



U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
 Dakotas Area Office
 PO Box 1017
 Bismarck ND 58502
 Attn: J. Signe Snortland
jsnortland@usbr.gov

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		October 23, 2012
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FOLDER I.D.		

**RE: Arkansas Valley Conduit Long-Term Excess Capacity Master Contract
 Draft Environmental Statement**

Dear Mr. Snortland:

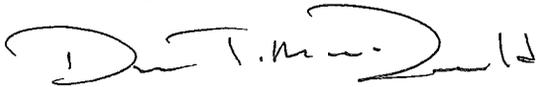
These comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") for the Arkansas Valley Conduit Long-Term Excess Capacity Master Contract are submitted on behalf of the City of Salida ("Salida"). Salida is located in the Upper Arkansas River basin and has a substantial interest in the flows of the Arkansas River, both upstream and downstream of Salida. To serve its citizens, Salida owns a variety of water rights in the Arkansas River basin and also operates exchanges along the Arkansas River. Salida also has interest in protecting water quality in the Arkansas River and maintaining flows to protect recreation opportunities along the river.

Salida supports those options in the DEIS that include the Master Contract. Salida relies on an excess capacity contract to meet its needs. It currently has a temporary excess capacity contract ("If and When" contract) for 625 acre-feet. In the future, Salida will need the Master Contract to fulfill demand, particularly in winter months when its direct flow rights are limited. Salida has committed to participating in the Master Contract in the amount of 2,000 acre-feet. In order to ensure a firm future water supply, Salida has a preference for those options in the DEIS that include the Master Contract and encourages the Bureau to select a preferred option including the Master Contract.

Finally, Salida supports compliance with the Upper Arkansas Voluntary Flow Management Program ("UAVFMP"). This is a year-round program designed to provide an annual flow regime that helps maintain the brown trout fishery, meet the demand for boating recreation and support the region's tourism industry. It has been an important flow protection tool. Salida is a participant in the UAVFMP and appreciates the fact that the DEIS studied the effects of each option on the UAVFMP. Salida was pleased to see that the DEIS concluded that all options would have a negligible effect on the frequency with which the UAVFMP target flows are satisfied. Salida was also pleased to see the DEIS identified, as a best management practice, that all participants will continue voluntary commitment to operation of Fryingpan-Arkansas Project and non-Project water in accordance with the UAVFMP. Accordingly, Salida supports compliance with the UAVFMP as a best management practice in any preferred option.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments to the Arkansas Valley Conduit Long-Term Excess Capacity Master Contract DEIS. Please contact me with any questions or concerns or if Salida can, in any way, be of help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dara MacDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke.

Dara MacDonald
City Administrator