

Date Sent: 4.30.09

Subject: [Little Mtn] **Whiskey is for drinking, Water is for fighting**

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**On behalf of the sportsmen groups involved in the Greater Little Mountain Coalition (see list at bottom), we thought you'd be interested in this ...**

### **Whiskey is for drinking, Water is for fighting**

Million Conservation Resource Group, a private Colorado company, has what is describes as a "major water transportation project for the state of Colorado." The Army Corps of Engineers is in the process of creating an Environmental Impact Statement and had 2 public scoping meetings in Wyoming recently – in Green River and Laramie.

Because of the massive size of this project and the irreversible damages it could cause, the public was solidly opposed to the proposal at both meetings!

**What you can do:** Deadline for written comments is **May 19, 2009**.

Comments should be addressed to:

Ms. Rena Brand, Regulatory Specialist  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District  
Denver Regulatory Office  
9307 S. Wadsworth Blvd. Littleton, CO 80128  
Phone (303) 979-4120 Fax (303) 979-0602

Or you can submit email comments to [MCRG.EIS@usace.army.mil](mailto:MCRG.EIS@usace.army.mil)

To find out more information, including maps, go to:

<https://www.nwo.usace.army.mil/html/od-tl/eis-info.htm>

Check out a recent opinion piece on this:

<http://www.trib.com/articles/2009/04/21/editorial/forum/4c8e89e6a20a117b8725759c002104ef.txt>

**Background:** The proposal is to build approximately 400 miles of pipeline and extract water from the Green River in two places, Flaming Gorge Reservoir and just south of Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge. Water will be sent to the Front Range of Colorado – to be used primarily to serve municipal needs in Fort Collins, Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo. Some of the water may also go to southeastern Wyoming (see attached map for proposed pipeline route).

The pipeline project would draw 250,000 acre-feet (about a quarter of the water in Green River) away from the region, which has experienced below average flows in recent years because of severe drought. There is no law in Wyoming that requires a minimum amount of flow that must be in the Green River – raising

concerns about the amount of water that will be left in the river in drought years. In order to transport the water, sixteen natural gas-fired pumping stations will be constructed. The project also includes the construction of several reservoirs.

**Fish & Wildlife Concerns:**

- Flaming Gorge Reservoir, a National Recreation Area, draws 2.5 million visitors each year. It is unclear how this might affect tourism.
- The long-term implications to fish, wildlife, and recreation in the area are not well understood and are not reversible.
- This issue should be closely followed, as it can have great impacts on the blue ribbon fisheries of Flaming Gorge Reservoir, the Green River, and its tributaries.
- The removal of 250,000 acre-feet of water via pipeline will mean that much less water is available to a wide variety of wildlife species in an intensely dry area.
- Decreasing the cold diluting waters flowing out of Fontanelle will increase the water temperatures and threaten the survival of the Kokanee and trout populations.
- Decreasing the diluting waters out of Fontanelle will increase the nutrient concentrations flowing into Flaming Gorge - leading to an increase in algae growth, an increase in temperature and a decrease in dissolved oxygen at critical spawning times. This threatens to change the fishery in Flaming Gorge and kill trout.
- The Seedskafee take out point deprives the Green River of the cold diluting waters flowing out of Fontanelle. There are serious water quality impacts in terms of increased salinity.
- Exporting water to other drainages risks export and import of exotic species

**Water Users:** Due to concern about how this large and continuous water withdrawal might impact water users on the Green River system, the Sweetwater County Commissioners have opposed this project based on the need and ability to have a dependable supply of water that will sustain future development.

**Greater Little Mountain Area Coalition Members**

Bowhunters of Wyoming, Local Western Wyoming Mule Deer Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation – Muley Fanatics Chapter, Steelworkers Union – Local 13214, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Trout Unlimited, Wyoming Wildlife Federation