

Date: November 16, 2023

Dear Members of the Colorado Drought Taskforce,

Colorado's rivers, streams and lakes are a core part of our identity and fundamental to sustaining a viable economy. These are key attributes of attracting businesses and employees to relocate or remain in the state. While we recently experienced above average snowpack, and more moisture in the spring, we quickly reverted to unprecedented drought and aridification placing constraints on our ability to satisfy water users, environmental needs, and interstate obligations.

The legislature charged the task force to "develop recommendations for state legislation that provided additional tools...in the development of programs that address drought in the Colorado River Basin and interstate commitments related to the Colorado River and its tributaries through conservation of the waters of the Colorado River and its tributaries."

The stability of the Colorado River Basin is important to both water users and the environment. We need to prepare for the conditions we may have to endure. The Drought Task Force has the charge and the opportunity to be proactive in developing our capacity to ensure that our water users and rivers can continue to thrive in the face of challenges from both climate change and possible interstate obligations. This includes the development of tools and systems through law making, funding and creative partnerships for Colorado to be nimble in an uncertain future.

Specifically, we call on the Task Force to take advantage of funding opportunities. Responding to drought and aridification within Colorado and as part of the interstate community calls for time, resources, and commitment. The programs needed must be effectively developed, implemented, and administered. Strategies include improvements in agricultural infrastructure and operations, implementing responsibly flexible water management systems and water conservation programs, and providing watershed investments to provide wildfire protection, and improve climate resilience. Colorado must make sure it is well positioned to take advantage of federal and state funds.

The task force also needs to provide recommendations that address environmental needs alongside our communities and economies. Reliable water supplies are dependent on healthy functioning rivers. Colorado needs collaborative solutions to drought that ensure healthy rivers and the wildlife that depend on them are prioritized alongside efforts to support growing our food and raising livestock, protecting, and sustaining local economies, and providing clean water for all.

We deeply appreciate your commitment to the Drought Task Force as well as your commitment to put forth solutions to address the impacts of aridification. Our economy depends on new and sustainable ways to ensure that businesses, and all water users continue to thrive regardless of an uncertain future. We appreciate your work to identify opportunities to become more flexible in the face of drought and aridification as reliable water is a critical concern of the business community. This is critical for the stability and longevity of a thriving economy throughout the state.

Sincerely,





MARBLE DISTILLING CO.

Conservation Colorado  
American Whitewater  
Eagle River Watershed Council  
Down River Equipment  
Friends of the Yampa  
4 Corners Riversports  
Vail Valley Partnership  
Wild Birds Unlimited  
Stray Wild  
Twitch LLC DBA Hala Gear  
Steamboat Flyfisher  
Backdoor Sports Ltd  
Redesign LLC  
Valor Tactical Innovation  
Green Valley Energy Solutions  
CHAZM Consulting  
Pedacito Boricua, LLC  
Be Someone Design Co. LLC  
Matrix Resource Technology  
Roan Creek Ranch  
Wild Wonder Outdoor Learning

Grip Bouldering  
Blades of Glory  
Orr's Trading Post  
Grand Junction Adventures  
Climate Refarm  
Citizens for Clean Air, Grand Junction,  
CO  
Climate Con LLC  
Downstream Adventures  
Proudline Guided Fly Fishing, LLC  
Mild to Wild Rafting  
Mountain Racing  
4Corners Riversports  
Thistle Whistle Farm  
RE Development  
Mountain Whitewater & Paddler's  
Pub  
Copeka  
CHAC  
Badfish SUP  
Charlie's Flybox

Wilderness Exchange  
MJ Hair

Crystal Love  
Colorado Cultural Connections