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Colorado Needs Serious Discussions, Not Pipe(line) Dreams ***Conservation Leaders Encourage Real Ideas, Decline to Participate in Meetings on ‘Implausible’ Flaming Gorge Pipeline Plan***

BOULDER, Colo. (Jan. 12, 2012) — Conservation leaders from across the West today encouraged the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) to suspend examination of the so-called ‘Flaming Gorge Pipeline’ and focus its efforts on water supply and conservation efforts that are both more realistic and cost-effective.

“The Flaming Gorge Pipeline is a bad idea that is never going to make sense for Colorado, and no amount of debate is going to change this very basic fact,” said Bart Miller, Water Program Director at Western Resource Advocates. **“There isn’t enough lipstick in the world to make this pig more presentable.”**

Today is the first meeting of ‘The Flaming Gorge Pipeline Task Force,’ which was convened by the CWCB to further discuss a proposal to pump water more than five hundred (500) miles from the Green River in Wyoming to the Front Range of Colorado. Western Resource Advocates (WRA) is just one of numerous conservation groups that declined invitations to take part in the ‘task force’ to study a project that CWCB estimates would cost some \$9 billion to complete.

“We declined invitations to participate in further discussions about the pipeline project because it distracts from realistic proposals that Colorado can undertake now,” said Miller. **“The public doesn’t want the pipeline, elected officials don’t like it, and we can’t afford it. We need to move on to other ideas.”**

The pipeline proposal has already encountered widespread opposition. **Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead** has formally objected to the proposal, as have cities and counties across Colorado and Wyoming (from Rock Springs, Green River and Sweetwater County in Wyoming, to Mesa County and the City of Grand Junction in Colorado). A survey conducted by the sportsmen’s group Trout Unlimited in Fall 2011 showed that nearly 80% of Wyoming residents opposed the pipeline.

“Like most conservation groups, we encourage cooperative decision making for Colorado’s water needs,” said Becky Long of the Colorado Environmental Coalition, which also declined to participate in the ‘task force’. **“At the same time, it is incumbent of any responsible organization to recognize when an idea has run its course. Nobody should spend any more time or money beating their heads against this particular wall.”**

Many regional conservation groups are already supporting existing proposals for water availability, such as ‘Prairie Waters’ in Aurora; Chatfield Reservoir re-allocation; the WISE water project; and the ‘Super Ditch’ in Southern Colorado. These projects represent just a partial list of water plans that can be pursued now and in the near future – projects that should be prioritized over pipe(line) dreams.

Aaron Million, President of Wyco Power and Water, Inc., is [seeking a federal permit](#) from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to review his proposal for a pipeline project, which has become something of a test case for any similar proposals in the future. More than 5,000 comments from citizens, governments and non-profit organizations were formally submitted to FERC in December 2011; out of more than 5,000 submissions¹, only 1 (one) was supportive of the idea.

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

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

Western Resource Advocates is a regional nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to protecting the West's land, air, and water. Offices or staff located in Boulder (CO), Phoenix and Tucson (AZ), Pocatello (ID), Santa Fe (NM), Carson City (NV) and Salt Lake City (UT). Visit www.WesternResourceAdvocates.org.

¹ Public comments and 'Motions to Intervene' can be found at: <http://elibrary.ferc.gov> (docket # P-14263). The Center for Biological Diversity submitted 3,388 individual public comments, and Earthjustice submitted 1,706 public comments.