

INDIVIDUALS

IN80

Bureau of Reclamation
815 East Second Ave. Suite 300
Durango, CO 81301

Louise McCauley
301 S. 2nd St. Lot 4
Gunnison, CO 81230-3718

March 30, 2000

Dear Mr. Pat Schumacher,

1

I oppose the Bureau of Reclamation's latest Supplemental Environmental Impact ~~Statement~~ Statement (DSEIS)'s preferred alternative for the Animas-LaPlata project which includes a large reservoir in Fidges Basin and pumping plant. Instead, I urge you to adopt Alternative 6, the Animas River Citizen's Coalition Alternative, for the following reasons:

2

- The DSEIS for the Animas-LaPlata project is woefully inadequate and does not meet the basic requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act to provide sufficient factual information to allow the public and decision-makers to make an informed decision among alternatives;

3

- None of the suggested future uses for A-LP water justifies the enormous cost and environmental damage

IN80-1 Comment noted.

IN80-2 The FSEIS provides analysis of several alternatives, their potential environmental impacts, and mitigation measures to ameliorate impacts. As such, Reclamation believes that it meets the requirements of both CEQ and NEPA policies for NEPA compliance.

IN80-3 Refer to General Comment No. 6 for a discussion of future water uses .

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3
(con't)

A-LP will cause the Animas River ;
- The DSEIS mischaracterizes the non-structural alternatives, discounting them because they provide only Indian water and do not subsidize municipal and industrial needs in Durango and other towns;
- Most (70%) of the Indian water needs identified for A-LP supply power plants and coal mines, with another 16% supplying golf courses and resorts;
- The proposed Ridges Basin Reservoir would displace up to 800 elk and deer, and threatened endangered native fish species and bald Eagles;
- U.S. and Colorado taxpayers will pay \$330 million for the proposed A-LP project, while cheaper and less destructive alternatives meet Indian water rights obligations.

5

Thank you for your time.

Spitze McAuley

IN80-4 Considerable analysis has been undertaken to evaluate the existing wildlife and fisheries populations and projecting potential impacts from the ALP Project. These analyses are included in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the FSEIS. Refer to General Comment Nos. 5, 9 and 11 for discussions of bioaccumulation, fishery and elk impacts.

IN80-5 Please refer to General Comment No. 2 for a discussion of project cost.

Similar letters were received by the following people and are included as part of Form Letter D.

Beverly Baker, Boulder, CO
Rebecca Barrow, Westcliffe, CO
Jean Bean, Pagosa Springs, CO
Elvira Blaine, Denver, CO
Mark Burmich, Twin Lakes, CO
Laurel Clark, Lakewood, CO
Sharon Clark, Telluride, CO
Julie Emerson, Denver, CO
Mark Freitag, Durango, CO
James Holst, Pueblo West, CO
Vicki Kirsch, Boulder, CO
Jim Logterman, Denver, CO
Lisa Maragon, Denver, CO
Dave Meredyth, Durango, CO
Oliver Nickels, Colorado Springs, CO

Mary Patalan, Durango, CO
Donna Provance, Lakewood, CO
Eric Rechel, Grand Junction, CO
Jack Rodreck, Colorado Springs, CO
Jerry Sims, Arvada, CO
Joyce Sjogren, Fort Collins, CO
Barbara Snyder, PhD, Durango, CO
Renata Scheder, Carbondale, CO
Tyrone Steen, Colorado Springs, CO
Pam Thompson, Aspen, CO
Diane Voytko, Wheat Ridge, CO
Charles Williams, Boulder, CO
Sally Ziegle, Colorado Springs, CO
Marilyn Zimmerman, Boulder, CO

INDIVIDUALS

IN81

From: "keith meehan" <keithmeehan@hotmail.com>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>, <Neromary@aol.com>, <eroy@smcvt.edu>, <schneid@digisys.net>, <staceywgl@hotmail.com>, <atcarpen@bouldernews.infi.net>, <alex.merritt@central.sun.com>, <gregboulbol@hotmail.com>, <lizbuck@hotmail.com>, <cookiebrooke@hotmail.com>
Date: 2/18/00 6:20PM
Subject: ALP Project comments

Dear Bureau of Reclamation and Mr. Pat Schumacher,

Regarding the proposed Animas LaPlata Project in Durango, CO, I am taking this opportunity to recommend Alternative #6, the Animas River Citizen's Conceptual Alternative.

I am baffled and disgusted that we are still considering this project. The expense is huge and unnecessary. Indian concerns and water rights can be compensated through other more creative and effective measures than building ALP. The impact/destruction of elk and deer habitat, fisheries, and the resulting cumulative ecosystem impact is simply unacceptable. The quality of our recreational opportunities and related damages to tourism businesses are unnecessary. The health of a sustainable tourist economy returns far more economically to the Durango area than a one time construction boom. And taxpayers would pay for this project?!? First \$300 million dollars (IF costs don't balloon) and then millions each year in operating costs. Money can and should be spent in a more efficient, equitable, and generous manner to compensate local Native American groups.

This is NUTS! No ALP of any scale!

Sincerely,

Keith Meehan
Whitefish, MT
(former Durango resident)

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2 |
3 |

IN81-1 Refer to General Comment Nos. 5, 9 and 11 for further discussion.

IN81-2 Refer to General Comment No. 8 for a discussion of river recreation. While the proposed action may negatively impact the quality of private river recreation and reduce commercial rafting user days by 4.5%, it would not significantly impact tourism in the area. In fact, the construction of Ridges Basin Reservoir with an estimated 218,400 user days would positively impact the tourism industry by attracting additional tourists to the area.

IN81-3 Refer to General Comment No. 2 for a discussion of project cost.

INDIVIDUALS

IN82

From: Animas - La Plata Project <swcbd@sw-center.org>
To: <gis@SW-Center.ORG>, <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: 2/3/00 7:42AM
Subject: Comments: Animas - La Plata Project.

Name: Tracy Meints Fox, Peoria Audubon Society
Address: 15215 North Ivy Lake Road
City: Chillicothe
State: IL
Zip: 61523-9133
Phone: 309-579-3264
Subject: Comments: Animas - La Plata Project
Comments: Pat Schumacher
Bureau of Reclamation
835 E. 2nd Ave.
Durango, CO 81301

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

11

I urge you to revised the scope of the proposed Animas - La Plata project and eliminate the Ridge Basin dam component. Please consider the impacts of this dam on wildlife and endangered species such as the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker. In addition, I have specific concerns about bioaccumulation of heavy metals in bald eagles and other fish eating raptors. The associated reservoir will also eliminate a major elk migration corridor and large wintering range for resident elk.

