



*“Voice of the Western Slope since 1953”*

A coalition of counties, communities, businesses & individuals

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**02-3 WA 1  
Instream Flow Program**

**WHEREAS** in 1973 the Colorado Legislature passed landmark legislation to protect Colorado’s natural environment through a pioneer instream flow law; and

**WHEREAS** since the inception of Colorado’s instream flow program, the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) has adjudicated instream flow rights on more than 8,000 miles of Colorado’s streams and rivers and more than 475 rights to protect natural lake levels; and

**WHEREAS** the CWCB has the exclusive authority under Colorado law to appropriate water for instream flows, and it has a legislative mandate to balance environmental protections with potentially competing consumptive water uses; and

**WHEREAS** the current instream flow program allows the CWCB to file for new water rights appropriations for the minimum amount of water necessary to protect the environment to a reasonable degree; and

**WHEREAS** the current instream flow program allows the CWCB to accept senior absolute water rights for conversion to instream flow rights when and where such senior rights would better protect the natural environment or natural lake levels; and

**WHEREAS** the Colorado instream flow program has proven its ability to balance protection of Colorado’s stream and lake environments with other agricultural, industrial and municipal water uses; and

**WHEREAS** the CWCB has a statutory obligation to protect both existing water users and the future ability to fully develop Colorado’s full water entitlements if and when Coloradoans choose

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that CLUB 20 opposes any legislative proposal or initiative effort intended to significantly change Colorado’s landmark instream flow legislation and insists that any proposal or initiative should be pursued only following extensive discussion by all interested parties and only with a broad consensus regarding any modification to Colorado’s pioneer instream flow program.

*Adopted March 8, 2002*