

PROCLAMATION



City and County of Denver
Proclamation No. CP12-0955

In Support of the Current Approach Proposed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management for the Regulation of Oil-Shale Development

WHEREAS, the State of Colorado is projecting that by 2050, even after taking into account ongoing conservation efforts, statewide municipal and industrial water demand will increase between 50% and 80% over 2008 water demand levels; and

WHEREAS, even without the addition of new water-intensive industries, such increases in water demand may intensify competition for already strained water supplies throughout Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Government Accountability Office has estimated that full-scale commercial extraction and processing of oil-shale in the Colorado River Basin could require as much water as 140% of the entire annual water consumption of the Denver metropolitan area alone; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado River supplies a significant portion of the municipal and agricultural water needs of the Front Range, and the Front Range Water Council has expressed concern that commercial extraction and processing of oil-shale in the Colorado River Basin could directly impact water resources, water development, and water supply for Front Range communities, and “could significantly affect the Council’s ability to serve existing customers and the future growth projected for the Front Range”; and

WHEREAS, companies exploring oil-shale development in the Colorado River Basin have already accumulated over 200 water rights decrees, some of which are senior to the water rights under which the drinking water for Denver and other Front Range municipalities are currently supplied; and

WHEREAS, the extraction and processing of oil-shale on a commercial scale remains a speculative and experimental enterprise, with uncertain economic prospects and a well-documented history of issues with pollution and ground-water contamination.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:

Section 1. That the Denver City Council recognizes that ensuring a clean and reliable supply of water is vital to the long-term prosperity and success of Denver and other Front Range cities.

Section 2. That in order to safeguard the long-term safety and security of Front Range water supplies, the Denver City Council supports the current approach promulgated by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management requiring that, prior to initiating any commercial leases for development of oil-shale deposits, companies seeking such leases must first demonstrate the technological, economic, and ecological viability of oil-shale development, and the impact that extraction and processing of oil-shale will have on statewide water demand and water quality.

Section 3. That the Clerk of the City and County of Denver shall attest and affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that copies be transmitted to Helen Hankins, Colorado State Director of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management; Mike King, Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources; John Hickenlooper, Governor of the State of Colorado; and Ken Salazar, Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL December 17, 2012

PRESIDENT