Sincerely,

Tracy Meints Fox

Remote_Addr: 216.178.176.230
HTTP_User_Agent: Mozilla/4.5 [en] (WinNT; I)
HTTP_Referer: http://www.sw-center.org/swcbd/activist/animas.html
HTTP_From: (null)

IN82-1 Ridges Basin Dam is an integral part of Refined Alternative 4 and is necessary to provide the storage necessary to satisfy the water right claims of the two Colorado Ute Tribes. Therefore, eliminating the dam as part of Refined Alternative 4 is not a viable option. Constructing an offstream dam with this alternative is less environmentally damaging when compared with the non-structural alternative of Refined Alternative 6. Refer to General Comment No. 5 for a discussion of bioaccumulation, No. 9 for threatened and endangered species, and No. 11 for elk.

March 11, 2000

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

I am writing in regards to the proposed Animas-La Plata project.

Leave the Animas alone. Its name means "soul", and it is a sacred river, full of holy water. It is one of the last untamed, undammed, undescrated river systems left in the American West, and should remain so.

Indeed, I have often thought of the Animas and its jade-green waters to be the heart and soul, the spirit and essence, of Southwest Colorado, of Durango, and of the San Juan Mountains that feed it with secret springs and summer rains and winter snows. It is a comfort and a blessing, it is wildness and joy, it is evidence of the divine here on earth.

Leave it alone.

Do the Indians really need its water? And if so, what for? I have heard that the local reservations have more than enough water for agricultural and domestic uses already, which comes from the San Juan, La Plata, and Dolores rivers. If they want the water from the Animas for coal-fired power-plants, for golf-courses in the desert, for more casinos, just tell them "No. This water is sacred."

Leave the Animas alone.

And leave Ridges Basin alone, too. As it is, it is a lovely and peaceful place, full of wildlife and natural beauty. It is much

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IN83-1 The purpose of the ALP Project is to bring final resolution to Colorado Ute Tribal water rights claims as contained in the 1986 Settlement Agreement. Refer to General Comment No. 13 for a discussion of Indian water rights. Also refer to General Comment No. 6 for a discussion of water uses.

too nice to flood, to scar, to fill
with water, with people, with people's
filth.

I have seen many rivers. Many great
rivers. Many sacred rivers. And the Animas
is my favorite of all. It is special.
It should not be disturbed, as have so many
other rivers.

Let's be different. If this A.L.P. project
exists - as I suspect - to make the
greedy ones among us wealthy (both Indian
and White), then let's just disappoint them.
Let's surprise them.

Let's do nothing.

Do not desecrate the Animas River. Do
not ruin Ridges Basin. Do not send
holy water where it does not belong.

There is an important lesson from Mother
Nature that we have perhaps forgotten:
If no action is needed, do nothing.

Leave the Animas alone.

Its name means "soul".

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,
Curt Melliger

2329 County Road 122
Hesperus, CO 81326

INDIVIDUALS

IN84

From: Gary Mike <gjmike@shiprock.ncc.cc.nm.us>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: 4/6/00 1:12PM
Subject: Animas=La Plata Project

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Historical rights - the first people get the first claims to water rights.
The historical commitment to the Native Americans and their water rights
should be upheld. They should decide what to do with their water!

Gary

IN84-1 Comments noted.

INDIVIDUALS

IN85

424 _____ April 12, 2000
 Mr. Pat Schumacher
 Four Corners Division
 Bureau of Reclamation
 835 E 2nd Ave, Suit 300
 Durango, Co 81301
 Comments on DSEIS for A/P

Dear Mr. Schumacher
 I live in La Plata, New Mexico and after all
 the battles am very disappointed with not
 getting any water for irrigation.
 I am hopeful we will get the project
 started + keep the water in La Plata +
 San Juan County - California has
 benefited long enough from our ~~well~~ water
 We certainly can't afford to go to court to
 settle the Ute Tribes water rights.
 M+F water is something we can't afford to lose
 We can't afford to lose our more deep water
 Thank you for your consideration of my
 comment.
 Sincerely,
 Steve Montoya

IN85-1 Comments noted.

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INDIVIDUALS

IN86

From: "Linda R. Morris" <lmorris@frontier.net>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: 2/10/00 7:49PM
Subject: ALP Feedback

753 E. 6th Ave.
Durango, CO 81301
February 10, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

1 | I am writing in reference to the ten alternatives to ALP. As a taxpayer of La Plata County who does not believe in excessive taxation, I would like to tell you my opinion. Pumping water uphill to fill a large reservoir in Ridges Basin is an overly-expensive, inefficient use of tax money. It goes so far beyond meeting the Indian Tribes Settlement Agreement that it is absurd.

2 | It is obvious that the evaluation process was not prioritized to settle Indian water claims, but was expanded to include recreation and a huge quantity of water for development. I strongly believe that this will be devastating to the quality of life of the Four Corners region.

As I am unable to attend the Durango Hearing on Feb. 15 to share my opinion, I wish to go record with the following:

- 3 | · The DSEIS shows clearly what ALP Opponents have long said, there is no legitimate use for the water. None of the suggested future uses justifies the enormous cost and environmental damage ALP will bring to our community.
- 4 | · The Bureau has mischaracterized the nonstructural alternatives and measured them against larger alternatives so they look as bad as possible. In-reality, non structural alternatives are more practical, cheaper, and would be less harmful to the environment.
- 5 | · The great majority (70%) of the Indian portion of ALP water will supply power plants and coal mines. Almost all the remaining water will be sucked up by federally subsidized golf courses and resorts (16%). Only 2% satisfies Ute housing needs!
- 6 | · The Ridges Basin Reservoir would displace up to 800 elk and deer, and threaten endangered fish species and native bald eagles.
- 7 | · The new ALP will cost US and Colorado taxpayers \$330 million. The Animas La Plata Water conservancy district will face \$12.5 million of up-front repayment costs. In addition, the City of Durango will have to spend \$5 million to build a pipeline to get the water back out of the reservoir.

I, personally, can not afford your new *scaled down* ALP, and I am a middle class teacher in La Plata County. I'm sure the majority of La Plata County residents are in my same shoes.

Sincerely yours,

Linda R. Morris

IN86-1 Refer to General Comment Nos. 2 and 3.

IN86-2 Refer to General Comment No. 13.

