



Colorado Water Congress

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THE LEADING VOICE OF COLORADO'S WATER COMMUNITY

June 21, 2017

The Honorable Scott Tipton
218 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Tipton:

On behalf of the Colorado Water Congress (CWC), we are writing in support of H.R. 2939, the Water Rights Protection Act. The CWC is membership organization consisting of 400+ members, serving as the principal voice of Colorado's water community. The CWC's members represent the municipal, agricultural, industrial, commercial, recreation and environmental sectors. As an organization, we have consistently listed "ski area water rights" as a Federal priority, and the passage of this legislation would further that objective. At its most recent Federal Affairs Committee meeting, the CWC reviewed and agreed unanimously to **support H.R. 2939**. CWC also supported H.R. 1830 the 2015 Water Rights Protection Act.

In recent years, we have seen attempts by the Forest Service to force ski areas to relinquish their water rights simply to make administrative modifications to special use permits. This exercise of agency overreach is contrary to Colorado water law.

The CWC appreciates your effort to educate others on the importance of privately held water rights to the West's economy and culture. Should the lawful water rights of ski areas and other private water rights holders be ignored, water would cease to hold the value that it does today. Furthermore, a federal takings of water rights would not long allow for investment in the free market, thus diminishing a substantial sector of the Colorado economy.

Protecting privately held water rights is a top priority for the CWC and we support any effort on the federal level to do so. The Colorado Water Congress looks forward to continuing to work with you and your staff by supporting sound legislation protecting western water and water rights holders. The CWC thanks you for sponsoring this legislation and continuing the effort to protect Colorado's water.

Sincerely,

Douglas Kemper
Executive Director

Andy Colosimo
Federal Affairs Committee Chair

Chris Treese
Federal Affairs Committee Vice Chair