

RESOLUTION 2025-105
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS
REGARDING THE NORTHERN COLORADO WATER ALLIANCE

A. The Northern Colorado Water Alliance (“Alliance”) is a collaborative forum for representatives of water providers and other interested organizations in the northern Colorado Front Range Region (also, “Region”). The Alliance is not a separate legal entity or decision-making body.

B. The City of Fort Collins (“City”) is a home rule municipality, owns a portfolio of water rights and water contracts, and owns and operates a water utility that provides treated water service.

C. Current members of the Alliance are: the City, Town of Berthoud, Town of Eaton, City of Evans, City of Greeley, Town of Johnstown, City of Loveland, Town of Milliken, Town of Severance, Town of Timnath, Town of Wellington, Town of Windsor, North Weld County Water District, Little Thompson Water District, Platte River Power Authority, Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, and Larimer County.

D. Water providers in the Region face various risks and challenges that prompted the formation of the Alliance, including the following:

- Communication-focused risks and challenges, including siloed water knowledge, complex regional systems, and governance challenges, such as tensions between different types of water users;
- Risks and challenges beyond members’ direct control, including hydrological conditions, users’ increasing demand for water, and economic conditions increasing the cost of infrastructure projects;
- Rising water costs’ impacts on the cost of development, which may impede the housing affordability goals of municipalities;
- Different types of water providers having varying levels of involvement in local land use planning and land control; and
- Recent purchases of water rights by entities outside of the Region, including entities within the Denver metropolitan area.

E. Members use the Alliance to discuss, learn about, and collaborate on water-related issues, issues affecting the Region’s communities, and each organization’s approach to addressing challenges. Because the Alliance itself is not a decision-making body, takeaways from discussions are intended to inspire members to adopt new approaches and techniques to mitigate the water-related risks and challenges affecting the Region as a whole or individual communities within it.

F. There are mutual interests across water providers in the Region, and a collaborative approach is needed to achieve the goal of successfully protecting the Region’s water.

G. Members of the Alliance have articulated the following mission for the Alliance: collaborating and educating for the protection of water resources and systems to ensure a resilient future for the northern Colorado Front Range.

H. Members of the Alliance desire to collaborate specifically to support efforts: to retain water for local beneficial use by discouraging the further transfer of water to entities outside of the Region; and to seek appropriate mitigation to offset impacts to affected communities in circumstances where water must be transferred outside of the Region.

I. In support of the foregoing, members of the Alliance have articulated the following principles, which are not intended to bind any member to specific actions:

- Members of the Alliance represent a variety of special districts, municipal and county governments, and utilities facing different jurisdictional opportunities and challenges regarding the protection of water;
- The citizens, civic leaders, water providers, and other water users of Northern Colorado have gone to extraordinary lengths since the 1860s to responsibly plan for, develop, and operate complex water systems that are essential to the Region's economy and quality of life;
- The citizens, civic leaders, water providers, and other water users of Northern Colorado are currently making significant investments in additional projects to increase water system resiliency, meet future demands, and provide a greater level of water security in the Region;
- Northern Colorado's high quality of life is tied to the health and well-being of communities and depends directly on the availability of water resources;
- Nothing in these principles is intended to cause harm to Northern Colorado communities or infringe on the ability of members to fulfill their organizational missions;
- Water is a building block of the regional economy and is critical to the further economic development of the region;
- Collaboration and partnerships among water providers and other entities in Northern Colorado enable agreements to develop, maintain, and improve water storage, delivery, and treatment infrastructure that benefit water users in the region;
- Each water provider has the right to acquire sufficient water resources to meet its water users' current and future demand;
- Each individual water right owner has the right to sell and/or transfer their water rights;
- It is the intent of the Alliance to be transparent with water right owners and mutual ditch companies that manage water rights and not to diminish the value of those rights or alter the water market;
- The Alliance respects Colorado's current system of water rights that is based on the doctrine of prior appropriation and other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that honor rights and obligations under existing permits, approvals, and agreements;

- Availability of water for agricultural, environmental, and recreational uses is tied to the economic and cultural value and character of the region; and
- The members of the Alliance will, in their discretion and in good faith, interpret and implement the stated goals.

In light of the foregoing recitals, which the Council hereby makes and adopts as determinations and findings, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS as follows:

Section 1. The City Manager is hereby authorized to continue to participate in the Northern Colorado Water Alliance to further the policy and related goals of the City.

Section 2. City Council expresses support for the Alliance's mission stated in Recital G and for the principles set forth in Recital I above, which are not intended to bind the City to any specific position(s) or action(s).

Section 3. City Council expresses support of the desire to collaborate with other members of the Northern Colorado Water Alliance to support efforts: to retain water for local beneficial use by discouraging the further transfer of water to entities within the Denver metropolitan area; and to seek appropriate mitigation to offset impacts to affected communities in circumstances where water must be transferred outside of the Region.

Passed and adopted on December 2, 2025.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Effective Date: December 2, 2025

Approving Attorney: Eric Potyondy

Exhibit: None