IN86-3 Refer to General Comment No. 2 for a discussion of costs to taxpayers. General Comment No. 6 provides additional discussion of the future water uses that could occur as the Colorado Ute Tribes develop their water. A reconnaissance level analysis of these water uses is provided in Chapter 2 of the FSEIS. The Colorado Ute Tribes have gone on record as having a strong preference for an assured water supply in a storage reservoir. Reclamation's evaluation concludes that the best overall location of such a storage reservoir is at Ridges Basin.

IN86-4 All ten alternatives were evaluated on a comparable level of detail. Of great importance was the ability of the alternative to be implemented in a timely manner and with little to no risk so that the water right claims of the Colorado Ute Indian Tribes could be satisfied. The evaluation of alternatives is presented in Section 2.3 of the FSEIS. Structural and non-structural alternatives were evaluated at a level of detail sufficient to determine the merits for additional study. Non-structural alternatives are neither the least environmentally damaging nor would they provide sufficient, reliable sources of water.

IN86-5 Refer to General Comment No. 6 for a discussion on future water uses.

IN86-6 Refer to General Comment No. 11 for discussion on wildlife impacts, General Comment No. 5 for impacts to bald eagles, and General Comment No. 9 for a discussion of threatened and endangered species.

IN86-7 Refer to General Comment No. 2.

INDIVIDUALS

IN87

From: "James H. Moss" <jhmoss@earthlink.net>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: 2/8/00 6:36PM

February 8, 2000
Pat Schumacher
Bureau of Reclamation
835 E. 2nd Ave
Durango, CO 81301
Re: ANIMAS-LA PLATA PROJECT

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

This project will cause a myriad of undesirable environmental consequences. A biological assessment prepared for the Bureau found that the water depletions are likely to threaten the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker and adversely modify critical habitat in the San Juan River. Furthermore, the assessment raises serious concerns about heavy metal bioaccumulation in the food chain of bald eagles. The high content of selenium and mercury in the reservoir water may be passed on to the eagles from the fish in their food supply. Construction of the project will also disturb the nesting eagles, despite mitigation measures.

Ridges Basin is currently a State Wildlife Area and is used by up to 2,000 elk as a prime migration corridor. It is also frequented by around 1,500 resident and migrating mule deer. The project will block their migration corridor and prevent the deer and elk from moving between summer and winter ranges. The Bureau projects that the animals will be forced to cross highways and fenced farmland to achieve their migration.

In addition to the harm to wildlife, the project will result in numerous other undesirable impacts. For one, the pumping station will consume approximately as much power as the downtown districts of the City of Durango currently use. Lower river flows will eliminate over 4,000 kayaking and rafting user days. Perhaps worst of all, there is no current need for the water; the projected future uses include the construction of two power plants, two or three golf courses, a casino-resort, and a dude ranch.

All this is going to cost the US and Colorado taxpayers nearly 300 MILLION DOLLARS, plus annual operating costs of several million dollars. Although the ALP project will settle Ute Indian water rights claims, there are better ways to achieve a settlement with the Ute tribes. A local citizens group has shown that existing water rights can be purchased and transferred to the tribes with a lower cost to the government and without a dam!

PLEASE CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO THE STRUCTURAL RESERVOIR AT RIDGES BASIN. THEY SHOULD FURTHER STUDY AND RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE #6, THE ANIMAS RIVER CITIZEN'S CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVE.

Please call me if you have any questions. Thank you for your time and help in this matter.

Sincerely,

James H. Moss
Attorney at Law

Very rarely does a mind rust open. James H. Moss, 1998

- IN87-1 Refer to General Comment No. 9 for a discussion of threatened and endangered species issues, and No. 5 for a discussion of bioaccumulation impacts and mitigation. A revised discussion of mitigation for nesting eagles has been included in Chapters 3 and 5.
- IN87-2 Refer to General Comment No. 11 for a discussion of elk and deer migration and mitigation.
- IN87-3 Refer to General Comment No. 3 for a discussion on pumping efficiencies. The ALP Project is a participating project of the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP). Part of the electric power produced by the federal hydroelectric generating facilities of the CRSP has been reserved by Reclamation for participating project purposes, including the power requirements for the ALP Project. Western Area Power Administration is responsible for the transmission of power from the CRSP generating facilities to the project. The power would be delivered through a combination of federal and non-federal transmission lines. The direction, authority, and purpose by which the project would consume this power are provided for in the CRSP Act of April 11, 1956 (P.L. 84-485). The power needed to operate the project is currently available and is being marketed by the Western Area Power Administration under short-term, non-firm contracts. When power is needed to operate the project, the short-term contracts would be terminated.
- IN87-4 Refer to General Comment No. 8 for a discussion of kayaking use of the Animas River, impacts and mitigation.
- IN87-5 Refer to General Comment No. 6 for a discussion of future water uses.
- IN87-6 Refer to General Comment No. 2 for a discussion on project costs. The Animas River Citizens Coalition Group placed the cost of implementing a non-structural solution at \$113 million to \$158 million. This estimate is based on the assumption that each acre of land would yield 2.5 acre-feet per acre. Under Colorado water rights law, the amount of water that can be transferred from land is limited to the depletion of water associated with that crop which is about 1.4 acre-feet per acre for southwestern Colorado (Note: an expanded discussion on the use of dry year depletion factors is now included in Section 2.2.1.). This means that considerably more acreage would need to be purchased to obtain the desired water rights. The more detailed evaluation of the proposal by the Animas River Citizens Coalition Group is reflected in Refined Alternative 6 and would cost approximately \$273 million to implement. Refined Alternative 6 and Refined Alternative 4 were both subject to detailed evaluations, with Refined Alternative 4 being selected as the Preferred Alternative. This analysis is described in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5.
- IN87-7 Alternative 6, a non-structural approach to the ALP Project, has been evaluated and discussed in detail in Chapters 2, 3, and 5 of the FSEIS. Alternative 6 was modified to reduce environmental impacts and allow it to better meet the project purpose and need. This Refined Alternative 6 is also evaluated in the FSEIS. It was determined that both the original Alternative 6 and Refined Alternative 6 presented significant risks on the ability of the project to provide an assured water supply commensurate with the water rights established in the Settlement Agreement. Alternative 6 would seriously impact Indian trust water rights by using the remaining capacity of the Navajo Reservoir, thus creating a likely conflict with the Navajo Nation and Jicarilla Apache Tribe. Both Alternative 6 and Refined Alternative 6 would also cause more impacts to the environment than Refined Alternative 4 in terms of wetland impacts.

