



August 25, 2008

Anti-Glade cause gets help

National Sierra Club director says fight must be long-term

BY NATE TAYLOR

NateTaylor@coloradoan.com

Weeks before the Save the Poudre Coalition will present its argument to the public against Glade Reservoir, the organization's supporters received encouragement from a national supporter of their cause.

Sierra Club National Executive Director Carl Pope, in town for the three-day Peace Corps reunion, spoke Sunday morning to dozens of river supporters along the Poudre's banks near Old Town. He encouraged a long-term opposition to Northern Integrated Supply Project's Glade Reservoir plan.

"You've got to be in it for the long haul," Pope said. "People need to understand reservoirs do not provide a solution to water needs, they just provide the illusion that they will."

Pope's recognition is a sign of increasing national concern about the Poudre River issue, said coalition spokesman Gary Wockner.

"The message is loud and clear that the environmental community is drawing a line in the river," Wockner said. "It's being drawn from the top by environmental supporters in Washington, D.C., and at the ground level with citizens' activity."

Citing his experience opposing similar projects across the country, Pope told supporters they have what it takes to defeat the NISP project.

"To stop a project like this, you need two things: One is local people who care, and you have that right here," he said. "And two is a positive alternative that will meet water supply needs."

The Save the Poudre Coalition will present its alternative to the Glade Reservoir project at a public meeting Sept. 10 at the Lincoln Center. The coalition's plan will include a "Healthy Rivers Alternative."

Brian Werner, spokesman for the Northern Colorado Water Conservation District, which has proposed the Glade Reservoir, said to dismiss reservoirs as a storage option for water in a growing region is "short-sighted."

"We've got to store," Werner said. "No matter how good you do at conserving, you still have to store water somewhere."

He also said it is wrong for anyone to oppose the reservoir project in the hopes it will prevent growth in Northern Colorado.

"At some point in time, the region is going to need this water supply, and we're there right now," Werner said. "People are going to keep moving here."

Pope said conservation and storage can be done without building dams and reservoirs.

"The lesson we need to learn is natural system management of water is a lot better than engineered management," Pope said.

The last day for public input on the project, which is overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is Sept. 13.
