

*Colorado Legislative Council Staff Fiscal Note***NO FISCAL IMPACT**

Drafting Number: LLS 15-0221
Prime Sponsor(s): Sen. Hodge

Date: January 20, 2015
Bill Status: Senate Agriculture
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BILL TOPIC: RETURN OF WATER FROM TAIL DITCH

Summary of Legislation

This bill allows a person using an irrigation ditch system to use a tailwater ditch to return water to a stream in variable amounts to facilitate efficient operation of the ditch and delivery of water to persons served by the ditch system. The state engineer shall not require the delivery of any minimum amount of water unless required by a court decree.

Background

Tailwater ditches are used to collect and conserve excess surface water draining from an irrigated field. Current law requires the installation of tailwater ditches by ditch owners to return water with as little waste as possible back to the stream from which the water was taken.

Assessment

The Division of Water Resources (DWR) in the Department of Natural Resources administers Colorado water law. This bill clarifies the administration of water in tailwater ditches but is not expected to affect the workload or expenditures of the DWR or any state agency, so this bill is assessed as having no fiscal impact.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect August 5, 2015, if the General Assembly adjourns on May 6, 2015, as scheduled, and no referendum petition is filed.

State and Local Government Contacts

Judicial Department

Law

Natural Resources