



COLORADO

**Colorado Water
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Kevin Houck, P.E., Chief
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Watershed and Flood Protection Section

DATE: July 6, 2018

AGENDA ITEM: Agenda Item 26, SW Temporary Mobile Radar System

Background: At the time of this writing, numerous wildfires have been sparked throughout the state. Besides the immediate problems the fires cause, the threat of future flooding due to increased runoff caused by hydrophobic soils is an issue that will remain for several years in areas downstream of the burn scars. As an added concern associated with the 416 Fire burning near Durango, the area sits in a “radar hole” where storms are not picked by National Weather Service (NWS) radar. This caused concern by local emergency managers who are worried about the inability to receive warnings of heavy rain.

In response, the CWCB Flood and Drought Response Fund and the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management have funded a program with the University of Oklahoma to deploy a mobile radar from July 1 – October 1. The CWCB has assisted in the past with mobile radar projects in the Rio Grande watershed following the West Fork Fire Complex as well as in Gunnison, all areas that are not covered by NWS radars. This new mobile radar project will help the Grand Junction NWS have better access to weather features occurring on or near the burn scar for the summer and early fall monsoon season. The radar will also help give a quicker response time for emergency operations plans for public safety.

The radar is an X-Band dual polarized research radar that is set up for real time communication and display of data. Real time displays of radar data will be helpful to help the NWS make more timely and accurate flash flood forecasts and give local emergency managers more time to act when there is rain on the burn scars from the 416 Fire above Durango.

Board members will be updated on the specific circumstances and benefits associated with this action.

Summary

This is an informational item with no board action requested.

