



# Colorado Legislative Council Staff

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## MEMORANDUM

October 9, 2014

**TO:** James Eklund, Director, Colorado Water Conservation Board

**FROM:** David Beaujon, Senior Research Analyst, (303) 866-4781  
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**SUBJECT:** Public Comments on the Colorado Water Plan Received by the Water Resources Review Committee

### Summary

Pursuant to Senate Bill 14-115, the Water Resources Review Committee is required to collect feedback from the public and provide a summary of this feedback, as well as its own feedback, on the draft Colorado Water Plan to the Colorado Water Conservation Board by November 1, 2014. At its September 30, 2014, meeting, the committee instructed Legislative Council Staff to provide a summary of public feedback to the board prior to its October 10, 2014, deadline to submit public comments on the plan. The committee also decided to forego providing feedback on the draft Colorado Water Plan until after a full draft of the plan is released. A full report of the committee's SB 14-115 activities during the 2014 interim will be provided to the board prior to the November 1, 2014, deadline.

**Overview.** Pursuant to Senate Bill 14-115, the Water Resources Review Committee (WRRC) is required to hold at least one public hearing in each geographic region associated with a basin roundtable to collect feedback from the public. During the 2014 interim, the committee held nine meetings to collect feedback from the public on the draft Colorado Water Plan in Alamosa, Denver, Durango, Fort Collins, Glenwood Springs, Gunnison, Pueblo, Steamboat Springs, and Walden. The committee also received public comments in letters and e-mails, handwritten questionnaires, and questionnaires that were completed on the committee's website. Attached to this memorandum are two tables that summarize public feedback provided to the committee by October 1, 2014. The contents of these tables and the process for obtaining the public comments are described below.

**Table 1 — Public comments from questionnaires.** The committee used a questionnaire to elicit written comments and guide public testimony on the Colorado Water Plan. Questionnaires were distributed at each SB 14-115 hearing and were available on the committee's website. This questionnaire offered interested persons the opportunity to provide information about themselves, including their name, their basin of residence, their water constituent group, their experience with

the roundtable process, and to indicate whether they wanted to be added to the committee's SB 14-115 interested persons e-mail list. It also offered an opportunity for respondents to raise questions about the plan, provide comments on the plan, and comment on any other water issue of interest.

Table 1 includes comments from questionnaires that were submitted by 40 individuals at meetings, through the committee's website, or mailed to the committee. The comments in this table are essentially verbatim with corrections for typographical errors and complete names instead of acronyms. This table does not include completed questionnaires from the June 18 Gunnison Basin hearing because that meeting's questionnaire was substantially different from the standard format used for the later meetings. Comments from the Gunnison Basin questionnaires are provided in Table 2. Several completed questionnaires were submitted anonymously. Staff was instructed by the committee not to convey anonymous comments to the Colorado Water Conservation Board.

**Table 2 — Summary of public comments from meetings and other sources.** At each SB 14-115 hearing, the committee received a briefing on that basin's basin implementation plan (BIP) from a representative of the local basin roundtable. Attendees also met in small groups to discuss the BIPs, the draft Colorado Water Plan, and other water matters. Due to the committee's inability to record multiple events at the same time, the committee recessed during the small group discussions. Following these discussions, audio recording resumed and a member of each group reported on that table's discussion. At each meeting, the committee also received public testimony from any person who wanted to speak directly to the committee about the draft water plan or any other issue of concern. Public testimony was recorded and open to any person, including those from other basins.

Table 2 includes summaries of the comments provided by 86 individuals during public testimony, as well as summaries of e-mails and letters submitted to the committee. Table 2 also includes a summary of the 38 small group discussion reports from eight SB 14-115 hearings. This table does not include public comments from the North Platte Basin hearing. Due to the small audience that attended that meeting, the committee opened a dialogue with the attendees. This dialogue could not be summarized without risk of mischaracterizing the speaker's comments. The audio recording of the North Platte Basin meeting, as well as the recordings for all other meetings, are available on the General Assembly's website. To obtain the most accurate understanding of the public comments, interested persons are encouraged to listen to the audio recordings of the SB 14-115 hearings.

Thirteen people submitted both completed questionnaires and testified at an SB 14-115 meeting. Their comments are indicated in both tables. Table 2 also indicates whether a person provided testimony at more than one SB 14-115 hearing or provided copies of written testimony. Letters and written testimony submitted to the committee during a meeting are attached to that meeting's summary, which is available on the committee's website.