

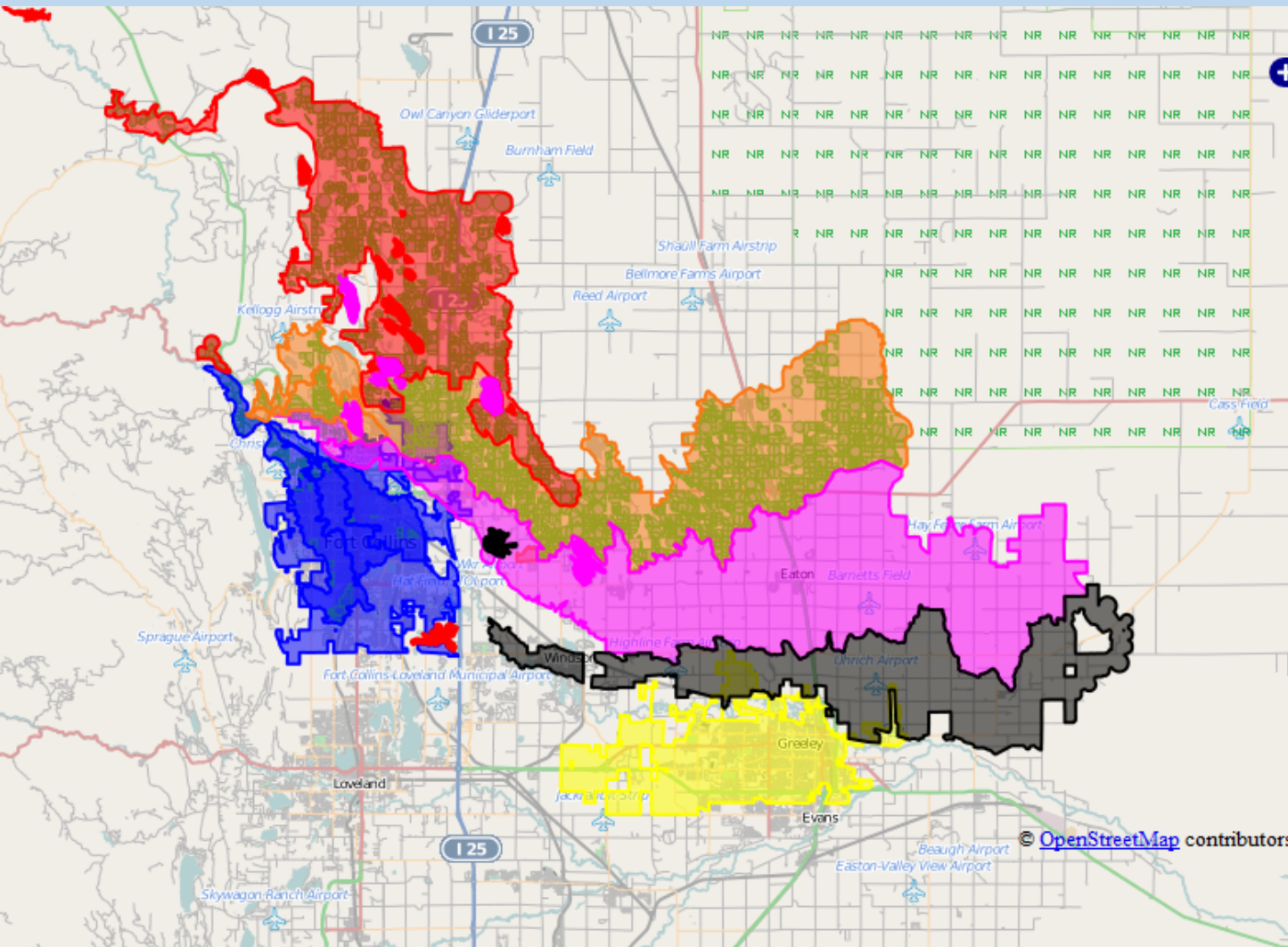


The
POUDRE
Water Sharing Working Group

An Update on the Group's Work During 2013 and Projected Work for 2014

Working Group Members and Funding

- **Irrigation companies:** North Poudre, Larimer Weld System, Water Supply and Storage, (New Cache 2014)
- **Water Utilities:** City of Fort Collins Water Utility, City of Greeley Water & Sewer, Tri-Districts, West Fort Collins, (Northern Water 2014)
- **Consultants:** Open Water Fdn. (data base), Lawrence, Jones, Custer and Grasmick Law Firm (legal agreements), CSU Human Dimensions of Natural Resources Dept.(surveys)
- **Facilitation:** CSU Colorado Water Institute
- **Funding:** Colorado Water Conservation Board – interested in alternative transfer methods to buy and dry



Click the + sign to toggle which layers are

Fort Collins



Greeley

North Poudre Irrigation Company

Larimer-Weld Irrigation Company

Water Supply and Storage Company

New Cache la Poudre Irrigation Company

Irrigated lands

Why are Alternative Transfer Mechanisms Important?

