"...we dedicate ourselves to the complete abandonment of our State's past leisurely attention to and consideration of its water problems, and in lieu thereof, the adoption of the strongest possible program, to the end that the fullest development of our water resources shall become the first order of business of the entire state and of all its people." (Constitution of Colorado Water Congress)

COLORADO WATER CONGRESS
NEWSLETTER

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Organization has been the initial focal point of Water Congress activities. A constitution was adopted by the representatives selected on June 4, 1958. It tells what the Congress wants to do and how it intends to do it. Then by-laws were adopted. They put meat on the framework of constitution fundamentals.

There's more to the development of constitution and by-laws than meets the eye. Countless hours of personal time, as well as sponsored time...meetings, conferences, revisions. Why? Because your Water Congress recognizes the importance of building upon a solid foundation.

Result: unanimous agreement on organizational fundamentals by representatives from every watershed in Colorado...and, for the participants, an inspiring personal experience.

Picture this: partisans of Colorado's past internal water wars, sitting side by side in an atmosphere of mutual respect and confidence, constructively working on state-wide water problems. There have been water men in Colorado who would shed honest tears of joy at such a sight.

Does this mean an end to Colorado's internal water wars? Certainly not. But this spirit of cooperation is already forestalling some unnecessary skirmishes which could cost the participants dearly in time and dollars.

Why now, after all these years of water strife? A resurgence of strong water leadership? Not yet, although there are some signs that this may be on the way.
Current water leaders can be credited, however, with recognizing an opportunity when it arose and then taking advantage of it. The opportunity: settlement, for a time at least, of basic east slope-west slope differences on Blue River trans-mountain diversions.

What then accounts for current state-wide water harmony? Basically this: growing awareness of the seriousness of out-of-state demands on Colorado water supplies.

This is the basic force that is propelling Colorado Water Congress efforts. It is a uniting force which is being intelligently harnessed by capable, hard-working men.

Key men in the initiation of the Colorado Water Congress efforts have been the Governor and the Attorney General. Determined to do something about Colorado's desperately weak position on inter-state water problems, McNichols is providing needed leadership.

Behind the democratic Governor 100 per cent on water problems is Colorado's republican Attorney General, Duke Dunbar. At considerable sacrifice, he has encouraged his top assistant, John Barnard, Jr., to provide strong leadership for the Colorado Water Congress.

Has it come too late? Only time can tell the lateness of the hour for Colorado water supplies. Demands by the federal government, by other states and by the Republic of Mexico for more of the water which originates in Colorado than any treaty, compact, or other contractual relationship requires are becoming increasingly persistent and powerful and time may be running out.

Because of this, your Water Congress is moving quickly from its initial organizational stage into an action stage.

As the result of efforts by your Water Congress, the Colorado water conservation board, in a special meeting on July 30th, created the Colorado Water Investigation Commission. Its job: to give technical support and assistance
to the Board on certain urgent inter-state water problems, through effective utilization of the best legal and engineering talent available in Colorado.

Note this: the Commission will not encroach upon the functions and prerogatives of the Colorado water conservation board.

Commission members: J. R. Barkley (chairman), of northern Colorado water conservancy district; Glenn Saunders of Denver; John Barnard, Sr. of the Colorado river water conservation district; J. Sid Nichols of the southeastern water conservancy district; Clifford Jex of the southwestern water conservation district, and Mills Bunger of the South Platte water conservancy district. Alternates: John Clayton, Charles Fisk, Philip Smith, William Eakes and David Miller.

Constituent agencies have assigned their top water lawyer-water engineer teams to commission work, without charge. This makes available to the Colorado water conservation board many decades of education, experience and active participation in water problems.

Basic approach: to function as an effective arm of the Colorado water conservation board in (1) assembling inter-state water facts, (2) obtaining state-wide approval and support of these facts, and (3) putting sound facts to work for Colorado in inter-state water problems.

Top priority commission job: obtaining beneficial operating criteria for Glen Canyon Reservoir.

