NISP includes water exchanges that will bring needed water storage to the region while helping protect agriculture.

WaterSecure is a key element of the Northern Integrated Supply Project and represents a shift away from the widely used “buy-and-dry” approach that has stressed our agricultural communities. As part of a long-term strategy that’s consistent with the goals and principles established in the Colorado Water Plan, Northern Water and the NISP participants are implementing efforts that will eventually provide supplemental water to approximately 500,000 residents in northern Colorado while also preserving thousands of acres of irrigated farmland.

Once constructed NISP will consist of Glade Reservoir northwest of Fort Collins, which will divert water from the Poudre River, and Galeton Reservoir east of Ault, which will store water piped from the South Platte River, as well as pipelines, pump plants and other required infrastructure.

A key component of NISP operations will be water exchanges, in which Northern Water and the project participants collaborate with the New Cache la Poudre and Larimer-Weld irrigation companies in Weld County.

A win-win for local farms and ranches

NISP’s strategic use of the irrigation companies’ senior water rights will allow Glade Reservoir to fill for the communities in need of those supplies.

In return, the NISP participants will provide compensation for the two participating ditch companies, including:

- **Monetary payments**
- **Additional water supplies from the nearby Galeton Reservoir**
- **Ditch-system improvements**

These exchanges are designed to serve as a win-win for the farms and ranches, in that:

- Shareholders maintain control of their water, and water continues flowing to the farms and ranches
- Compensation from the NISP participants will enhance the long-term viability of those ag operations
- Some operations will receive water later in the season
- These exchanges would not reduce the value of their water shares
- These exchanges have been adjudicated and approved by the water court, and would not subject the ditch and reservoir companies’ water rights to a change case

All of Northern Colorado will benefit from keeping more irrigated acres in production. Our agriculture industry employs thousands of local residents and feeds even more, while our farms and ranches also offer quality-of-life and environmental enhancements by providing open space and wildlife habitat – all of which we want to preserve for future generations.
How will these water exchanges work?

Water from Galeton Reservoir will be delivered to the farms and ranches participating in the exchanges through the Larimer and Weld and New Cache canals.

Learn more at [www.gladereservoir.org](http://www.gladereservoir.org)

WaterSecure measures being implemented to ensure farms and ranches stay in operation and water remains available for the NISP exchanges

The senior water rights in the New Cache and Larimer-Weld systems are currently among the most sought after by water providers looking to obtain future supplies. That’s where our WaterSecure efforts come into play.

To avoid water permanently leaving those farms through other buy-and-dry purchases, **Northern Water and the NISP participants are willing to buy land and water from willing sellers in the two ditch systems**, and explore various avenues to keep water on the farms so those supplies remain available for the NISP exchanges.

Rather than “buy-and-dry,” this is an outside-the-box, “buy-and-supply” approach to address tightening water supplies. Farms in the New Cache and Larimer-Weld systems purchased by Northern Water will remain in production, through:

- **Limited land use easements on the property**
- **Lease-back agreements**
- **Or other arrangements that will allow continued irrigation on those farms**

Furthermore, the purchase of any irrigated lands will be done with the goal to eventually **return the operations to private ownership**.

Water quality questions addressed

Water quality and agronomy experts have examined the water quality issues, and with proper water blending, no impacts on crop yields would occur in nearly all anticipated operating conditions, and only minor impacts on specific crops in some instances. NISP participants would certainly factor any such impacts on crops into mitigation and compensation packages, and Northern Water will also continue monitoring water quality long into the future to address any potential issues.

Contact us

We encourage anyone who wants to learn more to contact Greg Dewey at Northern Water at (970) 622-2300, or email him at gdewey@northernwater.org.