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Colorado River Day in Santa Fe Attracts City Leaders and Rural Voices United in the Call for Water Conservation and Healthy River Flows

Santa Fe, NM -- Today's Colorado River Day celebration, taking place in Santa Fe and four other western cities on the river's 92nd birthday, honors the waterway that serves as the backbone of the West's economy and a critical drinking source for millions.

In its second year, the event brings together urban and rural constituencies who in solidarity are calling on the Department of Interior and state governors across the basin region to implement strategies that focus on improving the urban and agricultural efficiency with which the basin states consume the Colorado River's water. The seven Colorado River states and the Department of Interior are now meeting to determine next steps on urban water conservation, agricultural water conservation and how to keep healthy flow in the river. Conservation practices are the most cost-efficient and expedient way to effectively address the river's supply and demand imbalance. The groups organizing Colorado River Day -- National Young Farmers Coalition, Save the Colorado, Protect the Flows, and Nuestro Rio -- are asking for an actionable plan to improve conservation and river flow, not just further study.

Santa Fe Mayor David Coss, an ardent supporter of common sense solutions to water imbalances that promote efficiency while also providing water for our cities, communities and farms, said, "Santa Fe is already national leader in urban water efficiency, but it's going to take a team effort throughout the Southwest to bring the Colorado River and its tributaries back into balance. That's why we're uniting with farmers and officials from other cities to urge the federal government and seven Colorado River states to help our region step up urban and agricultural water conservation."

Mayor Coss, as well as city leaders in other basin states, have signed a statement supporting improved urban and agricultural water conservation as a means to improve their communities' water security and sustain a healthy flowing Colorado River for generations to come.

In addition to Mayor Coss, signors include:

Mayor Schwieterman, Paonia, CO
Mayor Buck, Fruita, CO
Councilman Bennet Boschenstein, Grand Junction, CO
Councilwoman Judy Montero, Denver, CO
Councilman Joel Kincaid, Fruita CO

Mayor Jonathan Rothschild, Tucson, AZ
Mayor Michael Hancock, Denver, CO
Councilman Steven Ross, Las Vegas, NV
Councilwoman Anita Wood, North Las Vegas, NV
City Council President Pro Tem Sherri Lightner, San Diego, CA

The statement of commitment supports robust progress for urban and agricultural water conservation in the Southwest. The statement was launched today with a handful of founding signees at the event. After one month of collecting additional signatures from locally elected officials, the statement will be delivered to state and Department of Interior officials who are currently weighing next steps on water conservation and how to maintain healthy river flows. These state and federal actors are participating in stakeholder workgroups that were created in the wake of the Bureau of Reclamation's [Colorado River Basin Study](#) and are set to conclude their work and offer recommendations next year.

The Animas, La Plata, Mancos, Navajo and San Juan rivers are all Colorado River tributaries that flow through New Mexico. Over one million New Mexicans depend on the Colorado River system for drinking water, and the San Juan River irrigates 100,000 acres of farm land in the state. Recreation on Colorado River tributaries in New Mexico results in nearly \$1.7 billion in total economic output annually and supports over 17,000 jobs in the state.

Colorado River Day brings people together across divides in support of maintaining a sustainable Colorado River. Last year, progressives and conservatives came together in support of river. This year, urban and rural interests unite. It takes place on July 25th each year, as this was the day in 1921 when Congress re-named the river from the "Grand" to the "Colorado". It is produced by a wide coalition of organizations including National Young Farmers Union, Save the Colorado. Protect the Flows and Nuestro Rio.

www.ColoradoRiverDay.com