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C-BT WATER QUOTA INCREASED TO 60 PERCENT

BERTHOUD – Citing the need to balance the region’s water demands with the importance of maintaining future reservoir supplies, the Northern Water Board of Directors voted today to increase the Colorado-Big Thompson Project quota allocation to 60 percent.

The approval increased available C-BT water supplies by 10 percent, or 31,000 acre feet, from the initial 50 percent quota made available in November.

The Board made it clear they will revisit the quota as the year progresses should conditions warrant.

“I favor the staff recommendation for 60 percent now with the possibility to increase later,” said Weld County Director Kenton Brunner.

The board considered input from farmers and municipal water providers, demonstrating the varying demands and complex circumstances directors must consider when setting the quota. C-BT supplements other sources of water for 33 cities and towns, 120 agricultural irrigation companies, various industries and other water users within Northern Water’s 1.6 million acre service area.

Directors also considered streamflow forecasts, which are estimated to be above average. Snowpack in watersheds contributing to C-BT inflow is significantly above average for this time of year, at 134 percent in the Upper Colorado River Basin and 147 percent in South Platte River tributaries. C-BT storage at 100 percent of average, and local storage at 129 percent of average, are both in good shape as the runoff season begins.

Directors based their decision on the need for supplemental water for the coming year, while balancing project operations in what is shaping up as a higher than average runoff year. “Adding back to the bank account is wise,” said Boulder County Director Dennis Yanchunas.

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.

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-miles tunnel that runs underneath Rocky Mountain National Park. Northern Water’s boundaries encompass portions of eight counties, 640,000 irrigated acres and a population of about 860,000 people. For more information, visit www.northernwater.org.

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