



HB20-1344

SHORT TITLE: Study Artificial Recharge Max Beneficial Use Water

LONG TITLE: Concerning the Study of the Artificial Recharge to Maximize the Beneficial Use of Water in Colorado.

SPONSORS: Rep. Holtorf

COMMITTEES: House Rural Affairs & Agriculture Committee

PURPOSE OF THE BILL: To direct the state CWCB in consultation with the State Engineer and the Colorado Water Institute to evaluate ways to maximize the beneficial use of water in Colorado through artificial recharge when there is excess water and to minimize the amount of water flowing to downstream states while maintaining compliance with compacts, federal law, and Supreme Court decisions.

PROponents OF THE BILL: Water providers who need additional water for future growth.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS: Agriculture, municipal water providers, environmental organizations, state agencies charged with water oversight.

BACKGROUND: Colorado has experienced frequent droughts. However, there are periods of time when water flowing out of the state exceeds the amount required to satisfy compact requirements and obligations imposed by federal law and court decisions. If beneficial use can be expended through artificial recharge it would assist in times of drought.

Is the bill necessary this year? There is no specific deadline.

How does the bill change current law? It does not change law; it simply directs a study.

How is the bill implemented? The bill directs the CWCB, the State Engineer and the Colorado Water Institute to evaluate a number of issues to encourage and remove barriers to storage through artificial recharge, identify potential funding, identify existing or potential artificial recharge projects that would meet the objectives and recommend legislation and regulatory changes to meet the objectives. The CWCB must report its findings to the General Assembly by January 1, 2022.

Does the bill affect prior appropriations? No.

Practical considerations: Will there be adequate funding for the scope of the study?

Fiscal Impact: There is no fiscal note issued to date.