INDIVIDUALS

IN87

Similar letters were received by the following people and are included as part of Form Letter C:

Errol Baade, CO
Steven Barr, Logan, UT
K.C. Baum, CO
Francey Blaugrund, Ahwahnee, CA
Jenny Cherry, OH
Susanne Dubrouillett, Clemson, SC
Andrea Gabbard, Oakhurst, CA
Diane Hunnewell, Lakewood, CO
Bob Jacobs
Julie Oldham, Carbondale, CO
Thomas Ramsay
Andy Waldbart, Howard, CO

INDIVIDUALS

IN88

24 White Cliff Dr.
Durango, CO 81301
Feb. 17, 2000

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

Please consider the following observations and recommendations concerning the Animas-La Plata Project.

1. The Bureau has not adequately assessed the merits of non-structural alternatives.
2. Negative impacts on wildlife preclude the implementation of Preferred Alternative.
3. Impacts on riverusers are underestimated.
4. No current or near-term demand exists to justify this huge quantity of M&I water.
5. The Bureau needs to do a cost benefit analysis.
6. This project is a horrendous waste of our tax dollars!

The Ute Indian water rights need to be settled. We do not need a dam to settle them. Throw this project into the waste basket and get on with a reasonable, sane solution to the problem. Settle the Indian claims without a structural component in Ridges Basin. Stop carrying on this gross waste of tax payers money!

Sincerely,
Eileen Musie

IN88-1 Non-structural alternatives have been addressed in detail in Chapters 2, 3 and 5.

IN88-2 The Preferred Alternative is the least environmentally damaging.

IN88-3 Refer to General Comment No. 8 for a discussion of river recreation impacts.

IN88-4 The ALP Project would satisfy the senior water rights claims of the Colorado Ute Tribes. How they decide to use their water under the Settlement Act is a tribal decision.

IN88-5 Refer to General Comment No. 1 for a discussion of the need for a benefit-cost analysis.

IN88-6 One of the primary purposes of the ALP Project is to satisfy the senior water right claims of the Colorado Ute Tribes. The Preferred Alternative would accomplish that purpose. When viewed from a broader perspective, including the avoidance of potential litigation, the cost of the ALP Project would be viewed as a good solution to the water right claims of the Colorado Ute Tribes.

IN88-7 Numerous alternatives have been evaluated including several non-structural alternatives. Reasons for elimination of alternatives have been presented in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the FSEIS.

INDIVIDUALS

IN89

Hummingbird Massage
1812 W School St, #3
Chicago IL 60657

April 8, 2000

Pat Shumacher
Bureau of Reclamation
835 E. 2nd Ave.
Durango, Ca 81301

Dear Pat Shumacker:

I am writing you to ask you to consider alternatives to the structural reservoir at ridges basin. The bureau should further study and recommend alternative #6, the Animas River Citizens Conceptual Alternative. Please take into consideration these key points.

- The DSEIS clearly documents that there is no legitimate use for the excess water beyond the Indian water rights settlement. None of the suggested future uses justifies the enormous cost and environmental damage imposed by ALP.
- The Bureau has mischaracterized the nonstructural alternatives comparing them against larger alternatives as a means of negating their merit. In reality, nonstructural alternatives are more practical, cheaper, and would be less harmful to the environment.
- The great majority (70%) of the A/APL water will supply power plants and coal mines. Almost all the remaining water will supply golf courses and resorts (16%) with federally subsidized water. Only 2% satisfies Ute Indian housing needs.
- The Ridges Basin Reservoir will displace elk and deer.
- Project construction will impact native bald eagles.
- Project construction and operation will impact water quality and quantity in the San Juan River threatening endangered fish species.
- Project operation will reduce whitewater flows on the Animas River.
- The new ALP will cost U.S. and Colorado taxpayers \$330 million.

IN89-1 Comments noted. Refer to the General Comments for further discussion.

1

I strongly urge you to NOT divert water from the Animas River

Sincerely,



Carl Nelson, Owner

INDIVIDUALS

IN90

COMMENTS ON ANIMAL LAPATA PROJECT

DURANGO, Co. 81301

04-11-00

BARBARA HARPER NORRIS

970-382-8719

538 E. 7th ST

DURANGO, Co. 81301

PLEASE INCLUDE MY NAME ON FUTURE AHP MARKINGS

Gentlemen-

My statements regarding the issues of the Animas La Plata Project in relationship to our property in Ridges Basin are becoming repetitious-

There are only so many ways you can state the facts-

Our ranch comprised of 720 acres - is located west of Gods Wildlife pond is within the western end of the Animas La Plata Project high-water elevation - established in 1968.

(Please see enclosed map)

Harper Ranch has been in our family since the 1880's - over one hundred years -

Many people mistakenly believe that the Bureau of Reclamation owns all of the land in Ridges Basin - designated for the Animas La Plata Project.

We have been unable to improve or sell the property because of the inferred threat of condemnation of the property from the Bureau of Reclamation.

Banks or loan companies, are unwilling to finance improvements because of A.L.P.

The property has been listed on the real estate market for 3 1/2 years.

Prospective buyers have with-drawn all offers because of the implications connected to the Animas La Plata Project.

INDIVIDUALS

IN90

The County will not approve sub-
dividing or a business because the
land is Ditch-in the high-water boundaries.

At present we have been unable to
utilize the land for any purpose except
minimal grazing.

If the project is ever built, it appears
that a modified, down-sized version
is the current choice.

We certainly hope the high-
water elevation - established in 1968 -
would be reduced and modified
accordingly.

This would exclude our property
from the perimeter of the project and
free us from a situation that has
been on-going for my family for
thirty-two years.

