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reporterherald.com

Publish Date: 6/23/2007

Berthoud pulls out of reservoir plan

By Kathryn Dailey
The Daily Reporter-Herald

BERTHOUD — Town officials have cut themselves free from the growing price tag of the Northern Integrated Supply Project and will look at other areas where the money is needed more.

The Board of Trustees voted unanimously June 12 to remove the town of Berthoud from the water-storage project that will add two major reservoirs in Northern Colorado.

“The costs were going to be extremely high in the coming years,” said Mayor Pro Tem Don Ashcraft.

In 2007, the annual payment was projected at \$73,000. In 2008, the cost would jump to \$163,000 and to \$8.743 million in 2009.

“We need to have funds allocated to other projects without burdening rate payers,” Ashcraft said.

The Northern Integrated Supply Project was introduced in 2003 as a way for participating jurisdictions to secure water in the future. Berthoud was one of the original participants.

The project would consist of two reservoirs. The proposed 177,000-acre-foot Glade Reservoir, to be built northwest of Fort Collins near Ted’s Place, would provide users 40,000 acre-feet of water a year.

Junior water rights on the Poudre River would be used to fill Galeton, a 40,000-acre-foot reservoir to be built northeast of Greeley.

An acre-foot is the amount of water that would cover an acre to a depth of 1 foot and is generally enough to supply up to two households for a year.

Berthoud’s contribution would have made up about 3 percent of the project, said Brian Werner, Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District spokesman. “They weren’t a real large part,” Werner said.

Berthoud would have received about 1,300 of the 40,000 acre-feet from Glade

reservoir each year.

Some of the remaining 15 municipalities are hoping to acquire more water from the project and may be interested in taking Berthoud's share, Werner said.

"Most likely it'll be absorbed by one of the other participants," he said.

Karen Stockley, a Berthoud resident and member of the Sierra Club executive committee, said she supports the decision to pull out.

"I was really happy to see that Berthoud dropped out of NISP," she said.

In addition to the possible damage the Glade Reservoir could do to the Poudre River, Stockley said the town was paying for anticipated growth, not for current residents.

"Growth is supposed to pay its own way," she said.

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