



October 16, 2019

To: Yellow Jacket Conservancy District

As landowners and ranchers, in Rio Blanco County, we support strategically useful reservoirs with a clear and substantiated purpose. So we are deeply concerned about the proposed Wolf Creek Reservoir. It appears to be a project where the proverbial “cart is placed before the horse.”

Will it be Rio Blanco’s “Bridge to Nowhere” -not just built with local taxpayer money but also with an annual price tag of an estimated \$600,000 per year for electricity to pump the water from the river into a reservoir into a vast expanse of land that is shallow, hot and just a few miles from the Utah border?

The District Water Engineer has written several letters of concern, *the most recent of which is attached*, questioning the purpose as the RBWC is asking for additional water rights.

Here is a quote from the District Engineer’s letter (October 4, 2018) questioning the stated purpose for this proposal, using the following language: *Though there has been a great deal of communication between the District and I regarding the District’s water rights claimed in this case, the Engineers are not convinced that the District has met its burden of proof that it can and will put the requested Wolf Creek Reservoirs claims of 90,000 AF of water to beneficial use within a reasonable period of time and that the requested water rights are not speculative.*

The letter questions the need for the town of Rangely, the need by the oil and gas industry which already has several thousand of unused acre feet, and the lack of an industrial base which is also mentioned as a major user. Over the past three years alone, the purpose of this questionable reservoir continues to evolve, as each use gets shot down by the facts.

In addition to a clear substantiated purpose, the size of the reservoir also continues to change...upward...from 4,000 acre feet (for Rangely drinking water) to 1.3million.

In closing, we hope you will read the water engineer’s latest letter, and carefully scrutinize the purpose of need which is a critical step in this horse race to permitting according to what we have heard at a number of public meetings. It is critical to have the input of the stakeholders of the full river basin as real problems are identified and best solutions are pursued, the best most strategic locations are identified for water storage. With increasingly challenging years ahead of us, thoughtful, carefully researched solutions are critical, with real needs verified.

Thank you.

