



Sept. 12, 2022

TO: Northwest RAC Members for the BLM

FROM: Save The Colorado

RE: "[Introduction to Wolf Creek Reservoir Proposal](#)" on your Sept. 15th agenda

Dear RAC,

Save The Colorado's mission is to protect and restore the Colorado River and its tributaries across the Southwest U.S. We specialize in fighting to stop, or significantly alter, proposed new dam and diversion projects that would further deplete the flow of water in the Colorado River system. As you know, the White River is a tributary of the Green River which is a tributary of the Colorado River. As such, we've taken a strong interest in the proposed "Wolf Creek Reservoir Project" ("Project") for over five years now.

First, we have so-far engaged to fight to stop the Project because of its severe negative environmental impacts on the White River and waterways downstream. The Project would:

- Deplete flows in the White River which is currently one of the healthier and freer flowing rivers in the Colorado River system.
- Deplete water flow necessary for endangered fish in the Green and Colorado Rivers downstream.
- Cause severe negative environmental impacts to the White River including a change in flow regime, change in temperature, change in siltation, impacts to wetlands and riparian areas, impacts to the fishery and all aquatic species, and impacts to recreational opportunities.
- Cause severe negative impacts to Wolf Creek, part of which would be completely flooded negatively impacting wetlands and riparian areas, and impacts to all aquatic species.
- Cause an increase in greenhouse gas emissions due to the pumping of water out of the White River up into the Wolf Creek Reservoir, and cause an increase in greenhouse gas emissions due to the existence and operations of the Wolf Creek Reservoir.

Second, Project proponents have estimated the cost of the whole project would be around \$150 million. We strongly encourage you to get other opinions about this estimate. We're involved in many proposed dam projects, and we routinely see final project costs two or three times higher than initial estimates. Further, permitting alone – especially if it's controversial and contested, which this one will be from our group and others – can cost between \$20 million and \$30 million. Litigation can cost millions more, especially if the Endangered Species Act is involved, which it will be.

Finally, as you are aware, the entire Colorado River system is in crisis due to all of the current dams and diversions. It's completely irresponsible to be proposing new diversions when there's not even remotely enough water to fill, or even stabilize, the reservoirs on the system now. Indeed, upstream on the Green River, the federal government continues to drain water out of Flaming Gorge Reservoir to try as save Lake Powell and Lake Mead – as such, any new reservoir on the White River would likely face the same carnage, constantly being drained and depleted, or even opposed by downstream diverters. In fact, the proposed "Lake Powell Pipeline" in Utah has the entire Lower Basin water providers generally opposed against it.

We encourage you to stop this nonsense before it wastes more time and money. Tell the BLM "NO" on the Wolf Creek Reservoir proposal. Thank you, and feel free to contact me with any questions.

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