

## **ECONOMIC LOSS FROM WELL CURTAILMENT**

**By Bob Winter**

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If there are 4700 wells shut off, out of 8,400, and one half of them are sole supply for a farm. Then there are 2350 wells shut off. Each well can irrigate 130 acres that would equate to 305,500 acres out of production.

Let's assume \$6.00 per bushel price and 200 bushel per acre that will produce \$366,600,000 of lost revenue to rural communities in commodities alone. That doesn't include if the corn is raised for silage and it is fed to cattle or dairy animals and the value added price for milk produced or pounds of meat that will stimulate the local economies even more.

Many of the wells have been curtailed to only a few days during the summer which will have an extreme loss of crop production and yield. Yet while all of this curtailment is going on, people's basements are being flooded from high water tables. Last two years we delivered to Nebraska more than 1,000,000 acre feet of water over the compact agreement. What a loss. This year we may exceed another 300,000 acre feet and yet the wells are not allowed to pump.

It is criminal to be on top of 10,500,000 to 13,000,000 acre feet of stored water in the aquifer and not be able to use it. That is eight times more water than the **ALL** the water stored in **ALL** of the reservoirs from Denver to Nebraska put together. There is no cost to allow Colorado to benefit from this natural resource. No additional infrastructure is needed, no evaporation loss, no capitol expenditures needed to put millions of dollars back into the rural economies of the state of Colorado. This calamity came about because of the courts and a few unscrupulous water attorneys that make a living with water controversy in Colorado concerning the Empire Lodge case.

Lets add another dimension. Colorado has documented over one million acre feet have passed into Nebraska in the past two years. If the value of an acre foot of water is worth \$500, then we multiply that times 1,000,000 acre feet that left the state.

We have a value of \$500,000,000.00. Five hundred million dollars plus three hundred sixty-six million six hundred thousand dollars is EIGHT HUNDRED SIXTY-SIX MILLION SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS. That is nearly a billion dollars with a B. I would say that is quite a loss to the state of Colorado.

Mr. Donald Jones, a rural farm manager and Realtor, also alludes to the loss of valuation of farmland values from the tax rolls of irrigated farmland assessments to dry land values at a 75% loss, which in my opinion is very conservative of \$540,000,000.00. This loss affects our schools, how our rural counties operate, and how much money is not sent on to the state, when the state of Colorado needs every penny to solve the budget deficit we find ourselves in.

Agriculture can be a large solution to Colorado getting out of the Budget Deficit. We have to, only if it is allowed, to help do its part by allowing farmers to do what they do best, and that is produce more of the abundance we are used to.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Winter