



COLORADO FARM BUREAU
9177 East Mineral Circle • Centennial, CO 80112
Mailing Address: PO Box 5647, Denver, CO 80217
(303) 749-7500 • Fax (303) 749-7703
www.colofb.com

March 20, 2015

The Honorable Scott Tipton
218 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20151

Dear Representative Tipton,

We are writing you today on behalf of 400,000 farm bureau members across the west to thank you for your work on the Water Rights Protection Act. This Act is a positive step in protecting western property from the overreach of the federal government.

As you are aware, recently we have seen the United States Forest Service (USFS) attempt to use coercive methods to circumvent long-established state water laws. This is nothing more than the hijacking of water rights. Sadly, USFS have continued to do so despite objections from elected officials, business owners and private property owners.

One specific example that we have seen is the USFS telling water right holders that they had to sign over their water rights to have their special use permit renewed. This goes beyond coercion and should be considered theft. The USFS has not invested millions of dollars in developing these water rights. The USFS has not spent thousands of hours maintaining these water rights. And the USFS has shown they are willing to violate federal statute stating they will abide with state water law.

Water is the backbone of the American west. Without it production would cease. For the USFS to try and take something that is not rightfully theirs in exchange for use of taxpayer funded land under the multi-use doctrine illustrates the problems that western farmers and ranchers have experienced. Thank you again for standing up for the rights of and protecting farmers and ranchers with the introduction of the Water Rights Protection Act.

Sincerely,

Alaska Farm Bureau
California Farm Bureau
Idaho Farm Bureau
New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau
Oregon Farm Bureau
Washington Farm Bureau

Arizona Farm Bureau
Colorado Farm Bureau
Montana Farm Bureau
Nevada Farm Bureau
Utah Farm Bureau
Wyoming Farm Bureau