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Loveland Reporter-Herald: May 20, 2011

By Tom Hacker

Loveland rally promotes water storage project

Speaker after speaker at a Thursday rally in support of a regional water storage project made references to the obvious.

They pointed out that the nearly 4 inches of rain that has fallen in Northern Colorado in the past week is all headed for Nebraska and Kansas.

“We don’t get thank-you notes from Kansas and Nebraska,” state Rep. Jerry Sonnenberg, R-Sterling, told an audience of about 200 at the First National Bank Pavilion at The Ranch in Loveland.

“Let’s keep Colorado water in Colorado.”



Rep. Cory Gardner, R-Colo., fires up the faithful at a rally at The Ranch in Loveland on Thursday in support of the Northern Integrated Supply Project, a regional water storage proposal. Reporter-Herald/Tom Hacker

The rally organized by the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District promoted the Northern Integrated Supply Project, a controversial water storage project.

Backers say it is needed to shore up a regional water supply that demand will outstrip in the next decade, and that failure to build it would doom agriculture.

Critics say it would threaten the free-flowing Cache la Poudre River, degrading water quality and harming wildlife habitat.

But the water-storage faithful ruled on Thursday at “Water, Jobs and the Economy,” a business rally to boost support for NISP.

‘Get it Done’

Featured speaker Rep. Cory Gardner, R-Colo., said that by 2020, water demand in the region will require another project the size of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, the region’s largest, which began delivering water in the late 1950s.

“It’s time we stop talking and start working,” Gardner said. “Let’s get it done.”

Eric Wilkinson, general manager of the Northern Water agency, warned that the region’s farm and ranch economy would be decimated without NISP.

“The fallback position is the dry-up of irrigated agriculture,” he said. “It would mean the loss of 60,000 acres, or 100 square miles. That’s our heritage. That’s our legacy.”

The NISP plan hinges on diverting a portion of the Poudre River’s flow to fill Glade Reservoir, a proposed 5-mile-long, 260-foot-deep reservoir that would store 170,000 acre-feet of water northwest of Fort Collins.

An acre-foot of water is sufficient to meet the needs of one to two households annually. On hand were the future owners of NISP — 15 municipalities and water districts that have stakes of varying sizes in the project.

Their upfront costs already have been substantial, with more than \$10 million spent on studies since the project was proposed, most of them required to satisfy state and federal regulatory agencies that have criticized the project, Wilkinson said.

“In this regulatory atmosphere, there is a lot more that has to be done than eight years ago,” when the project first was proposed.

‘We Lost It’

Larimer County Commissioner Tom Donnelly said NISP is essential to capture water that is sent downstream each year, most of it during the spring runoff.

“In 2010, the North Platte River Basin saw 600,000 acre-feet of water flowing out of the state,” he said. “We lost it.”

While many of the rally participants urged united — and bipartisan — support for the project, some noted that most elected officials who favor the project are Republicans, and most who

oppose it are Democrats.

“One of the worst things that could happen would be for this project to be about R’s, D’s and other labels,” said Eric Doering, mayor of NISP participant Frederick.

“This project is about people.”

Tom Hacker can be reached at 669-5050, ext. 521, or thacker@reporter-herald.com.

http://www.reporterherald.com/news_story.asp?ID=32836&pg=2

This article also ran in the Longmont Times-Call.

NISP Business Rally Speakers

Larimer County Commissioners

Tom Donnelly and Steve Johnson are here representing the Commissioners today

We appreciate their continued support of NISP

Mayor Eric Doering – Frederick

Not only does Mayor Doering serve as the Mayor of Frederick, he is also the District Manager of the St. Vrain Sanitation District which serves southwest Weld County and the President of the New Consolidated Lower Boulder Ditch and Reservoir Company.

Mayor Doering also serves on the Department of Local Affairs and the Regional Air Quality Commission for the State of Colorado.

