



**COLORADO**  
Gov. John Hickenlooper

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Office of Gov. John Hickenlooper

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# Gov. Hickenlooper presents Colorado's Water Plan

**DENVER — Thursday, Nov. 19, 2015** — Gov. John Hickenlooper today was joined by James Eklund, Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Director, Dr. John Stulp, Senior Adviser to the Governor, CWCB Board members and many members of Colorado's water community to celebrate the completion of Colorado's Water Plan, calling the project a historic step for the state.

The plan is the product of an unprecedented level of collaboration and public participation spanning two and a half years.

"This is how Colorado works: together, in partnership, to tackle head-on our toughest challenges," said Hickenlooper. "Today we turn a new page on Colorado's long and adversarial history on water. Colorado's Water Plan shows us how we can move forward together to ensure we continue to enjoy sufficient supplies for our vibrant cities, productive farms and incomparable environment."

In the spring of 2013, Hickenlooper directed the Colorado Water Conservation Board to develop Colorado's Water Plan, a roadmap that would put the state and its eight major river basins on a more collaborative and cooperative path to manage our water in the face of constrained supplies and growing population.

The Plan reflects grassroots discussions that began with the Basin Roundtable process in 2005. Key to the plan's success, too, has been the steady participation and counsel of water providers, agricultural organizations, environmental groups, the General Assembly, local governments and the business community as well as more than 30,000 public comments geared specifically to Colorado's Water Plan since 2013.

The completed Plan represents the consensus view from this process that Colorado must take a strategic, proactive and statewide approach to water or face the risk of leaving the fate of our water to decisions and actions from outside interests, the federal government and other states within the Colorado River Basin.

"This is a moment for Coloradans to be proud," said James Eklund, director of the CWCB. "For 150 years water has been a source of conflict in our state. More recently, that story is changing, and Colorado's Water Plan - a product of literally thousands of meetings and conversations across our state - is the best evidence yet for a new way of doing our water business. We are talking to one another. We are forging relationships. Even those who may see water-related issues from very different perspectives have worked hard to understand other points of view. And that kind of understanding leads to an environment of civility that helps us cooperate in fashioning solutions."

Colorado's Water Plan grapples directly with water challenges and highlights necessary near-term actions, including efforts to conserve and store water, additional reuse and recycling of water and providing more options to agriculture to avoid permanent dry-up of our valuable farm and ranch operations. It also sets out a framework for discussion of any future projects that may propose to move water between basins.

The final version of the plan, building on comments across interests and geography, includes a set of measurable objectives that help us move forward and provide a sense, statewide, of the goals Colorado should set for addressing our water challenges.

"Colorado's Water Plan leaves no mystery as to what Colorado's water challenges are and why we have to address them as we grow the next five million people in the state," said Jim Pokrandt, chairman of the Colorado River Basin Roundtable. "It is now up to all of us to take this information and fashion a balanced approach to meeting the water supply gap while protecting current water users on the Colorado River system, the West Slope's recreational economy and the environment."

"We all need to be willing to experiment, try new ideas, and even be willing to fail," said Jim Lochhead, CEO/Manager of Denver Water. "The important thing is that this is our opportunity to move the state forward to chart a path toward water security."

For more information, please visit <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>

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