



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Northern Water Board Approves Additional C-BT Water Supplies for 2012

BERTHOUD – A 90 percent quota for Colorado-Big Thompson Project water was approved today by the Northern Water Board of Directors. Their decision, which they based on low snowpack and precipitation conditions, bolsters this year’s supplemental water supplies with a 40 percent increase from the initial quota set earlier this water year.

The C-BT quota sets 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 90 percent quota means that each unit will yield nine-tenths of an acre foot. This is the first year since 1977 that the board set an April quota of 90 percent or above.

Every year the directors base their April quota decision on updated snowpack, precipitation and reservoir storage information while striving to balance the overall needs within Northern Water’s district boundaries. As of today, snowpack in watersheds integral to C-BT is significantly below average for this time of year, at 34 percent of average in the Upper Colorado River Basin and 53 percent in the South Platte River Basin. To add to that, the year’s precipitation within district boundaries is sitting at 59 percent of the historical average.

Northern Water is also forecasting below-average streamflows this season.

In contrast, recent water years replenished C-BT reservoirs enough to give directors the option to offer additional water despite the paltry snowpack and precipitation. The C-BT Project’s storage has provided a reliable source of water through both dry and wet years for more than half a century.

“This will allow the project to do what it is intended to do: Get us through the dry years,” said Director John Rusch, who represents Morgan and Washington counties.

Many of the directors said they favored this higher-than-average quota because they are concerned about farmers’ needs in this dry year.

“This is one of those years why we have the C-BT,” said Director Kenton Brunner from Weld County. “Farmers need to get their crops in and they need the water.”

The quota will make 279,000 acre feet of C-BT water available to agricultural, municipal and industrial users within Northern Water’s district boundaries. The board can make additional water available anytime through October if they see the need.

To learn more about C-BT quota and see historical decisions from 1957 to now, visit www.northernwater.org and click on “Allottee Info” then “C-BT Quota” in the tab bars.

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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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