique natural resource issue with federal, state or local partners.
- 5) The instream flow amount and timing recommended by the CWCB staff:
 - Is based upon standard scientific methodology and an accurate R2CROSS and PHABSIM/RHABSIM analysis;
 - Is based upon a set of habitat suitability curves that are appropriate for the Dolores River stream channel and resident fish population;
 - Is based upon a reasonable selection of protective flow rates taken from the weighted usable area curves produced by the PHABSIM analysis;
 - Reflects the amount of water available for appropriation as an instream flow water right; and,
 - Is required to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree.
- 6) CPW reserves the right to submit additional factual claims as necessary in its rebuttal statement.

B. LEGAL CLAIMS

CPW is not submitting legal claims with this prehearing statement, but reserves the right to submit legal claims with its rebuttal statement.

C. EXHIBITS TO BE INTRODUCED AT HEARING

- 1) January 2014 CWCB Staff Report on the Dolores River Instream Flow Recommendations. This report, along with its appendices, contains maps of the proposed reach, information regarding the proposed ISF amounts, data collected by the former CDOW, CPW and BLM up to the date of the reports, hydraulic and hydrologic studies and water availability estimates - see:

Staff Report:

<http://cwcbweblink.state.co.us/weblink/0/doc/174123/Electronic.aspx?searchid=ea100ba0-da72-4c95-860e-b847ae02e33f>

Appendices:

<http://cwcbweblink.state.co.us/weblink/0/doc/174141/Electronic.aspx?searchid=06db0563-c06a-4c17-aa1b-ec9d101d5269>

- 2) CPW may introduce demonstrative, rebuttal, or other exhibits as allowed by the CWCB or as otherwise agreed upon by the Parties.
- 3) CPW may rely upon exhibits introduced or disclosed by any other party to this hearing.

D. WITNESSES

The following witnesses may testify at the hearing as described below, may give rebuttal testimony, and may be available at the hearing to answer questions from the Board.

- 1) The following CPW employee may testify on the importance of using the State of Colorado's ISF Program to acquire adequate instream flows and lake levels to assist the CPW with its' responsibilities relative to the protection, preservation, enhancement and management of fish and wildlife and their habitats and the environment for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of this state and its visitors:
 - Jay W. Skinner, Acting Water Resources Section Manager and current ISF Program Coordinator
- 2) The following CPW individuals may testify at the hearing, may give rebuttal testimony and may be available at the hearing to answer questions on their observations of the natural environment of the Dolores River, bluehead and flannelmouth sucker research, bluehead and flannelmouth sucker habitat and streamflow requirements, roundtail chub habitat and streamflow requirements, existing fishery surveys and their analysis and current and future CPW management strategies relating to the Dolores River and these species of fish:

- John Alves, Senior Aquatic Biologist - Southwest Region
- Dan Kowalski, former Montrose Area Aquatic Biologist and current CPW Aquatic Researcher
- Eric Garduino, Montrose Area Aquatic Biologist
- James White, Durango Area Aquatic Biologist
- Harry Crockett, CPW Aquatic Native Species Coordinator
- Jay Skinner, Acting Water Resources Section Manager and current ISF Program Coordinator and/or
- Mark Uppendahl, retired CPW ISF Program Coordinator

2) CPW reserves the right to name additional witnesses with its rebuttal statement.

E. WRITTEN TESTIMONY

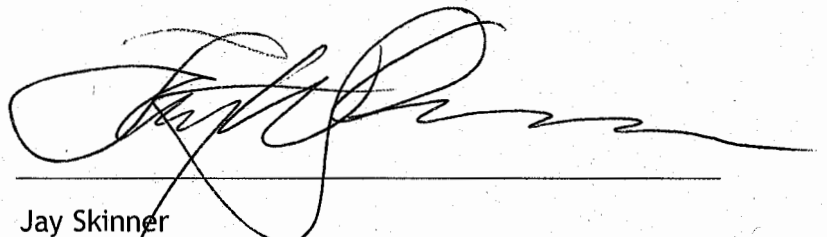
CDP is not submitting written testimony with this prehearing statement, but reserves the right to submit written testimony with its rebuttal statement.

F. LEGAL MEMORANDA

CPW is not submitting legal memoranda with this prehearing statement, but reserves the right to submit legal memoranda with its rebuttal statement.

Respectfully submitted this 30th day of June, 2015.

FOR COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE



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