

As Reservoirs Swell, Colorado Sends Water Out of State

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Nick McGurk reporting

KUSA - Too much water. That's what experts in northern Colorado are grappling with after September flooding helped fill reservoirs, before heavy snowpack and spring moisture helped drench the Front Range.

"This is one of the best years we've had in the last decade or two," said Brian Werner with Northern Water. So good, he said that the state could send out the equivalent of five Horsetooth Reservoirs full of water to Nebraska this year because there's nowhere to store it in Colorado.

"It's helping Nebraskans, believe me, but it's water that we have rights to that we're not putting to use because there's nowhere to store it," said Werner.

It's why he says Colorado needs more reservoirs. Glade Reservoir has been talked about for a decade. It would take water from the Poudre and store it northwest of Fort Collins.

But not everyone believes Glade Reservoir is the answer.

"That particular reservoir would drain and destroy the Poudre River," said Gary Wockner with the group Save the Poudre.

He says more water conservation would better serve the public – not more reservoirs.

"About half of all the water would be drained out of the river, and it would just drain and destroy what's left," said Wockner.

Werner disagrees.

"It won't run dry. It can't run dry directly because of this project," he said.

Glade is years away from being finalized, according to Werner. He says everybody's concerns will be taken into consideration, including concerns over water storage.

"We try to take advantage of those good years, so we can carry it over for the bad years," said Werner.