

Congress of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20510

July 27, 2022

The Honorable Camille Calimlim Touton
Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Commissioner Touton and Director Young:

As you develop project-level allocations for the funds provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in fiscal years 2022 and 2023, we ask that you provide robust funding for construction of the Arkansas Valley Conduit (the Conduit) in Southeast Colorado. The Conduit has been one of Colorado's top priorities for nearly six decades. It is critical that the federal government make robust investments to fulfill its promise to deliver clean water to Coloradans.

The Arkansas Valley Conduit is a planned 130-mile water-delivery system from the Pueblo Dam to communities throughout the Arkansas River Valley. The Conduit is the final component of the Frypan-Arkansas Project, a water diversion and storage project in the lower Arkansas Valley. Once complete, the Conduit will deliver clean drinking water to 50,000 people in 40 Colorado communities.

The IIJA presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to invest in western water infrastructure projects that have languished due to lack of federal funds like the Conduit. Residents in Southeast Colorado currently rely on groundwater supplies contaminated by naturally occurring radionuclides such as radium and uranium, or use surface water that contains harmful microorganisms and pollutants. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has also issued concerns about these communities' ability to comply with long-term clean drinking water requirements while awaiting connection to the Conduit. Completion of the Conduit will remedy these concerns and ensure that Coloradans have access to clean drinking water.

The federal government required Coloradans to build the Conduit since its authorization in 1962. However, construction stalled for decades because communities could not pay for the complete cost of the project. In 2009, President Obama signed bipartisan legislation committing the federal government to a larger cost-share of 65 percent of the project's costs.

After six decades, the federal government has invested about \$60 million. Key partners, including the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District, local water providers, and the State of Colorado, have worked in partnership with the Bureau of Reclamation to reduce costs and move this project forward.

Significant funds through IJA will allow local stakeholders, in collaboration with the Bureau of Reclamation, to finally complete the federal portion of the Conduit and provide these communities with access to clean drinking water.

We appreciate your attention and look forward to working with you on this important project.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



Ken Buck
Member of Congress