Glen Canyon, now under construction, is the principal main stem storage unit of the Colorado River storage project. Development of favorable criteria is an absolute must, if Colorado is to be permitted to use the water apportioned to it by compacts.

Lower basin states, with technical assistance from top-drawer bureau of reclamation engineers, are developing operating criteria for Glen Canyon Reservoir which will probably be submitted to Congress early next year.

Apparent ultimate objective of the lower basin criteria: to prevent the
filling of Glen Canyon Reservoir in time to do the upper basin states much good.

Lower basin criteria provide that water be by-passed or released at Glen Canyon Reservoir for these purposes: First, to meet the demands to the full extent of the seven and one-half million acre feet apportioned to the lower basin by the 1922 compact; second, for generation of firm energy at Hoover Dam and at other power installations on the lower river; and third, for generation of what is termed secondary or dump energy at those power plants.

If this formula is followed, it is impossible to determine when, if ever, Glen Canyon Reservoir would reach a stage of storage which would permit it to perform its intended functions. Since the power contracts do not expire until 1980, it appears certain that the lower basin formula would not permit full utilization of Glen Canyon Reservoir until after that date.

Over one-half (Colorado's 51.75%) of the water by-passed or released in excess of compact requirements must be deducted from the amount of water which Coloradans can put to use. These are deductions from water supplies which will ultimately define the limits of Colorado's greatness.

Commission studies of various aspects of the Glen Canyon problem are getting under way. Specific problems have been assigned to commission members and alternates. Technical coordination is progressing with the staff of the Colorado water conservation board.

Upper basin compact commissioners discussed Glen Canyon studies with Colorado water conservation board representatives and study commission representatives in Denver on August 14th. Result: assurances of full cooperation between upper basin states on this important problem.

Housekeeping problems must also be given attention by the Colorado Water Congress, even while it is attempting to move quickly into action on inter-state water controversies. Financing is the number one problem.

Substantial financial contributions have been received from a number of
the larger water user organizations in response to a request for assistance during this initial period. Congress funds now total $2,200.

But more is needed. Much more! A stenographer is being hired. Office supplies are being purchased: paper, stamps, addressograph, etc. There are long-distance calls and arrangements for the annual convention -- many costs, all over and above the contributions of manpower and travel expenses by the larger water user organizations.

Membership dues are needed: Five dollars per person for the remainder of calendar year 1958. Thereafter, ten dollars a year. For this you will receive the monthly Water Congress Newsletter and all other periodic Congress publications, plus an investment in the future of Colorado through the conservation and protection of her water supply. A membership application is enclosed. Early submission of your application will aid greatly in financial planning.

Something more than membership dues will be needed over the long pull. Your finance committee is exploring all possibilities.

Speaking of housekeeping funds, did you know that California is experiencing an intra-state controversy over water development funds? The outcome: complete stripping of her $2 billion state budget of all money for water projects construction, leaving a bare-bones water appropriation of only $14 million... "barely enough for the department of water resources' housekeeping activities."

In California, "bare-bones" and "barely enough" mean an expenditure of over one dollar per person for the operation of its state water resources department this year.

Colorado's 1958 appropriation to its water conservation board: $405,000. This amounts to an expenditure of about twenty-five cents per person.

On a per capita basis, California's water expenditures for minimum housekeeping activities this year is more than four times that of Colorado!
We don't blame Californians. We admire them. Plain talk from the Denver Post editorial page recently expressed it this way:

"You've got to hand it to California when it comes to water development. While her sister states squabble among themselves or sit back and wait for Uncle Sam to step in, California goes after every drop she can get, any way she can get it, and with all the wiles and resources in her possession.

"Rich, ambitious, fast-growing California has recognized that the fundamental fact of life in the arid West is water. Gigantic water supplies are essential to the gigantic future she envisages for herself.

"...Sister states of the West, frequently pitted against the heavy odds of California water grabs, could do worse than to adopt the aggressive and resourceful approach to water development which has made California great..."

Dates to remember: November 7th and 8th -- the first annual convention of the Colorado Water Congress...to be held in Denver.