



WESTERN RESOURCE
ADVOCATES

CONTACT:

Jason Bane

(720) 763-3721

jason.bane@westernresources.org

Objections Filed Over Proposed Flaming Gorge Pipeline ***Conservation Groups File Formal Objections to Proposed Pipeline*** ***Boondoggle as Federal Agency Considers Permit Application***

BOULDER, Colo. (Dec. 15, 2011) — Western Resource Advocates (WRA) announced that it is filing formal objections today with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regarding the proposed ‘Flaming Gorge Pipeline.’ The objections are being filed by WRA along with the Colorado Environmental Coalition and the National Parks Conservation Association.

“The Flaming Gorge Pipeline has more unanswered questions than a Presidential debate,” said WRA Water Attorney Robert Harris. **“The bottom line is that there is no good reason for FERC to contemplate the proposal. The pipeline idea is getting messier by the day, and it’s not going to get cheaper or more realistic in the future.”**

Aaron Million, President of Wyco Power and Water, Inc., is [seeking a federal permit](#) from FERC to review his ‘Flaming Gorge Pipeline’ (FGP) proposal to pump water more than five hundred (500) miles from the Green River in Wyoming to the Front Range of Colorado.

The objections to a potential FERC permit as filed by WRA focus on four points:

1. **Ridiculously Expensive:** The Colorado Water Conservation Board estimates that the project would cost \$9 billion, which would easily qualify the FGP as the most expensive water project in Colorado history¹. The 2011 General Fund for the *entire state of Colorado* is about \$7.4 billion².
2. **Unnecessary and Illegal Water Hoarding:** There is simply no need for the FGP. If it proceeded, the project would be open to charges of water hoarding, which is against state law.
3. **Against the Public Interest:** There is no scenario in which the FGP could be completed in an environmentally-safe manner, and there is widespread opposition to the proposal in both Wyoming and Colorado. Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead, among others, has publicly condemned the project.
4. **Wyco and Million are Unsuitable Applicants:** Mr. Million and Wyco Power and Water have a history of missing deadlines and failing to provide complete information; in July 2011, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [terminated Million’s application](#) for these reasons.

“The real shame of this entire process is that it is a distraction from discussions of much more reasonable and cost-effective water supply projects that Wyoming and Colorado can implement already,” said Stacy Tellinghuisen, Energy & Water Policy Analyst at WRA. **“If Wyco or any other company wants to go off chasing unicorns, they should do it on their own time and their own dime.”**

¹ “Prairie Waters” in Aurora, Colo., is the costliest completed water project in state history with a price tag of \$700 million.

² http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505245_162-57336581/budget-battle-brewing-in-colo-over-taxes-medicaid/

Becky Long, organizer for the Colorado Environmental Coalition, said: “Citizens across Colorado and Wyoming think this project is a bad idea. Multiple cities and counties in both states have publicly condemned the plan, and a recent survey by the sportsmen’s group Trout Unlimited showed that almost 80% of Wyoming residents opposed the proposal.”

The complete filing from WRA will be available this afternoon on the FERC website and at www.WesternResources.org.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On September 1, 2011, Mr. Aaron Million of Wyco Power and Water, Inc. applied to FERC for a permit application for the Regional Watershed Supply Project proposal (generally referred to as the Flaming Gorge Pipeline, or FGP). Two months earlier, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers terminated its review of the project, citing Million’s failure to meet required deadlines to provide information. Wyco applied to FERC [under the premise](#) of reclassifying the FGP as a hydropower project, but because it is primarily a water-delivery system, FERC only has limited jurisdiction and cannot approve the entire project.

The FERC deadline for public comments and ‘Motions to Intervene’ is December 19, 2011. If FERC eventually decides to consider permitting for the FGP, it would begin a 3-year study period of the project. Before the FGP could begin to be constructed, Wyco would almost certainly need a permit from multiple additional federal agencies, such as the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. At some point, Wyco would also likely need to resubmit an application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

For More Information on the Flaming Gorge Pipeline, go to:

<http://www.westernresourceadvocates.org/water/pipeline/million.php>

To access FERC Submissions/Filings directly, go to:

http://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/file_list.asp?accession_num=20111013-5035

Western Resource Advocates is a Boulder-based nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to protecting the West’s land, air, and water. For more information, visit www.WesternResourceAdvocates.org.