- “Buy and Dry” is increasingly seen as unsustainable: (by the CWCB, Inter-basin Compact Committee, Basin Roundtables, Western Governors Assn., county advisory boards & many other groups.
- Agriculture is a key economic driver that supports local communities and links regions across the State
- People need water and food. There is increasing concern about supporting local agriculture, long-term food security & sustainability, reducing carbon footprints.
- Irrigated ag provides many other benefits: flood surge control, groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, wetlands, open space, important infrastructure etc.
- Colorado Legislature has passed several laws to facilitate water sharing and the Governor wants a State Water Plan that includes water sharing

Problems are We Trying to Address Together

Water Utilities:

- Need for water supply security during drought, drought recovery, flood, fire, infrastructure repair or other unforeseen problems
- Need for additional storage for operations and drought reserve
- Need additional raw water to meet future demand

Irrigated Agriculture:

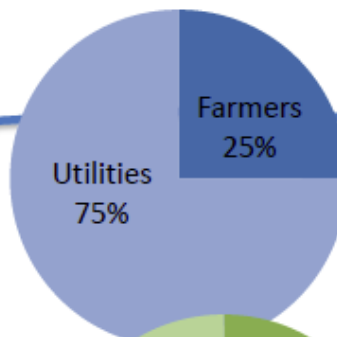
- Many wish to minimize permanent transfers from ag to urban ownership (“buy and dry”)
- Instead, look for alternative transfer mechanisms for sharing water with utilities
- Hope to achieve more rental water security (especially NP irrigators)

...and, in general:

- All entities need more flexibility to deal with drought and other water supply issues. Inter-basin collaboration can help
- We want to keep Poudre River water in the Poudre Basin

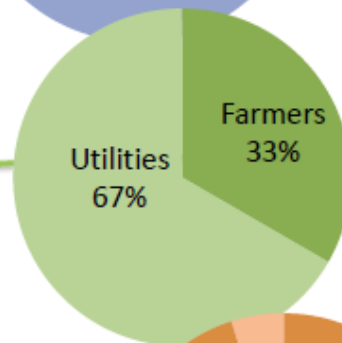
North Poudre Irrigation Company (NPIC)

Average Annual Diversion – 79,500 AF



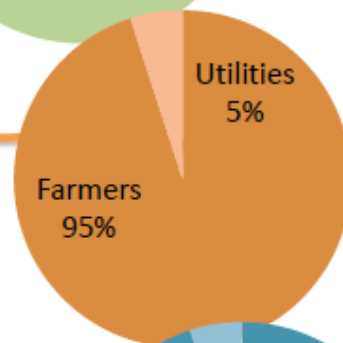
Water Supply & Storage Company (WSSC)

Average Annual Diversion – 55,000 AF



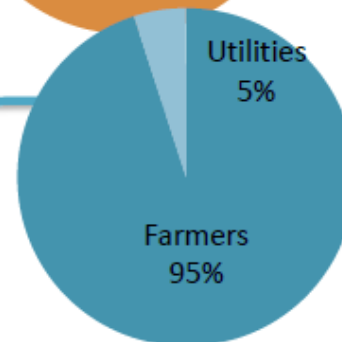
Larimer & Weld Irrigation Systems (L&W)