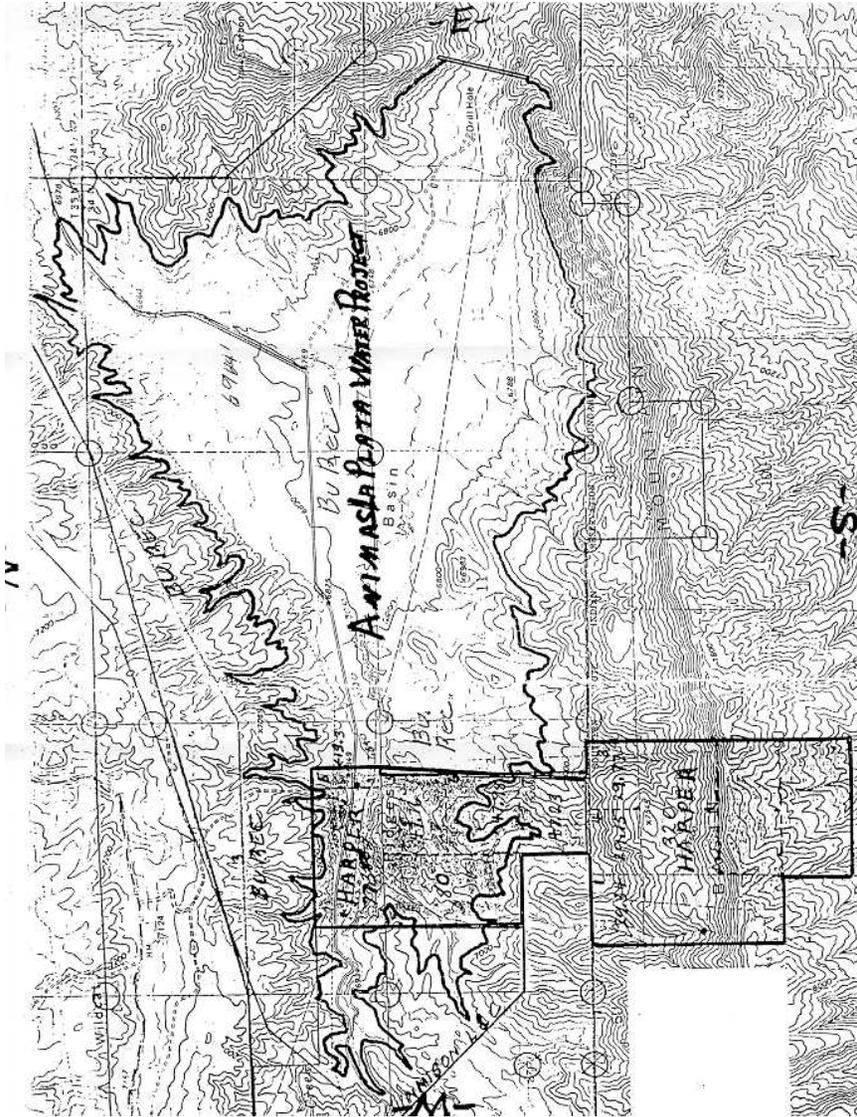
We are of retirement age and
desperately need to resolve this issue -
so that we may either sell or utilize
the land and realize some income
from it.

We would sincerely appreciate
any help or consideration you can
give us -

Respectfully,
Barbara Harper Harris
538 E. 7th St
Durango, Co. 81301

IN90-1 The top of the reservoir elevation reported in the 1979 Definite Plan Report was 6,964 feet above mean sea level. The top of reservoir elevation for the Preferred Alternative is approximately 6,881 feet above mean sea level.

IN90-2 Comment noted.



INDIVIDUALS

IN91

From: "Alpin Sales" <service@alpinsales.com>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: 2/9/00 11:19AM
Subject: stop the dam!

Dear Fellow Coloradoan,

As an avid kayaker and nature lover, I would like to voice my plea against the Ridges Reservoir project and push for the Citizen's Conceptual Alternative. The impact of Blackhawk/Central City on one of my favorite places to play and the water quality, traffic, and lack of wildlife I used to enjoy seeing is something I don't want to see repeated in another one of my favorite places to enjoy Colorado.

Thanks for your Consideration ,
Orrin

IN91-1 Comment noted.

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INDIVIDUALS

IN92

From: Barry Owen <owenb@frontier.net>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: Wednesday, January 26, 2000 11:21:28 AM
Subject: ALP Opposition

To Whom it May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to register my opposition to the building of the Animas-La Plata project. Rather than restate all the objections you have already received, I'll make this short.

This is the wrong project at the wrong place at the wrong time.

Please reconsider the easiest alternative to destroying so many resources: pay for the water rights to satisfy legal demands and keep the Animas and the Ridges Basin in their current state.

Thank you for considering this request.

Barry Owen
Durango, Colorado

IN92-1 The ALP Project is timely in that it would satisfy the long-standing water rights claims of the two Colorado Ute Tribes. Refined Alternative 4 as described in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5 provides the best solution for resolving these claims.

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INDIVIDUALS

IN93

From: "Mel Burnett" <mburnett@prodigy.net>
To: <alpdseiscomments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: 3/6/00 5:38PM
Subject: Yet another comment period

208 Sherwood Blvd.

Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544-3467

Phone: 505/672-3108

E-mail: mburnett@Prodigy.net

March 6, 2000

Patrick Schumacher

Bureau of Reclamation

835 E. Second Ave., #300

Durango, CO 81301-5475

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on yet another DEIS for the proposed Animas-La Plata project, a perhaps unparalleled epic attempt by a government agency to advocate for a largely unneeded project against a majority of the citizens the agency ostensibly, not substantively, serves.

1 | Sir, it strikes me as curious that after 20 years of debate, rancor and dispute over this project that the Bureau of Reclamation is still trying to create justification for a project where little substantive justification exists. The professed goal of this project from the beginning has been to bring water to the Ute people; yet, once again I find myself reading pie-in-the-sky proposals to justify the project and, once again, find little sincere attempt to meet legitimate water needs for the Ute people with a low-budget, environmentally innocuous project. That is because, yet again, the Bureau has gotten caught up in designing a project meant more to boost the local economy artificially, as desired by local white businessmen, than to design a realistic project acceptable to traditional Utes, environmentalists and agricultural interests fearful that a badly designed project will harm existing water rights on the Animas River.

2 | Despite the Bureau's insistence that the Solicitor General has already ruled them valid (This is the same Solicitor General previously overturned in court regarding rulings on the Animas-La Plata.), there is still serious question about whether the Utes indeed hold senior water rights on the Animas River. This issue needs to be resolved in courts of law-not courts of water politics catered to by Colorado's pro-growth political establishment, from the governor's office on down. In addition:

3 | The DSEIS is the best evidence to date that there is indeed no legitimate use for Animas-La Plata project water that will justify the tremendous dollar and environmental cost of this project.

4 | Rather than provide objective, unbiased analysis, the DSEIS deliberately mischaracterizes nonstructural alternatives to the proposed project in an attempt to justify the Bureau's preferred alternative.

I do not believe the people of Southwest Colorado or Northern New Mexico should be taxed to bring water

IN93-1 Comment noted.

IN93-2 Refer to General Comment No. 14 for a discussion of water rights of the Colorado Ute Tribes.

IN93-3 Refer to General Comment No. 2 for a discussion of project costs.

IN93-4 Comment noted.

