

Wayne Allard

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ALLARD ASKS SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE TO REVERSE “BYPASS” FLOW POLICY SAYS POLICY EXTORTS WATER RIGHTS FOR SPECIAL USE PERMITS

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) has sent a letter to Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman requesting that she reinstate the historic policy of the Department of Agriculture of not imposing water “bypass flows” upon the current holders of land use authorizations for existing ditches, reservoirs, and other pipeline facilities. The request was made necessary by a last minute decision by the Clinton Administration to impose a new “bypass flow” requirement.

“This issue is of great importance to Colorado and to the West, as bypass requirements are used to take water that is owned by cities and farmers without compensation,” wrote Allard.

In the closing months of the Clinton Administration, the Forest Service announced their intent to require water “bypass flows” for all existing water facilities. This decision was made despite the fact the Federal Water Rights Task Force found that Congress had not delegated this authority to the Forest Service.

“The current policy allows the Forest Service to extort water rights from Colorado’s citizens without compensation,” said Allard. “This policy is outrageous and needs to be reversed immediately.”

Allard said he is optimistic the new administration will look favorably on his request.

“The new administration has a deep appreciation for private property rights,” added Allard. “They can recognize when a policy is unfair. I am very confident that once Secretary Veneman has a chance to review this policy, she will do the right thing and reverse it.”

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