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Ag Water NetWORK

WEBINAR #5 Highlights – 2017 South Platte Storage Study

Recorded March 8, 2018.

Presenters: Joe Frank, PE, General Manager, Lower South Platte Water Conservancy District (LSPWCD), and Mary Presecan, PE, Leonard Rice Engineers, Inc.

The storage study was authorized by HB 16-1256, funded by a CWCB Water Supply Reserve Fund grant, and managed by the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the LSPWCD..

Water is delivered to Nebraska in excess of the interstate compact agreement (summary table below):

Statistic	Amount of Water Leaving Colorado (at Julesburg Gage)	Amount of Water Delivered to Nebraska in Excess of the Compact Requirement ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾
Annual Average (ac-ft/yr)	436,000	397,000
Minimum Year (ac-ft/yr)	29,000	10,000
Maximum Year (ac-ft/yr)	1,957,000	1,904,000
Total over 20-yr Period 1996-2015 (ac-ft)	8,728,000	7,939,000

(1) Storable flow Julesburg gage (2) Future environmental flow obligations could reduce legally available water.
Table source: Stantec, South Platte Storage Study Final Report, December 15, 2017.

The study found that various storage options could provide the following:

- Maximum firm yield of 62,000 ac-ft per year (AFY) with a pipeline or 47,000 AFY without a pipeline.
- Average annual yield ranging from 81,000 AFY with a pipeline to 60,000 AFY without a pipeline.

Costs for new storage:

- Costs for new storage projects ranged from \$190M to \$1.08B.
- Cost per acre-foot of additional firm yield ranged from \$3,000 per AF to \$47,000 per AF.

A dam on the mainstem of the South Platte River is the most economical storage option but least likely to be implemented. The 2nd cheapest option is adding storage in the lower part of the South Platte River Basin.