



ORIENT LAND TRUST

Valley View Hot Springs

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A Colorado 501(c)(3) Corporation

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Doug Bishop
Executive Director

To: The Honorable Commissioners of Douglas County, Colorado

Subject: RWR Water Export Proposal

Date: December 9, 2020

It has come to our attention that the corporate entity known as Renewable Water Resources (RWR) will be presenting a proposal to you that asks for your financial support of \$20 million for their water exportation scheme to pump 22,000 acre-feet per year of water (and maybe more later) out of Colorado's San Luis Valley and to your County as destination. We want you to know that we are opposed to their proposal.

The property that we (Orient Land Trust, 501 c 3) steward encompasses 2,300 acres of beautiful Sangre De Cristo foothills and historic San Luis Valley ranchland. We share and protect the historic and world-renowned Valley View Hot Springs with over 23,000 visitors and supporters each year. We host a migratory bat colony that comes to our abandoned iron ore mine every summer with a quarter of a million Mexican Freetail bats to the Valley. They in turn greatly reduce pests and pesticides while pollinating local agricultural crops, all of which depends entirely on a delicate balance of groundwater.

Our properties are literally within a very few miles of RWR's proposed well sites and we believe this project represents an existential threat to our most essential resource, a delicate seep of geothermally heated water. The waters for our hot springs exist on the unconfined edge of the deep aquifer from which RWR intends to pump. Should they ever succeed in putting in their wells, we believe they will ruin the existing and delicate hydrological balance that currently delivers the hot waters that attract so many to Colorado's most unique and educational eco-destination. Already since their public presentations of two years ago, they have increased the number of their proposed *3-foot diameter* wells from 16 then to 25 now. Given the "cones of depression" that such a battery of powerful well pumps will create, we are certain that the cycling of our groundwater into the deep hot rock formations would forever be lost. The waters that we protect and enjoy will no longer be viable in the slightest for future generations.

The San Luis Valley has already successfully stopped two earlier water exportation schemes. During the first such iteration, (AWDI), the Courts determined that ALL waters in the San Luis Valley are considered to be Tributary to the Rio Grande river basin and as such determined that all the

aquifer waters are in communication with each other. The "separations" by clay layering in the aquifer are more permeable than RWR would have you believe, most especially along the many fault lines such as where we are. This case went all the way to the United States Supreme Court which honored the rulings of the lower courts. The second iteration, (Stockman's Water Co.), was determined at the ballot box (not a "survey") where their two Valley-busting Referendums were roundly defeated Statewide by a margin of 3 to 1 and in Douglas County by at least 2 to 1.

We have read the proposal they are presenting to you and we see numerous glaring examples of misleading information that they apparently expect to be taken at face value. We fully expect that your august body will take every due diligence in the reading of their proposal and in researching the veracity of their claims. We have every faith that you recognize the duty you have to your County's voters to not be frivolous with the dispersal of their treasury or the state's natural bounty.

With Respect and Gratitude,



Doug Bishop
Executive Director
Orient Land Trust