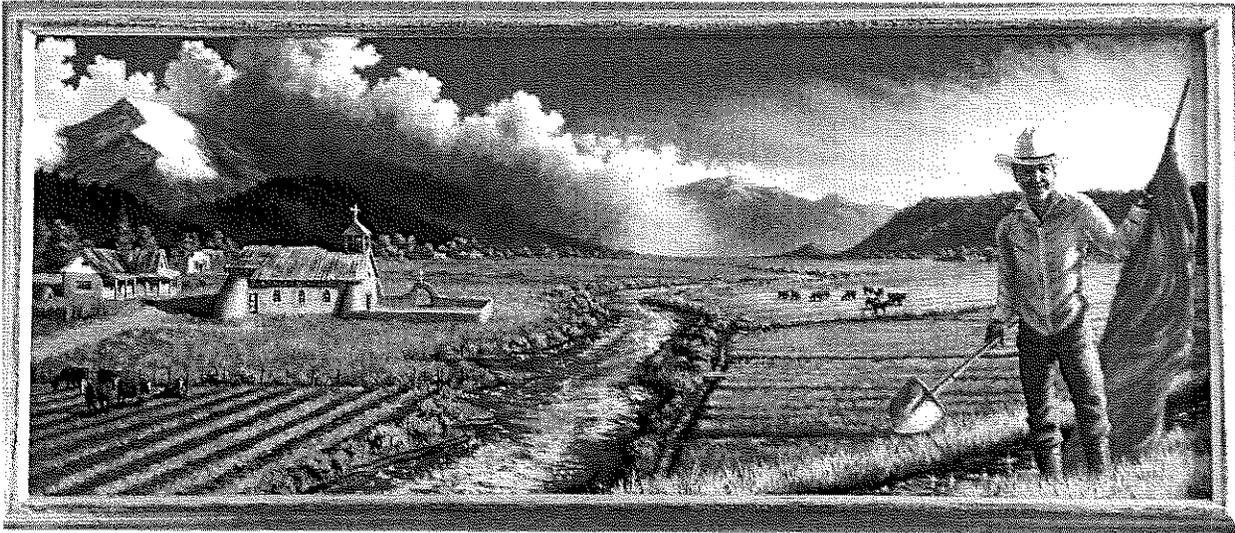


## SB-19 – Promote Water Conservation



### Background

My original goal in introducing SB 019 was to provide farmers and ranchers with incentives to encourage irrigation efficiencies or at the very least to remove existing disincentives for efficiency investments.

I listened to the full range of interests on this emotional and technical subject and requested the Water Congress create a working group to advise me on future directions for this bill. The Strike Below amendment before you represents my conclusions for the best and most realistic way forward that results in an incremental step for Colorado's agricultural water users and Colorado's environment.

### What SB-19 does

Some water appropriators may wish to reduce their water consumption, in part to stream flows, but there is a disincentive in current law that penalizes appropriators who decrease their consumptive use of water;

At a time when Colorado can expect drought conditions to increase in frequency and severity, the general assembly should give appropriators a safe harbor when they decrease their consumptive use of water by participating in a variety of government-sponsored water conservation programs

This act promotes the maximum utilization of Colorado's water resources, which can help alleviate the effects of drought on river flows, and is in the public interest.

### **Specifics of the amendment**

L.001 deletes sections 3 and 4 of the introduced bill that addressed the allocation of non-consumptive water savings. I remain committed to this wider and admittedly more difficult area of ag water conservation but will not pursue it in SB 019.

L.001 retains most of Section 2 from the introduced bill but with the following important changes:

- Limits applicability of the bill to Water Divisions 4, 5, and 6 (Gunnison, mainstem Colorado, and Yampa/White River basins)
- Adds "Water Authority" to the list of entities authorized to approve a water conservation plan,
- Clarifies that entities approving water conservation programs may only do so within their jurisdictional boundaries,
- Changes technical terms to comport with existing statute, at the State Engineers Office's request,
- Deletes unnecessary language that already exists in statute (paragraphs (E) and (F) of the introduced bill).
- L.001 also revises the Legislative Declaration (Section 1) to address the amendment.