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State grants 401 Water Quality Certification to Northern Integrated Supply Project

BERTHOUD – The Water Quality Control Division of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has issued a state water quality certification for the Northern Integrated Supply Project.

The Colorado 401 Water Quality Certification is required as part of the federal permitting process through Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, and its issuance serves as an important milestone for the project. State officials notified Northern Water leaders about the decision via a letter received this week.

"After a three-year process to evaluate water quality effects of the project on the Poudre River and the development of extensive mitigation measures, the Water Quality Control Division has concluded that no significant degradation is expected because of the project," said Northern Water Environmental Services Division Director Esther Vincent.

As part of the conditions for certification, the 15 participants in NISP will be required to monitor the Poudre River at points throughout Northern Colorado, and in some cases, to do so for decades. Among the items to be monitored will be water temperature, E. Coli, nutrients and other substances that occur naturally in the environment. Other mitigation measures will be required.

Over the course of meeting the state conditions, NISP participants will spend tens of millions of dollars.

The issuance of the 401 Water Quality Certification brings to a close the major permitting efforts with the State of Colorado. In 2017, the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission and the Colorado Water Conservation Board approved the Fish and Wildlife Mitigation and Enhancement Plan, which calls for \$60 million of improvements in Northern Colorado.

About the Northern Integrated Supply Project

The Northern Integrated Supply Project will supply 15 Northern Front Range water providers with 40,000 acre-feet of new, reliable water supplies.