

Determination of the annual water supply allocation for the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

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Abstract. The Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District (Northern Water) is a public agency created in 1937 to contract with the federal government to build the Colorado-Big Thompson Project. The C-BT Project collects water west of the Continental Divide and delivers it to Northeastern Colorado for agricultural, municipal, domestic and industrial uses. Northern Water and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation jointly operate and maintain the C-BT Project. Today the C-BT Project supplies 850,000 residents and 640,000 irrigated acres with a portion of their much needed and highly valued water supply. Each year the Board of Directors evaluates the water supply conditions of the District service area and declares an allocation (quota) for use by allottees of the Project. The quota is generally set to supplement existing native water supplies. The makeup of the ownership of the allotment contracts is changing with time. The water allotment contracts are increasingly owned by municipal and industrial interests. This talk will explain the methodology used to set the quota and discuss some of the variability and vulnerability issues that face Northern Water.