Needless to say, he is familiar with Northern Colorado and is well qualified to speak to you today about an issue that's important to all of us; continued prosperity and the necessity of water supplies to ensure we'll continue to prosper into the future.

State Senator Mary Hodge

Currently chair of the Joint Budget Committee at the State Capitol – a thankless job with current budget issues

Former chair of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee – Sen. Hodge understands water!

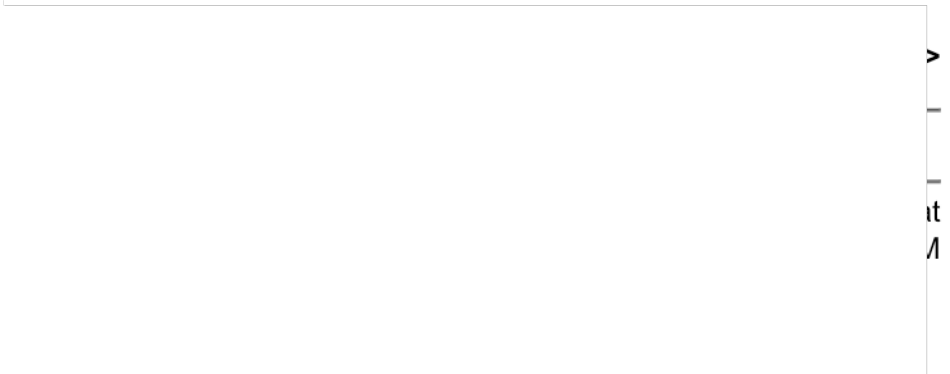
Served in the State House of Reps from 2000-2008

Elected to the Senate in 2009

State Representative Jerry Sonnenberg

Chairs the House Agriculture, Livestock and Natural Resources Committee

Farmer/rancher from Sterling – not too many at the Capitol today



Johnson at a NISP rally:



Larimer County Commissioners Lew Gaiter III and Steve Johnson listen as U.S. Sen. Cory Gardner speaks in favor of the Northern Integrated Supply Project during a support rally this summer at Northern Water in Berthoud.
(Photo: Coloradoan library)

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Comments are due to the Corps, which developed the impact study, Sept. 3.

[Quoted text hidden]

240770

Hi Lola:

I did attend the event. The Larimer County Commissioners were asked to give a welcome to the audience and Chairman Donnelly spoke for us all.

Basically the rally was a chance to hear about a dozen speakers from the participating local governments who talked briefly about what they saw as the benefits of NISP to their either constituents in the case of towns or customers in the case of water districts. They did speak generally how agriculture and jobs would benefit from NISP.

Other speakers included State Sen. Mary Hodge of Adams County and Congressman Cory Gardner. There was an agenda which basically listed the speakers. That and any more information might be available from Brian Werner of the NCWCD.

No specific actions or policies were discussed or debated. Attendees were urged to contact their local officials and express their support for NISP. An information table contained updates and information on the project.

That's my recollection. Hope this is helpful.

On Thu, May 26, 2011 at 12:15 PM, <lolasuefoster@gmail.com> wrote:

This message was sent by a visitor to the Virtual Courthouse.

Name: Lola Sue Foster

E-mail: lolasuefoster@gmail.com

Phone: 568.7768

Greetings, Steve. I was interested in the content of last week's meeting at "The Ranch" sponsored by NCWC(?) ---"Water / Jobs/ Economy". If you attended, could you --or a staff- provide a brief summary of a) purpose b) content.

Was it to promote effects on area economy/

jobs should/when NISP is built? Future water for agriculture?Speaker(s)?

If you did not attend -- or another source easier for summary, please forward me to that source.

Thank you/ Sue Foster/ Waverly

Page sent from: <http://www.co.larimer.co.us/bocc/>

Date/Time: 05/26/2011 - 12:14 PM

User located at: 72.55.212.108

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Steve Johnson

Larimer County Commissioner Dist. 2

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