



Water Use	Jan. 1, 2005 Fee
Ground Water for Irrigation	\$5.50 / acre
Ground Water for Commercial or Municipal	\$4.40 / acre-foot
Post-Compact Surface Water	\$5.10 / acre-foot

*Irrigated acres are based on assessed acres per current county records. The annual use fee for diversion of ground water for irrigation use has been based on the average estimated diversion of ground water per acre for the previous ten years within the District and has been set so that the average estimated diversion of ground water per acre results in a fee of \$5.50 per assessed irrigated acre within the District.*



Republican River Water Conservation District  
 505 E. 8th Ave., Building A  
 PO Box 304  
 Yuma, CO 80759  
*in cooperation with...*



Division of Water Resources  
 1313 Sherman St., Room 818  
 Denver, CO 80203  
 (303) 866-3581  
[www.water.state.co.us/wateradmin/  
 RepublicanRiver.asp](http://www.water.state.co.us/wateradmin/RepublicanRiver.asp)

Ken Knox  
 Chief Deputy State Engineer  
 Scott Richrath  
 Program Coordinator



Colorado State University  
 Cooperative Extension

Kit Carson County 719-346-5571	Sedgwick County 970-474-3479
Phillips County 970-854-3616	Logan County 970-522-3200
Washington County 970-345-2287	Lincoln County 719-743-2542

Yuma County  
 970-332-4151

[www.republicanriver.com](http://www.republicanriver.com)



# Republican River Water Conservation District



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January 27, 2005

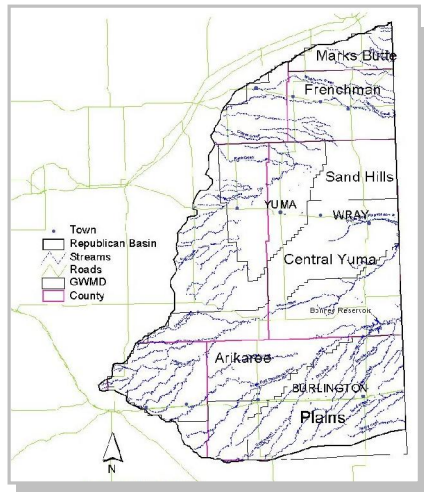


## Republican River Water Conservation District

Governor Bill Owens signed into law Senate Bill 04-235, establishing a Republican River Water Conservation District in Phillips and Yuma counties, and those portions of Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Sedwick, and Washington counties within the Republican River Basin.

The District is empowered to take such actions as are necessary to cooperate with and assist the state of Colorado to carry out the state's duty to comply with the Republican River Compact. The county commissioners of each county, the ground water management districts, and the Colorado Ground Water Commission have appointed the 15 members to the District's board. The new law authorized the District to form a water activity enterprise ("Enterprise") and authorizes several funding mechanisms to enable the District and the Enterprise to help comply with the Compact.

- Water use fees
- Revenue bonds
- Special assessments
- Sales and use tax
- Ad valorem property taxes



During 2003, Colorado exceeded its allocation by several thousand acre-feet of water due to ongoing drought reducing streamflows, improved tillage practices reducing runoff, and continued well pumping from 3,967 wells in Colorado.

## EQIP

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to eligible participants who install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

EQIP offers contracts with terms of three and five years as well as permanent contracts. These contracts provide incentive payments and cost-sharing to implement conservation practices. Farmers and ranchers may elect to use a certified third-party provider for technical assistance.

Producers may sign up by December 17, 2004, at their local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offices or online at [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov).

Additionally, the Republican River Water Conservation District Water Activity Enterprise intends to further supplement NRCS payments with incentives based on District objectives. The Enterprise plans to provide a schedule of those incentives at [www.water.state.co.us/wateradmin/RepublicanRiver.asp](http://www.water.state.co.us/wateradmin/RepublicanRiver.asp).

## CREP

The State of Colorado seeks to obtain federal funds through the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the purpose of encouraging some farmers in the Republican River Basin to enroll in a voluntary Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

This program would provide incentives and cost sharing to participants who enter their land into eligible conservation practices such as native vegetation establishment or wildlife preservation for a period of 15 years. Of the more than 570,000 acres irrigated by surface or ground water in Colorado's region of the basin, the state will seek to enroll approximately 5% of those acres into the program over the next several years.

The USDA Colorado offices, the Colorado Divisions of Water Resources and Wildlife, Colorado State University Extension, the Republican River Water Conservation District and other agencies will work to prepare a proposal for 2005.

## Conservation Easements

Some landowners may choose to permanently donate the water rights associated with their agricultural land in order to receive tax savings. A conservation easement is a real property interest that grants the owner of the easement the right to prohibit certain acts (irrigation) with respect to the property in a manner that will preserve its value for conservation purposes.

Additional information regarding donating water rights and conservation easements can be obtained by contacting the Republican River Water Conservation District.

## Short-Term Leases

To achieve its objective of helping the State of Colorado meet its compact obligations, the Republican River Water Conservation District and its Water Activity Enterprise must begin helping agricultural producers voluntarily retire irrigated land, on both temporary and permanent bases.

This will require the Enterprise to begin leasing the water rights of certain acres beginning in 2005. Based on the model governing the Republican River Compact Agreement, those acres closest to the North Fork and South Fork of the Republican River will provide the greatest benefit to Colorado compact compliance.

Surface and ground water irrigators interested in entering a lease agreement with the Enterprise should contact the Enterprise after January 1, 2005.

## Important Dates

- |   |             |                             |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------|
| q | 1/01/2005   | First fee assessment        |
| q | 1/11/2005   | Special Board meeting       |
| q | 6/8-9/2005  | Republican Compact meeting  |
| q | Sept., 2005 | Projected CREP signup       |
| q | 12/31/2007  | Final day of 5-year average |