

DISTRICT COURT, WATER DIVISION 4 MONTROSE COUNTY, COLORADO 1200 N. GRAND AVE., BIN A MONTROSE, CO 81401	DATE FILED: June 22, 2015 1:42 PM
CONCERNING THE APPLICATION FOR WATER RIGHTS OF: COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD, IN THE SLATE RIVER (UPPER), A NATURAL STREAM, IN THE EAST-TAYLOR WATERSHED, IN GUNNISON COUNTY, COLORADO.	▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲
	Case No.: 14CW3096 Div. 4
FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, RULING OF REFEREE, JUDGMENT AND DECREE OF THE WATER COURT	

This matter comes before the Water Referee by Application of the Colorado Water Conservation Board ("CWCB") for a water right to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree. The Application was filed on December 19, 2014. The Water Court for Water Division 4 referred the Application to the Water Referee for Water Division 4, in accordance with section 37-92-101, C.R.S (2014).

The Referee, having made such investigations as are necessary to determine whether or not the statements in the Application are true, having consulted with the Division Engineer for Water Division 4, and being fully advised in the premises, does hereby make the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Ruling of the Referee in this matter:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The statements in the Application are true.
2. The name and address of Applicant:
 Colorado Water Conservation Board ("CWCB")
 1313 Sherman Street, Suite 718
 Denver, CO 80203

3. Notice and Jurisdiction: All notices of this matter required by law have been fulfilled and the Court has jurisdiction over the Application and all parties affected thereby, whether or not they have chosen to appear.
4. Opposers: No Statements of Opposition were filed and the time for filing additional Statements of Opposition has expired.
5. Summary of Consultation: The Division Engineer filed a Summary of Consultation pursuant to section 37-92-302(4), C.R.S. (2014), dated March 31, 2015 and the Referee has given the Summary due consideration.
6. Name of water right: Slate River (Upper) Instream Flow Water Right.
7. Legal Description: The natural stream channel from the confluence with Poverty Gulch extending to the confluence with Oh Be Joyful Creek being a distance of approximately 3.69 miles. This segment can be located on the Oh-Be-Joyful U.S.G.S. quadrangle. A map of the Slate River (Upper) Instream Flow Water Right is attached as Exhibit 1. The Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) and geographical descriptions (e.g., confluences) of the upstream and downstream termini are provided as the decree locations. The Public Land Survey System (PLSS) and Lat/Long coordinates are provided as cross-reference locations only.

A. Upstream Terminus = Confluence Poverty Gulch at:

1. UTM: Northing: 4312815.03 Easting: 321387.33 (NAD 1983 Zone 13 North).
2. PLSS: NE NE Section 12, Township 13 South, Range 87 West 6th PM 825' West of the East Section Line; 260' South of the North Section Line.
3. Lat/Long: latitude 38° 56' 45.96"N and longitude 107° 03' 39.75"W.

B. Downstream Terminus = Confluence Oh Be Joyful at:

1. UTM: Northing: 4308782.62 Easting: 323966.16 (NAD 1983 Zone 13 North).
2. PLSS: SE NW Section 20, Township 13 South, Range 86 West 6th PM 2,335' East of the West Section Line; 2,434' South of the North Section Line.

3. Lat/Long: latitude 38° 54' 37.10"N and longitude 107° 01' 48.96"W.
- C. The UTM, PLSS and Lat/Long locations for the upstream and downstream termini were derived from CWCB GIS using the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD). The PLSS locations in this decree were derived from CWCB GIS using 2005 PLSS data from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's Geographic Coordinate Database.
8. Source: Slate River tributary to East River.
9. A. Date of initiation of appropriation: January 28, 2014.
- B. How appropriation was initiated: Appropriation and beneficial use occurred on January 28, 2014 by the action of the CWCB under the provisions of sections 37-92-102(3) and (4) and 37-92-103(3), (4) and (10), C.R.S. (2014).
- C. Date applied to beneficial use: January 28, 2014.
10. Amount of water claimed: Instream flow of 30 cfs (5/1 – 7/15), absolute.
11. Use of the Water: Instream flow to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

12. The foregoing Findings of Fact are incorporated herein to the extent they constitute conclusions of law.
13. Notice and Jurisdiction: The Water Court for Division 4 has jurisdiction over the subject matter of these proceedings and over all persons, owners of property and water rights that may be affected hereby, whether or not they have chosen to appear. The Application in this matter and the resume publication of the Application placed such persons on notice of the relief requested by the Application and granted by this decree. §§ 37-92-203 and 302, C.R.S. (2014).
14. The CWCB has fulfilled all legal requirements for a decree for water rights including sections 37-92-302, 304 and 305, C.R.S. (2014).

15. Burden of Proof: The CWCB has complied with all requirements and has met its burden of proof to adjudicate the water rights required in the Application and is therefore entitled to a decree approving the requested water rights.

RULING OF REFEREE

16. The foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law are hereby approved and incorporated as the Ruling of Referee by this reference.

17. The application is granted and a decree in the amount of 30 cfs (5/1 – 7/15), absolute, is hereby entered to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree in the reach of Slate River between the upstream and downstream termini described in paragraph 7 above. The appropriation date for this water right is January 28, 2014.

18. The CWCB has an existing instream flow water right on the Slate River from the confluence with Poverty Gulch to the confluence with Oh Be Joyful Creek, in the amount of 8 cfs (12/1 to 12/31), and 15 cfs (4/1 to 11/30), decreed in Case No. 80CW092A, Water Div. 4, appropriated on March 17, 1980. The flow rates sought herein are in addition to the amount of the existing instream flow water right, in order to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree.

19. The priority herein confirmed was filed in the water court in the year of 2014 and shall be junior to all priorities filed in previous years. As between all rights filed in the same calendar year, priorities shall be determined by historical date of appropriation and not affected by the date of entry of ruling.

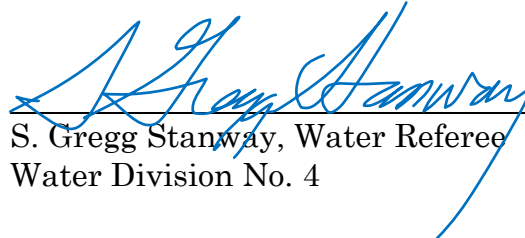
20. The CWCB shall install and maintain such measuring devices and keep such records as the Division Engineer may require for administration of this right.

It is accordingly **ORDERED** that this Ruling shall be filed with the water clerk subject to judicial review.

It is further **ORDERED** that a copy of this Ruling shall be filed with the Division Engineer and the State Engineer.

Dated this 28th day of May, 2015.

BY THE REFEREE:



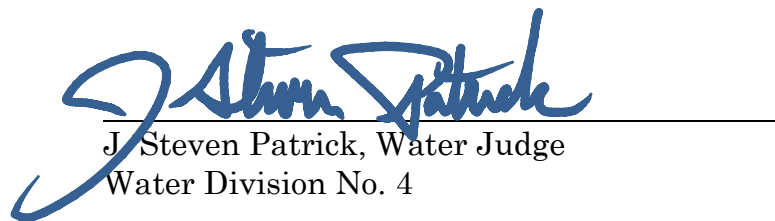
S. Gregg Stanway, Water Referee
Water Division No. 4

JUDGMENT AND DECREE OF THE WATER COURT

No protest was filed in this matter. The foregoing Ruling is confirmed and approved and is made the judgment and decree of this Court.

Dated this 22nd day of June, 2015.

BY THE COURT:



J. Steven Patrick, Water Judge
Water Division No. 4