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IN93

5

to power plants and coal mines in a time when this nation-and all of its agencies-should be moving away from energy sources which contribute so overwhelmingly to global warming. The United States has stated the intent of reducing our global warming emissions to 1991 levels, as Europe is doing with ease. That cannot happen if federal agencies continue to try to justify very bad projects through uses such as coal-fired power plants, or even more energy-efficient, but still water-intensive, gas-fired power plants, in an arid region where water is a precious commodity that should be used wisely, not just to pad corporate pockets.

IN93-5 Refer to General Comment No. 6 for a discussion of future water uses.

6

It is unconscionable during times when the United States population is growing as fast as that in India and when that human population growth is rapidly destroying wildlife habitats throughout the nation, for the United States Bureau of Reclamation and, more to the point, the Ute Mountain and Southern Ute tribes to advocate the placing of the Ridges Basin Reservoir smack in the middle of one of the few remaining elk habitats near Durango. This is a pathetic repetition of the 19th century when the flood of white settlers moved West displacing Indians from their lands, only now it is the flood of humans displacing wildlife from lands they have used for hundreds of thousands of years.

IN93-6 Refer to General Comment No. 11 for a discussion of potential impacts to elk.

7

The Bureau should return to its true goal, as defined by how the Animas-La Plata project has been promoted before Congress: a project to meet the water needs of the Ute people. We-the American taxpayers-cannot afford \$330 million (plus inevitable cost overruns) for another totally unneeded recreational project, the ludicrous proposal to bring yet another golf course to an arid region and water to artificially stimulate construction development in a region already experiencing growth at the highest rates in the region's history.

IN93-7 Refer to General Comment No. 2 for a discussion of project costs.

In conclusion, a majority of the good people of Southwest Colorado and Northwest New Mexico have had to pit their time, their energy and their money against the full might and power of the United States government in opposing this project for over 20 years. There is something pathetically wrong when an agency which is supposed to be serving ALL of the citizens-not just a handful of powerful business and water interests-could allow itself to become a pawn in this sort of enterprise for so many years.

You owe it to all of us to design a project that is financially and politically acceptable to the people of this region. But if you cannot or will not do that, we will all still be fighting this "battle" 20 years hence.

Sincerely,

Kathleene Parker

5th generation descendant of early Colorado and New Mexico pioneers

P. S. In times of the Internet and mass communications, I for one would profoundly appreciate your offering documents such as the DSEIS online, so that enormous amounts of taxpayer dollars do not have to be expended transporting documents that weigh several pounds each. Moreover, the paper and other natural resources invested in these huge, ponderous documents is ludicrous.

INDIVIDUALS

IN94

From: Mark Pearson <mpearson@frontier.net>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: Sat, Apr 15, 2000 5:16 PM
Subject: ALP DSEIS comments

April 15, 2000

Mr. Pat Schumacher
Bureau of Reclamation
835 East 2nd Street, Suite 300
Durango, CO 81301

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

Please accept these comments on the Animas-La Plata Project Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS).

1 | The DSEIS still suffers from the fatal flaw of not presenting real alternatives for the public to analyze. NEPA requires that an environmental analysis contain sufficient information so that the public can reasonably determine the expected environmental consequences from a proposed action. Because the ALP DSEIS relies almost exclusively on imaginary uses for the water stored by the project, the document fails to comply with NEPA.

2 | For example, the president of the ALP Water Conservancy District has vociferously attacked anyone who dared rely on the numbers presented in the DSEIS. The DSEIS on page S-7 calls for 7,669 acre-feet of water for municipal and industrial uses in Durango, Colorado. However, when any member of the public relied on this number for analyzing the impacts of the project, and when any member of the public asked how Durango could possibly make use of another 7,669 a-f of M&I water, the ALP District has attacked people as "liars." Now, if the ALP District claims that the 7,669 a-f number is one created by liars, then how can the Bureau of Reclamation possibly present this number to the public as a valid description of a real alternative, as required by NEPA?

3 | NEPA precludes segmentation of reasonably foreseeable impacts. If the Bureau of Reclamation anticipates the most likely foreseeable use of ALP water is for a coal-fired powerplant, then by law the Bureau must analyze the projected environmental consequences of mining coal and burning coal in this powerplant. Segmenting analysis of impacts by deferring evaluation of the powerplant's impacts to a later date is not permissible under NEPA.

Similarly, the Bureau must analyze the projected impacts of all of the water uses listed in the DSEIS as the end uses of ALP water.

4 | I am still perplexed why the Bureau claims water is unavailable from Vallecito Reservoir for the Southern Utes. I continue to receive solicitations from the new Pine River municipal water supply entity to sign up for their new service, which is using surplus agricultural water. If water is available for gross speculation such as this, why is no water available to meet the treaty obligations for the Utes?

The Bureau's refusal to realistically analyze Alternative 6 in light of

IN94-1 Comment noted. A range of potential future water uses is included in the FSEIS in order to comply with NEPA requirements. Refer to General Comment No. 6.

IN94-2 Comment noted. Section 2.1.1 of the FSEIS explains how future water uses were derived. The 6,669 afy (depletion) contains the 1,250 afy (depletion) that the City of Durango would receive through a subcontract with the Animas La Plata Water Conservancy District. It is projected that some time in the future (through 2100), the City of Durango will need more water and that water may (emphasis added) be purchased from one of the two Colorado Ute Tribes.

IN94-3 Refer to the discussion in General Comment No. 6.

IN94-4 The FSEIS has been revised to expand on reasons why water is not available from Vallecito Reservoir in Section 2.4.1.

INDIVIDUALS

IN94

clearly surplus water sources such as Vallecito calls into question the validity of the DSEIS. The DSEIS continues to demonstrate a clear bias for a monstrous dam, pumping plant, and traditional concrete project to meet the Tribe's water needs.

The ALP DSEIS demonstrates at least one fact with abundant clarity: there is no legitimate use for ALP's water. All of the ridiculous schemes mentioned for using the water -- powerplants, golf course, resorts, and so forth -- are highly speculative and clearly show that the huge environmental and economic costs associated with the project are not justified by the intended end uses.

5

The Bureau has repeatedly stated its intention to do a rush job analyzing public comments. These statements offer the public little faith that the Bureau takes seriously its mandate under the law to carefully and thoroughly analyze public comment. It seems clear the entire DSEIS is a sham process, simply a paperwork exercise to permit politicians to ram through their preferred choice of a boondoggle concrete project.

IN94-5 Comment noted.

Please surprise the public by giving real consideration to our comments.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Pearson
560 Clearview Road
Durango, CO 81301
mpearson@frontier.net

INDIVIDUALS

IN95

From: Aniam - La Plata Project <swcbd@sw-center.org>
To: <gis@SW-Center.ORG>, <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: 1/29/00 2:08PM
Subject: Comments: Animas - La Plata Project.

