

Colorado's Conceptual Framework

Guidelines For Additional Development of Transmountain Diversion (TMD) Projects



Colorado's Conceptual Framework

Additional Development of TMD Projects Should Consider the Following 7 Principles:

Ensure agricultural and non-consumptive (recreational and environmental) resilience that focuses on partnerships and considers impacts in and beyond Colorado.

Continue to focus on water conservation, promoting reuse, identify land-use opportunities, and agricultural efficiencies.

TMD provisions should support and accommodate future west slope water needs (including growth)



Inherent risk and a lack of firm yield from the new TMD should be accepted.

TMD contingency plans, diverse portfolios and firm yield absent of the TMD should be developed.

Adaptable triggers for TMD diversions and curtailment are needed.

Voluntary partnerships can help protect existing water systems; not the new TMD.

Exploring Principle #4

“The IBCC and roundtables can provide an important forum for sharing the work of ongoing interstate negotiations, scoping technical analyses, and identifying issues of concern at the stakeholder level, as well as providing input to CWCB as it manages and conducts the technical, legal, economic, and other studies necessary for implementation.”

-Principle #4 of Colorado's Conceptual Framework



Suggested Next Steps from IBCC

Taken from the February 2018 Draft IBCC Conceptual Framework Task Group



Recommended Action

1. Education and Outreach on the Conceptual Framework

The IBCC will work with the CWCB to engage in an effort to educate IBCC members, Basin Roundtable members and other constituents on the Conceptual Framework (what it says, why folks agreed to it, what its purpose was).

STRATEGY:

- Solicit input on lingering questions about the Framework.
- Feed into a discussion of existing information and studies that inform our understanding of it.
- Include discussion at upcoming basin roundtable meetings, joint roundtable meetings, and IBCC meetings.

Recommended Action

2. Education and Outreach on Colorado River Issues and Activities

Initiate an education and outreach process on current Colorado River issues, activities and information on Colorado's ongoing efforts with various activities related to the Colorado River Compact . An outreach plan will be developed for including the IBCC, roundtables, and potentially other stakeholder-driver efforts and venues.

STRATEGY:

- Solicit feedback on elements of potential demand management approaches for the state to consider, taking into
- consideration the intra- and interstate dynamic, as things develop in the coming months and years.
- Use feedback to implement the collaborative process as contemplated for Principle #4 of the Framework.
- Lay the groundwork for any further potential efforts on elements of the Risk Study or similar effort.

Recommended Action

3. Vet the Conceptual Framework Against a Project of Statewide Significance

Specifically and constructively to advance the Conceptual Framework in lieu of a concrete proposed TMD, the group considered how a project of statewide significance could be used to conceptually test some of the principles of the Conceptual Framework. For example, a potential regional water supply project in the South Platte basin could help address some of the state's most pressing water supply issues with collaborative in-basin solutions.

STRATEGY:

- A portfolio or package of projects throughout the state could be incorporated as part of a vetting process.
- A regional project of statewide significance and/or portfolio of projects could be appropriate for stakeholder consideration.

Projects of Statewide Significance

Practical Application of the Conceptual Framework in Absence of an actual TMD

"The Framework encourages agricultural partnerships with environmental, recreational, and municipal groups to help sustain Colorado's diverse economic future and healthy environment."

"All M&I water providers that are covered entities should do integrated water resource planning that strives to meet the "conservation stretch goal"

"The State should make every effort to allow for the reuse of these fully consumable water supplies in an appropriate and environmentally safe manner."

"Land-use practices that help reduce water consumption should be supported and encouraged"

When considering agricultural conservation strategies, it will be important to take a site-specific perspective and to consider the potentially negative consequences of altering timing and the amount of return flows."



"instead would develop a project that could provide firm yield if operated in conjunction with eastern slope sources of supply, as Principle 2 describes"

"It is important for eastern slope parties to demonstrate to the western slope that structures, agreements, and frameworks are or will be in place for eastern slope backup water supplies."

"Each entity would tailor its firming plan to its system's unique strengths and constraints."

"A collaborative program that protects existing uses and an increment of future development is a necessary element of Colorado's water planning, regardless of whether a new TMD is developed"

"A second goal of the collaborative program is protection of the yield of the water supply systems in place in the Colorado River Basin from involuntary curtailment."