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Northern Water Board Approves Additional C-BT Water Supplies for 2011

BERTHOUD – An 80 percent quota for Colorado-Big Thompson Project water was agreed upon today by the Northern Water Board of Directors. The quota is a 30 percent increase from the initial quota set by the Board for this water year, effective Nov. 1, 2010.

The quota establishes the percentage of an acre foot that a C-BT allottee will receive during the current water year for every unit of C-BT water the allottee owns. The 80 percent quota means that each unit will yield eight-tenths of an acre foot.

Every year the Board bases its April quota decision on updated snowpack and storage information while striving to balance the overall water needs within Northern Water's district boundaries. This year, the Upper Colorado River Basin's snowpack is 42 percent above average, and C-BT reservoir storage is also above average. However, Board members said that dry conditions on the East Slope are a significant concern.

They said an 80 percent quota would help farmers who are trying to get their crops started in low soil moisture conditions. Precipitation in Northeastern Colorado is 30 percent below average year to date.

Several Board members emphasized that they want to revisit the quota in May. The Board has the ability to increase the quota in subsequent meetings.

"We want to watch precipitation. We'll keep an eye on things and consider a supplemental quota next month," said Director Bill Brown from Larimer County.

The quota will make 248,000 acre feet of C-BT water available to agricultural, municipal and industrial users within Northern Water's boundaries until the end of the water year on Oct. 31, 2011.

About Northern Water

Northern Water is a public agency created in 1937 to contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to build the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, which collects water on the West Slope and delivers it to the East Slope through a 13-mile tunnel that runs underneath Rocky Mountain National Park. Northern Water's boundaries encompass portions of eight counties and a population of about 850,000 people. For more information, visit www.northernwater.org.

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