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*Reporter Mike Hooker*

## Farmers Hold Rally In Support Of Glade Reservoir

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (CBS4) — Farmers in northern Colorado say a proposed water project to help cities will also help agriculture. Opponents of Glade Reservoir say it will put one in seven farms out of production -- at least temporarily.

Poudre River would be used to fill Glade Reservoir.

Farmers disputed the opponents saying the project would actually help them. Farmers say storing water that now flows downstream in the Poudre River wouldn't hurt farms, but would actually save at least 40,000 acres of farmland from losing their water to cities.

Farms across northern Colorado depend on irrigation water.

"We're able to run this water through the summer to produce the crops in the short growing season that we have here," farmer Russ Leffer said.

Leffer is a farmer in Weld County. He says the valley north of Fort Collins is a key to the future of northern Colorado farmers. Filling the valley with water, turning it into the proposed Glade Reservoir, would give cities water they might otherwise buy from agriculture and in turn, drying up farms.

"I feel like what we've done here by not keeping agriculture viable in this area is we've let our forefathers down that worked hard to develop these systems," Leffer said.

"If we don't build this, it's taking a step backwards," farmer Mike Hungenberg said.

More than 300 farmers and politicians held a rally in Weld County to say Colorado agriculture supports Glade Reservoir. But opponents say farmers would suffer because financing the project depends on urban growth.

"All the growth that happens, happens on top of farms, so that is going to put farmers out of business," said Gary Wockner, Save the Poudre Spokesperson.

Opponents also point out that Glade is for municipal water users.

"Not one drop of the water that they propose to take out of this river and put in that reservoir is for farmers. It's all for cities," Wockner said.

But farmers at the rally say a new reservoir would help farms by helping cities.

"If they're able to store water in a reservoir, then they're going to be less apt to go out and have to try to purchase farm ground and then drying it up to bring that water right back to that community," Troy Bredenkamp with the Colorado Farm Bureau said.

Farmers say they wanted to keep the whole issue of Glade Reservoir and the Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP) on people's minds as government studies on the proposal continue.

Right now work continues on the "Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement," which is due to be completed by the end of next year. That leaves supporters and opponents with a lot of time on their hands waiting to see what will happen with the river and the reservoir.

If built, Glade Reservoir would be slightly larger than Horsetooth Reservoir and would require relocating 7 miles of U.S. Highway 287 northwest of Fort Collins.



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