

Support local farmers at upcoming NISP rally

Carbon Valley Farmer & Miner

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Opinion by Douglas Rademacher, Weld County Commissioner, District 2

Editor:

Water is the life blood of the American West, and no one understands that better than one who works in agriculture. As a fourth generation Weld County farmer and rancher, I have seen my share of wet years and dry years when it comes to irrigation water for crops and livestock. My family, like other farming and ranching families across northern Colorado, has prospered in the good times and struggled through the bad times.

It is hard to face a dry year, there is no doubt about that. It is difficult to watch family, friends and neighbors decide which fields to surrender and which fields to save; to decide how much livestock to sell off because of the lack of water.

Many people argue that facing a drought year is a part of life for a farmer – and they are right. But what many of those people don't understand or appreciate is the pressure the agricultural industry faces not only from mother nature but also from our growing communities.

When my family began farming in southern Weld County in the early 1900s, the land surrounding the farm was truly rural. Throughout the years, cities and towns have grown up in what was once exclusively farmland. In the year 2050, the population of Northern Colorado is expected to double, and with this growth comes additional demand for water which equates to greater pressure on the agricultural community.

The Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP) seeks to ease the demands and pressures our towns and agricultural communities face, especially in a dry year like this one, by building storage facilities for water that traditionally has left the state unused. Water that goes beyond the compacts Colorado has with neighboring states. Water that belongs to Colorado.

NISP, through Glade and Galeton Reservoirs, will allow us to keep Colorado water in Colorado for Coloradoans whether they live on the farm or in the city.

Please show your support for keeping Colorado water in Colorado by attending the NISP Rally on July 24 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Historic Fort Lupton. Learn about the history of water in our region and the future of water in our communities.

Douglas Rademacher is a Weld County commissioner representing District 2.