Average Annual Diversion – 60,000 AF



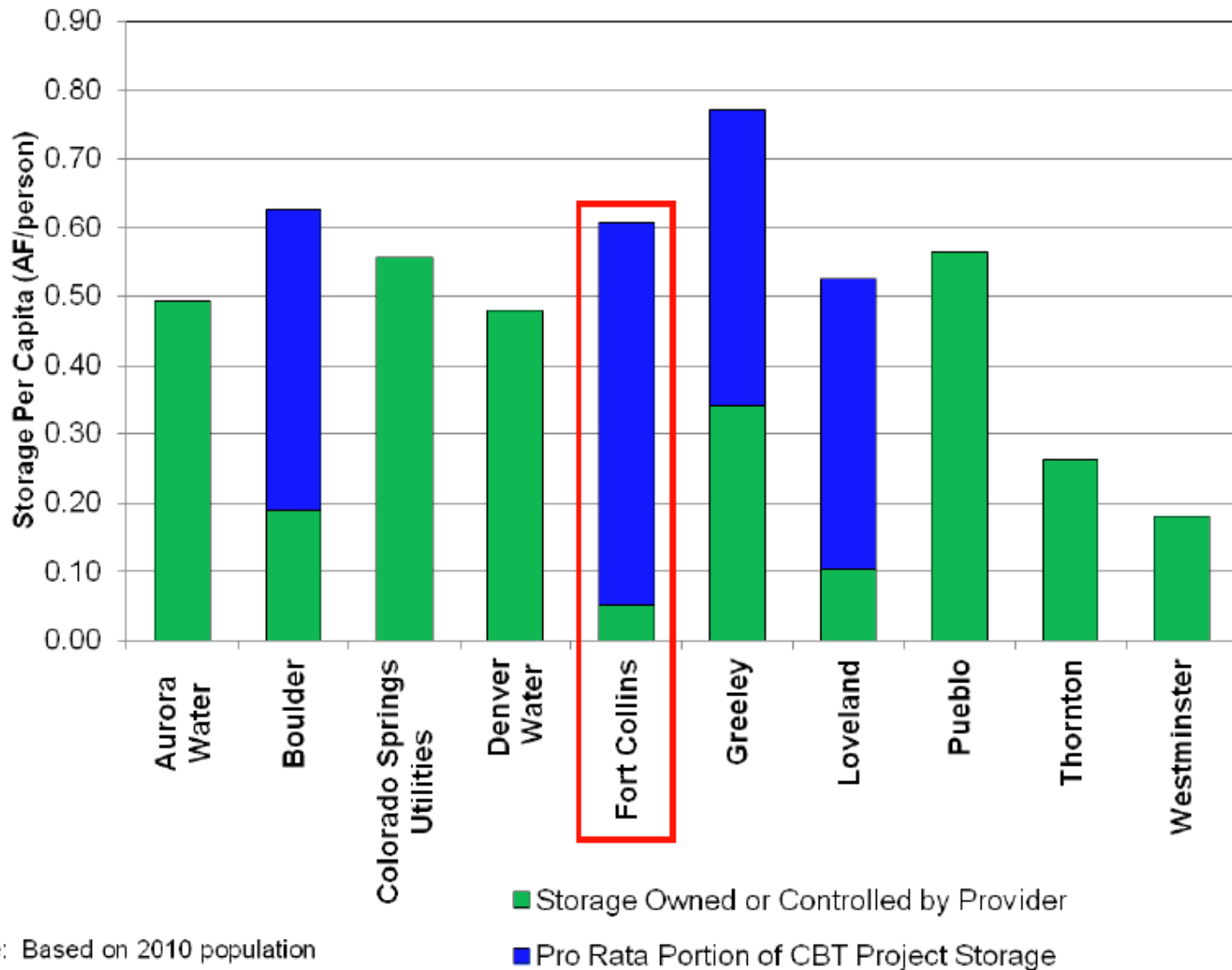
New Cache Irrigation Companies

Average Annual Diversion – 38,000 AF



Poudre River

Storage per Capita Comparison



Types of Water Sharing/Trading Being Discussed by the Working Group*

- **Water Swaps** – trading multiple-use water (CBT) owned by irrigators for agricultural water owned by a utility
- **Short Term Leases** – ag water shares used for urban water supply in response to a crisis
- **Interruptible Supply Agreements** – longer term contracts to help utilities meet drought firming and recovery, emergencies, or to enable utilities to use ag water they own

Water Swaps, Trading

- 2013 successful example, NP Irrigators traded CBT water to Fort Collins for Ag/River Water (drought, fire, flood & water quality issues)
- Swaps are best done with trans-basin (foreign) water that has no return flow requirements (like NP shares)
- No water court or state approval required
- Irrigators get more water than they give as an incentive
- Could be done via longer-term agreements to provide more certainty for both parties

Short Term Leases

- Unexpected events (infrastructure failure, natural disasters, construction, water court delays etc.) can create short term need for water utilities (ie 2002, 2003, 2013)
- Those owning water with agricultural decrees can lease water for payment via short-term agreement.
- Substitute Water Supply Plan (administrative approval) is used (CRS 37-92-308)
- Basin-wide collaboration can anticipate and ensure reasonable pricing

Interruptible Supply Agreements

- **Standard** = Longer – term lease agreements, multi-year duration
- Limited water delivered to utilities and return flows provided during drought, drought recovery (CRS 37-92-309)
- Water made available via fallowing, deficit irrigation or planting drought tolerant crops to reduce consumptive use (on marginal lands etc)
- Incentives could combine payment, rental water guarantee during normal years
- **Variation** = irrigators enable utilities to use ag water they own by foregoing rental water, providing dry up (cover cropping) and return flow recharge areas
- If many wish to participate, IS can be done on a rotating basis or by using a point system.

Understanding perceptions of irrigators and water providers is a next step

- Most water sharing agreements would be between individual irrigators/shareholders and water utilities
- Working group needs feedback from all of you
- Individual or entity evaluation of sharing mechanisms
- Likelihood of participation in water sharing - what type
- Characteristics of farming operations/irrigation entity
- Survey will be done by CSU -either on-line and paper formats with shareholders and focus groups with water providers
- No names will be associated with responses (confidential)



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Potential Outcomes of Working Group in 2014

- Clear descriptions of water sharing mechanisms
- Perceptions of irrigators/shareholders/utilities
- Prototype agreements for each type of sharing
- An improved basin-wide data base to enable future collaboration

And beyond

- Pilot projects
- Future discussions/funding for sharing infrastructure, sharing storage, water banking, addressing multiple values being raised by other groups

Thank You. Questions?

