

**Colorado Water Congress
2009 Interim Water Resources Review Committee
Topic Recommendations**

The Colorado Water Congress has met twice to consider topics for consideration by the Interim Water Resources Review Committee. There are a good number of issues that deserve consideration. However, the single most important issue that seems to overshadow all of them is the State budget crisis.

Colorado Water Conservation Board Loan Funds

The loss of \$107 million from the Colorado Water Conservation Board's Construction Fund and Perpetual Base Account through Senate Bills 208 and 279 is significant. The likely scenario is that little additional money will be available to loan for at least the next two years. These accounts were the investment in our water supply future and that future now seems much less certain. We need a plan to replenish these two loan funds. This issue is so significant that it needs to take precedence over many other important topics.

Division of Water Resources Funding

The Water Congress continues to be concerned that the hiring freeze will result in inadequate staffing for the Division of Water Resources. We believe it important to take a careful look at staffing levels in the Division. We need to be certain that we have adequate water commissioners to administer water rights. We supported the fee increases in SB-216 because of this concern. As this bill will not move forward this year, the issue remains regarding whether staff vacancies in the Division will be filled. Cash funds within the Division also need to be examined to be sure that fees are set at levels consistent with the cost of service and that they are not being used to subsidize the General Fund.

Future Water and Funding Needs

The Statewide Water Supply Investigation has identified serious gaps in the adequacy of water supplies for future generations of Coloradans. This investigation needs to be linked to funding requirements. A plan needs to be developed to ensure there will be a reliable and affordable source of funding to construct and maintain water infrastructure.

Colorado Water Congress Summer Conference

The Colorado Water Congress Summer Conference will be held August 19 through 21 in Steamboat Springs. We invite the Interim Committee to schedule one of its meetings in conjunction with this meeting of the water community. In the past, a portion of the Interim Committee meetings has been used to update members on the status of various water-related activities. Many of these topics are also of interest to Water Congress members. To the extent that we can cover some of the topics that may primarily be for information only, we would be pleased to do so at our Summer Conference. We will also be honoring John Fetcher at this meeting and hope that you will be able to join us.