



**COLORADO**

**Colorado Water  
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

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**TO:** Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

**FROM:** Tom Browning, P.E.  
Deputy Director, Integrated Water Resources

**DATE:** September 3, 2015

**AGENDA ITEM:** 16 - Updated Criteria and Guidelines for Fallowing-Leasing Pilot Projects

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### Staff Recommendation

This is an informational item only. Board action is not required.

### Background

Staff will provide the board with an overview regarding the need for updated criteria and guidelines related to fallowing-leasing pilot program (Program) in Colorado. The original authorizing language for the Program was contained in HB13-1248, with more recent legislative changes contained in SB15-198. Revisions to the previously adopted criteria and guidelines (approved by the Board in November 2013) will be based on those legislative changes. Additional updates are likely to result from consensus-based recommendations from the criteria and guidelines technical committee. The committee's focus will largely be based on real-world application of the technical criteria and the Lease-Fallowing Water Accounting Tool (LFT) as applied to the Catlin Canal Pilot Project. Revisions could also include suggested feedback not only from the project applicant, but also the commenting parties.

Last May, the CWCB facilitated a workshop and field tour that was hosted by the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District. A wide variety of interested stakeholders were able to learn all about the first-ever pilot project as it began operating during the 2015 irrigation season. The Board may recall its approval of the Catlin Canal pilot during the January 2015 CWCB meeting. Discussions during the workshop were very constructive. Participants actively confirmed that ATMs such as lease-fallowing projects represent a viable option for temporary transfers, which can play a valuable role moving forward as they relate to Colorado's Water Plan.

Staff intends to present the updated criteria and guidelines for Board consideration and action at the November 2105 meeting.

