

Kansas, Colorado reach agreement on Republican River Water Usage

Today the Governors and Attorneys General of Kansas and Colorado announced that they have reached a settlement of claims regarding Colorado's past use of water under the Republican River Compact. The Compact allocates the waters of the basins between the states of Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas.

"This settlement is an investment in the basin to ensure a better future for Kansas water users," said Kansas Governor Jeff Colyer. "Kansas and Colorado are committed to continuing to make the Compact work for the benefit of the citizens of our states, and this settlement recognizes the ties that bind our states together and is an important step for the economic development of the region."

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt also expressed his approval. "The Kansas water team at the Department of Agriculture and our legal team at the Attorney General's office have done an outstanding job of resolving years of past disputes without litigation," Schmidt said. "This settlement going forward promises a more cooperative approach to what really matters — the best possible management of the water resources in the basin's South Fork on both sides of the state line."

Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper agreed that "This settlement provides funds that could be used in the Republican River Basin within Kansas and Colorado and creates additional opportunities for cooperative water management between the States."

Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman also expressed her approval, saying the agreement "avoids the costs and uncertainty of litigation and furthers the principles of the Compact, including removing controversy and fostering interstate cooperation."

The agreement resolves the existing controversies between the two states regarding Colorado's past use of water under the Republican River Compact and allows them to continue to work collaboratively through the compact as part of an overall ongoing effort which also involves the state of Nebraska.

The settlement was signed by the governors and attorneys general of both states. A copy of the settlement is available at agriculture.ks.gov/RRCA.

