

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

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Bill Owens
Governor

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency in the South Platte Basin in Northern Colorado Due to the Drought

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, Colorado Revised Statute § 24-32-2101 *et seq.*, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency.

1. Background & Need.

Colorado is experiencing drought conditions in Northern Colorado. The South Platte River Basin in Northern Colorado has experienced unexpected dry conditions with below average snowfall and below average precipitation since January 2006. These drought conditions may cause a severe negative impact on citizens and businesses in Northern Colorado.

Under Colorado law, well users must replace water that they consume and when well users cannot meet their replacement obligation, they can no longer access that water. Many well users in this area purchased seed and other inputs, prepared their fields and planted based upon the early season snowpack. However, due to the lack of precipitation, the NRCS Streamflow Forecast Map issued by the Colorado State Engineer forecasts stream flow to be 50-69% of average for the South Platte River Basin. As a result, no water is available for diversion and production from the affected farms may be negatively impacted.

As Governor, I am responsible for meeting dangers to our state presented by disasters. C.R.S. § 24-32-2104(1). The Act defines disasters as “the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural cause or cause of human origin, including but not limited to ...drought” C.R.S. § 24-32-2103(1.5). The purpose of the Act is to reduce the vulnerability of injury to the people of Colorado and damage to property located within the state and provide for

coordination of activities relating to disaster prevention, preparedness and response by the state. C.R.S. § 24-32-2102(1)(a) and (f).

Declaring a disaster emergency allows those in the South Platte River Basin in Northern Colorado affected by this drought access to the Agricultural Emergency Drought Response Fund pursuant to C.R.S. § 37-60-123.5. In addition, declaring a disaster emergency will enable those affected to be eligible for federal aid.

2. Directive.

I hereby declare that drought conditions in the South Platte River Basin in Northern Colorado constitute a disaster, as defined by C.R.S. § 24-32-2103.

3. Duration.

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from the date of its execution unless extended by Executive Order.



GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of Colorado
this 10th day of May 2006.

Bill Owens
Governor