Name: Richard Quartaroli
Address: PO Box G
City: Flagstaff
State: AZ
Zip: 86002-0958
Phone: 520-779-2687
Subject: Comments: Animas - La Plata Project
Comments: Pat Schumacher
Bureau of Reclamation
835 E. 2nd Ave.
Durango, CO 81301

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

I cannot believe that the Animas-La Plata project in any form is still planned, proceeding, and endorsed, especially by Secretary Babbitt.

A-LP is clearly not cost effective, nor will it guarantee Native American water rights unless all phases are completed.

There are other ways of supplying water to the Utes, or cheaper to pay them not to irrigate marginal land.

This project has gone on far too long, and I hope you tell Secy Babbitt I said so.

It's time to quit. The Bureau needs to start being responsible for its actions and devastating projects such as this one!!!!

Remote_Addr: 134.114.228.92
HTTP_User_Agent: Mozilla/4.6 [en] (WinNT; U)
HTTP_REFERER: http://www.sw-center.org/swcbd/activist/animas.html
HTTP_From: (null)

IN95-1 Refer to General Comment No. 2 for a discussion on project costs. The 1996 version of the ALP Project that you have commented on is no longer proposed. The 1996 project was proposed in several phases, and included water for irrigation. The current project has been developed to meet outstanding water rights of the Colorado Ute Tribes, as mandated by an act of Congress. It would provide water and water acquisition funds to the tribes. Water for irrigation has been removed from the current project. Comments received during the ALP Project scoping process, and support for recently introduced legislation by the non-federal parties, indicate that the Colorado Ute Tribes would accept a water supply as described under Refined Alternative 4 as satisfying their water rights claims.

1

INDIVIDUALS

IN96



Dear Pat Schumacher,

On February 9, my (enclosed) letter to the editor which criticizes A-LP was published. My spoken concerns in the letter were about the lifestyle impact which A-LP would inflict on Durango (e.g. "truth-in-advertising" behooves us to rename our town "Duriowa" to reflect the taming of a wondrous wild river, etc).

- But I have far more strenuous objections and no room to list them all. To begin with:
- check out non-structural alternatives, for instance!!! You CAN satisfy water demands in other ways than the enormously expensive and environmentally damaging current plan. Try a combination of improvements in the efficiency of irrigation and delivery systems; try the coordinated operation of existing reservoirs; try land-water rights purchases.
 - our fragile ecosystem is already sorely taxed and a reservoir in Ridges Basin would severely impact a major elk migration corridor and wintering range for elk as well as disrupting bald eagle habitat. Furthermore, we Coloradans don't want another tame lake. We like our rivers wild! (but read my letter to the editor).
 - the sticking point used to push this ridiculous project is the promise of water to the Utes--note however that their need is miles and miles away from Ridges Basin storage and furthermore, at a lower altitude. There is no reason then to haul the water up there (see first point above). There are simpler ways to satisfy their claim.
 - what in the world are you thinking, to put a "recreational lake" next to a uranium tailings dump? It has already been "precluded from development for commercial and residential purposes." Don't tell me that groundwater doesn't seep.
 - should you remove water from the Animas there, you invite new ecological disasters not only for fish and wildlife but increased salinity for farmers downstream.
 - the cost is preposterous considering the benefits." FIND ALTERNATIVES! Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sara Ransom
(legal name: Rosalie Ransom)

IN96-1 Numerous structural and non-structural alternatives have been evaluated to provide water at locations closer to points of use. These include structural and non-structural solutions. There are no simple solutions to resolving the water rights claims of the two Colorado Ute Tribes. One possible solution was the offer of money to resolve the water rights claims. This offer was rejected by the Tribes. Refined Alternative 6 represents a concerted effort to find a non-structural solution to resolving the Colorado Ute Tribe water rights claims. It includes an evaluation of better coordinated use of the reservoirs and streamflows in the San Juan River Basin, the purchase of water rights, and the raising of Lemon Dam. This alternative also provides water closer to the points of use. This alternative was compared in depth with a structural solution of Refined Alternative 4. Refined Alternative 4 was selected as the Preferred Alternative because of the reasons stated in Chapter 5 of this FSEIS.

IN96-2 The potential impact to the elk herd at Bodo is discussed in General Comment No. 11.

IN96-3 Comment noted.

IN96-4 The quote you have referenced; "precluded from development for commercial and residential purposes", refers to the proposed pumping plant site. A groundwater management plan will be developed and enforced during construction of the pumping plant. The UMTRA disposal site is an engineered and actively monitored storage area. A study conducted by the DOE and verified by Reclamation indicates the groundwater movement under the cell is to the southeast. Surface drainage also effectively isolates the UMTRA cell away from the reservoir.

IN96-5 Please refer to the discussion in Sections 3.3 and 3.6 on water quality and fisheries impacts. Projections of impacts identify possible significant impacts to native fisheries in the Animas River and Reclamation has committed to monitoring and mitigation (see Section 5.4.6).

IN96-6 Comment noted.

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Wednesday, February 9, 2000 THE DURANGO HERALD

Opinion

247-3504, Ext. 238 • letters@durangoherald.com

Letters to the Editor

P.O. Drawer A, Durango, CO 81302 or letters@durangoherald.com

Fairfield, A-LP will ruin Durango

TO THE EDITOR:

In the interests of "truth-in-advertising" to the tourist market, let us change our name from Durango to Duriowa. Then the tourists will know what to expect.

First, advertise the wonderful change that the Animas-La Plata Project offers us. Instead of a wonderful wild river coursing right through town offering top-notch rafting and kayaking, we are apparently hell-bent on replacing it with a placid lake (near a radioactive tailings dump), where tourists can float around in boats and swim in marked-off areas.

And they won't have to brave our wilderness rampant with wild animals. They can camp in our new suburban-style campground and sleep to the sound of RV generators next-door. Fishermen can be relieved of the trials of cold, rapid currents and unstable rocky river bottoms with its hassle of learning how to fly-fish for wild trout (right in town). They can drive through a former wildlife preserve

to sit in their boats and cast worms for tasteless mud-fed fish. Just like my childhood in Iowa.

And, instead of hearing the sound of the wild rapids and the screams of fearful delight of boaters as they navigate them, picnickers in Santa Rita Park can now be numbed by the ceaseless drone of a pumping plant, which I'm sure will add to the scenic beauty of what was once a wildlife preserve.

