

Colorado Senate

State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203

Senator Greg Brophy
Colorado District 1

For Immediate Release

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Senator Brophy Introduces Bonny Reservoir Bill

Denver- Senator Greg Brophy (R-Wray) is taking his pledge to manage water rights in eastern Colorado seriously by proposing more effective management of Bonny Reservoir under the Republican River Compact.

Senate bill 028 would reduce the evaporative losses off of Bonny Reservoir by converting the state held storage rights to state held in-stream flow rights allowing water to drain from the reservoir. Currently those evaporative losses are subtracted from the total amount of water Colorado is annually allocated. The evaporative losses make up about half of our current deficit.

“Passage of this bill will keep us from needlessly pumping 1.6 billion gallons of water a year out of the Ogallala Aquifer to offset the evaporative and seepage losses at Bonny Reservoir. We can’t value fish over farmers; we have to pass this bill” Brophy said, “keeping eastern Colorado’s farmers operating is vital not only to the rural area, but the state of Colorado as well.”

Many counties including: Yuma, Phillips and Kit Carson as well as the Republican River Water Conservation District board, have adopted resolutions supporting the draining of Bonny Reservoir. “The people who live in eastern Colorado understand the water accounting system of the Republican River Compact” said Brophy, “draining Bonny is the last thing we want to do, but we know that it must be done.”

At this time, the Division of Wildlife and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation share the right to retain or release water from the reservoir. Senator Brophy’s bill confers these rights to the Colorado Water Conservation Board, who would then authorize water flow from the Republican River through the reservoir.

Senator Brophy’s bill capitalizes on Colorado’s valuable and limited water resources without changing the longstanding Republican River Compact, but rather by more effectively administering water at Bonny Reservoir.