

**Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources**  
**04/10/2024 Upon Adjournment**  
**SB24-197 Water Conservation Measures**  
**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
<p>Jeany Rush  Against  themselves</p>	<p>TO: SENATE AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  4-10-24  RE: SB24-197 WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES  FROM: JEANY RUSH COLORADO SPRINGS CONSTITUENT  VOTE: NO ABSOLUTELY NO ON THIS BILL</p> <p>This bill certainly alludes to alot of items prior to this bill, and brings up concerns for me. Taking it to 2050 is also concerning. As a lay person, while I may not understand all the technical intricacies of this bill, I do know that all of your statements, based on the Colorado State Clean Energy precepts, that this bill is based on total lies, misuse of science, and basically based on NON SCIENTIFIC heresy about green energy. The principals of carbon management in this state, totally disregard the real truth of CO2 and its being a plant food, necessary for life, and not a pollutant. Nor is it something you all should be capturing in pipelines, and using at trillions of dollars in the future, along with the false solar and wind projects, which harm the environment, use child slave labor, and mine critical rare earth minerals to damaging amounts to create for example, one EV battery. We are basing our future, our water use, on lies, and green new deal communist destruction of America! We could do a few more reservoirs in our state, to use the water we generate. I understand we have agreements with something like 29 native tribes, and 7 states in our water management scenarios. There are other items in this bill that look like they need more information, and future impact. Removing any water rights with a government person making determinations about use, etc. is how we got to the place of over reach in which we currently find ourselves. This would include the misuse of eminent domain so private companies can crony capitalize on energy! This state needs a total reboot of what is sane energy policy. Closing cleaner, working coal plants, when no real replacement sits in place, is insane. So water management is critical to all of the energy futures we have, but basing that management on non-scientific data is grossly unlawful and wrong!</p>

SUPPORT SB24-197 – Water Conservation Measures

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- **My name is Aaron Citron and I am the Associate Director of External Affairs for The Nature Conservancy in Colorado.**
- **The Nature Conservancy is a non-profit conservation organization working in all 50 states and over 70 countries around the world to protect the lands and waters on which all life depends.**
- Last summer, **I was appointed to the SB 23-295 Colorado River Drought Security Task Force** by Speaker McCluskie to fill one of the environmental representative seats. On a tight timeline, the Task Force **evaluated a range of proposals related to water conservation, aging infrastructure, Tribal engagement, healthy rivers and watersheds, interstate negotiations, and productive agriculture.**
- The report of that Task Force highlights a variety of priorities agreed upon by the group – **with a shared emphasis on the importance of putting Colorado – its water users, rivers, and communities – first, and doing no harm** in our recommendations made to the General Assembly.
- We invited robust public comment throughout the process and heard from water users and interested community members across the state.
- Many of our recommendations surrounded the need for continued, **increased investment into water management, aging infrastructure, monitoring and measurement, and the potential value of conservation.** Recognizing that funding in Colorado is limited this year – I’m pleased that some of these items were included in this year’s CWCB Projects Bill and hope that other elements identified will also be considered for funding in the future.
- In particular, there are three elements in this bill that are particularly important from the perspective of The Nature Conservancy:
  - (1) Across the board, there was **broad agreement on the importance of maintaining a healthy natural environment** alongside consumptive uses of water. In support of that sentiment, the Bill proposes to **expand the instream flow loans program to take full advantage of the greater flexibility of stored water to meet flow needs.** It would remove an existing limitation of the underlying program and provide a streamlined, administrative approach to

allow stored water to be released to **meet flow needs identified by CPW in coordination with the CWCB.**

- (2) Two meetings of the Task Force were hosted by **the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute Tribes.** In recognition of their substantial funding needs for aging water infrastructure and unique circumstances with regard to water management and water rights, the bill would allow the **CWCB to waive their existing match requirement for Colorado Water Plan grants.** This should help get critical resources out the door quickly to address Tribal needs.
  - (3) And the bill would support efforts by **coal utilities in the Yampa River Basin,** where TNC is a landowner and longstanding member of the community, **to transition to cleaner sources of energy while using their water to support endangered fish, recreation, and water-short agricultural users.** We commend Tri State and Xcel for their efforts in this space and are excited to see how these changes might benefit the Yampa River and help support a just transition away from coal in the region.
- This legislation represents **another step in the ongoing process to address drought and provide certainty for water users in Colorado.** I remain optimistic that with these actions – **in the context of our interstate negotiations and the efforts to implement the Colorado Water Plan** – Colorado can become more resilient to drought and a changing climate. This bill is an important step in that direction and is a reminder that all water users in Colorado and across the Basin are in this together. For those reasons, I ask for your support.