Furthermore, if we're blessed with Fairfield-Duriowa, won't our flatlander friends be delighted to hear we're planning to pave and straighten and flatten a premier in-town mountain bike park route, Horse Gulch. Why, they'll feel right at home here in Duriowa, and wonder why they ever bothered to leave. And, once all these proposed changes are in place, they probably won't come here. What's to see? Nothing new here anymore.

Wake up, Durango. What we have here is remarkably unique. It's why you came here, isn't it?

Sara Ransom
Durango

INDIVIDUALS

IN97

From: sara ransom <durangoransom@yahoo.com>
To: <ALPDSEISComments@uc.usbr.gov>
Date: Mon, Apr 17, 2000 4:31 PM
Subject: No to A-LP

Dear Pat Schumacher
(I have just returned from Vietnam, hence I'm writing
at this last day fo the comment period)

Please do not allow this Animas La Plata debacle to be
constructed. I realize many representatives believe
it is to satisfy an old treaty with the Utes but
consider:

there is NO DELIVERY SYSTEM of the water to Ute
territory in the plans, and Utes are allotted only
1/3 of the water while whites are to receive 2/3.

Furthermore, it is very cost INEFFECTIVE and therefore
not a justifiable expense for the taxpayer.

The proposed Ridges Basin reservoir will destroy vital
elk wintering grounds--where will they go? They will
die. It is also home to bald eagles.

It is possible to satisfy Ute claims to water through
alternative and ACTUAL delivery systems and these
should be explored and developed.

In this way, a wild river through town, which brings
great pleasure to so many, will not be destroyed. You
realize that after the water is proposed to be hauled
up 500 feet, it must then be hauled up another 700
feet to get over the next ridge to get anywhere near a
delivery system to the Utes---and then it all just
flows right back down to the river after all that
expense and destruction of habitat and beauty and
wilderness. CRAZY!

Please, STOP the plan for the construction of A-LP.

Thank you, Sara Ransom, 2720 Delwood Ave., Durango
Phone 970/247-5718.

Do You Yahoo!?
Send online invitations with Yahoo! Invites.
<http://invites.yahoo.com>

IN97-1 Comments noted. Refer to General Comments for further discussion.

INDIVIDUALS

IN98

1400 Sait Road
Bloomfield, NM 87413
April 13, 2000

Pat Schumacher
Four Corners Division Manager
Four Corners Division of the Western Colorado Area Office
835 East Second Avenue, Suite 300
Durango, Colorado 81301-5475

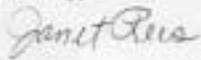
Dear Mr. Schumacher,

We believe the only acceptable alternative for the Animas-La Plata Project is Alternative 10, **The No Action Alternative.**

We believe scare tactics convinced many area voters to favor the project; if a vote were taken now that people know the environmental and monetary costs, the project would be defeated. Environmental concerns have not been adequately addressed including the wintering elk and raptors and the negative effects on the Animas River. The location poses the potential for significant serious contamination problems. Furthermore, we do not believe that giving the Utes their water rights should either obligate local taxpayers to pay for the storage of their water or the ongoing costs of pumping that water uphill including the environmental costs incurred there. We own Colorado ranch property with senior water rights; is the government going to provide the headgate and the ditch including yearly maintenance for us? We think not!!

The Animas-La Plata project should not be built.

Sincerely,



Janet and John Rees

IN98-1 Comment noted. Project costs are discussed in General Comment No. 2.

1

INDIVIDUALS

IN99

March 12, 2000 Ronne p 1/2

Mr. Pat Schumacher
Four Corners Division Manager
Western Colorado Area Office
835 East Second Ave, Suite 300
Durango, CO 81301-5475

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

I am writing to comment on the DSEIS for the proposed Aninisa - La Plata project that was recently released. I have lived in Durango since 1982, and I fully support the effort to provide the Ute nation with the water that was promised to them so long ago. Of all the alternatives presented in the DSEIS, Alternative 6 seems to be the most cost-effective and least damaging way to achieve this goal.

I believe that the DSEIS down-plays the many advantages of Alternative 6 and exaggerates the problems. For example, it seems to assume that all of the transfer of water rights to the Ute people will result in loss of wetlands and riparian areas... presumably because currently irrigated lands will no longer be irrigated. However, there is no reason why the Utes could not choose to continue irrigating productive agricultural land that come into their possession. The Ute people need not necessarily use all of the water for municipal and industrial purposes, as seems to be assumed in the DSEIS. The DSEIS also implies that it would be difficult to bring

(cont)

IN99-1 The Preferred Alternative does not contain an irrigation component. It is an all M&I project. In addition, the Preferred Alternative proposes the creation of a water acquisition fund that the Tribes could use to purchase water rights and continue to farm if they so choose. The municipal system for the Pine River was studied to bring water to the rural areas to provide a dependable domestic water supply. The irrigators voted to give up part of their water supply. They would be short this amount of water during dry years. For additional discussions on growth, refer to General Comment No. 12. For additional information on threatened and endangered species, please refer to General Comment No. 9 and for information on elk habitat refer to General Comment No. 11.

Romme p. 2/2

enough existing water rights to satisfy federal obligations to the Ute people. I simply do not believe this. Witness the current efforts by the Pine River irrigation district to sell former irrigation water for municipal purposes. I would much rather see that water go to the Ute people than to promote additional non-Indian exurban sprawl on Florida Mesa.

At the same time that the DSEIS exaggerates the problems with Alternative 6, it down-plays the even more serious problems with Alternative 4. Alternative 4 would create a reservoir with fluctuating water levels. The underlying Lewis shale would make ugly mud flats when the water is low, not a pretty lake for recreation and wildlife. Critical elk winter range would be destroyed, as would archaeological sites and non-game wildlife habitat. One of Durango's greatest amenities -- the unregulated Animas River -- would be diminished and depleted. Endangered fishes in the San Juan River would be further threatened. All of these problems are mentioned in the DSEIS, but they are glossed over as insignificant or easily mitigated. I strongly disagree: these are serious drawbacks to Alternative 4.

What kind of future do we want for southwestern Colorado?

Increased municipal and industrial growth are not what most residents want to see. People are moving to this area because they treasure the natural environment, the wildlife, the free-flowing rivers -- not for industrial parks, coal mines, power plants, and unbridled municipal growth. Alternative 4 is a backwards-looking, obsolete approach to solving our water problems. In contrast, Alternative 6 is a creative, forward-looking way to meet our long-overdue water obligations to the Ute people. Sincerely,

William H. Romme
601 Animas View Dr #106
Durango, CO 81301