News Statement

Western Resource Advocates Hugely Disappointed that Colorado Senate Killed House Bill 15-1259

Residential Rain Barrels Will Remain Illegal in Colorado

COLORADO (May 6, 2015) - Drew Beckwith, Water Policy Manager with Western Resource Advocates, had these comments today regarding a late-night move by the Colorado State Senate to delay a vote on HB 15-1259, the Residential Rain Barrel bill.

“I am dismayed that residential rain barrels in Colorado will remain illegal. Colorado continues to be the only state in the nation that bans rain barrels. Almost every major paper in the state editorialized in favor of this commonsense action, and the diverse list of supporters ranged from Front Range cities to Western Slope agriculture. Yet Senate leadership wouldn’t even call a floor vote on this bill. Apparently a few downstream irrigators, worried more about the sanctity of water rights laws than the facts, had greater sway than the majority of Coloradans calling for a new approach. It is sad that our legislature didn’t embrace this type of innovative water solution for our future. Rain barrels are a pathway to increased water conservation consciousness that only serves to ease the pressure on transferring water out of farming and ranching operations and Western Slope rivers. The more urban residents embrace a fuller set of water conservation tactics, the less pressure there is to pull water from somewhere else. Legalizing rain barrels would have benefitted all regions and interests of our state. We need all of our legislators to step up and embrace a new era of water that is solution oriented and not stuck in the past. Developing an increased conservation ethic around the state is needed if we are to ensure a reliable water supply for our communities, our wildlife, and agriculture – this would have been a golden opportunity to do so. We will not rest until this symbol of smart water management - the rain barrel - is legalized.”

For the last 25 years Western Resource Advocates has been one of the West’s leading groups of experts protecting the region’s air, land and water. WRA’s lawyers, scientists and economists craft innovative solutions for the most complex natural resource challenges in the region. Go to www.westernresourceadvocates.org and follow us on Twitter @WRADV.