

# Summit County

KATHLEEN NEEL  
COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER  
208 E. Lincoln Ave.  
Breckenridge, CO 80424-1538

## GENERAL ELECTION

TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2020

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The Election within Summit County will be conducted  
As a Mail Ballot Election on November 3, 2020 from  
7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

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This is a Composite of All Ballot Issues for this Election. Please Refer to Your Official Ballot for a Listing of  
Ballot Issues on Which You Are Entitled to Vote.

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## ALL REGISTERED VOTERS NOTICE OF ELECTION

TO INCREASE TAXES/TO INCREASE DEBT  
ON A CITIZEN PETITION/ON  
A REFERRED MEASURE

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THIS PAMPHLET CONTAINS BALLOT ISSUE NOTICES AS REQUIRED BY THE STATE OF COLORADO  
CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE X, SECTION 20.

A 'YES' VOTE ON ANY BALLOT ISSUE IS A VOTE IN FAVOR OF CHANGING CURRENT LAW OR EXISTING  
CIRCUMSTANCES, AND A 'NO' VOTE ON ANY BALLOT ISSUE IS A VOTE AGAINST CHANGING CURRENT LAW OR  
EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCE.

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A Publication of Summit County  
October 2020

**YOUR LOCAL ELECTION OFFICE IS:**

**SUMMIT COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER**

**OFFICE HOURS 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**PO Box 1538**

**208 E. Lincoln Avenue**

**Breckenridge, CO 80424-1538**

**Phone (970) 453-3479**

**[www.summitcountyco.gov/vote](http://www.summitcountyco.gov/vote)**

**BALLOTS MAY BE RETURNED TO THE ELECTION OFFICE BY  
MAIL OR DROPPED OFF AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS –**

**24-Hour Drop Boxes**

**Monday October 9 to Tuesday November 3 at 7:00 PM**

**Old County Courthouse – 208 E. Lincoln Avenue Breckenridge**

**Frisco Town Hall – 1 Main Street, Frisco**

**Dillon Town Hall – 275 Lake Dillon Drive, Dillon**

**North Branch Library – 651 Center Circle, Silverthorne**

**County Commons – 37 Peak One Drive Frisco**

**BALLOT REPLACEMENT, IN PERSON VOTING, AND WALK IN DROP OFF LOCATIONS -**

**In Person Voting and Ballot Replacement**

**South Branch Library/Breckenridge Grand Vacation Community Center**

103 S. Harris St. Breckenridge

8:00 am – 5:00 pm M-F October 19 – November 2

8:00 am – 12 pm Saturday, October 31

7:00 am – 7:00 pm Tuesday, November 3 **Election Day**

**Ballot Replacement**

Old County Courthouse

208 E. Lincoln Ave. Breckenridge

8:00 am – 5:00 pm M-F October 2 – November 2

7:00 am – 7:00 pm Tuesday, November 3 **Election Day**

**Election Day – In Person Voting and Ballot Replacement**

**Summit County Community & Senior Center**

83 Nancy's Place, Frisco

7:00 am – 7:00 pm Tuesday, November 3 **Election Day**

**Silverthorne Pavilion**

400 Blue River Pkwy, Silverthorne

7:00 am – 7:00 pm Tuesday, November 3 **Election Day**

**THE 2020 GENERAL ELECTION WILL BE CONDUCTED AS A MAIL BALLOT ELECTION.**

**All eligible, registered voters will receive a ballot in the mail.**

Mail Ballots will be sent to each “Active” voter in Summit County. We will begin mailing absentee ballots out the week of October 12, 2020. If you do not receive a ballot – Please call the Summit County Election Office at 970-453-3479. The ballots are due back in the elections office by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, 2020

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

This voter information pamphlet contains referenda and/or initiatives appearing on your 2020 General Election Ballot.

THE MAILING AND CONTENT OF THIS NOTICE IS MANDATED BY AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 (THE TABOR AMENDMENT) OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION.

The political subdivision providing this voter’s information notice does not warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in the summaries, nor is it responsible for errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation of submitted statements.

RECEIPT OF THIS VOTERS’ INFORMATION PAMPHLET DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT EVERY RESIDENT OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE. YOU MAY NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE ON ALL ISSUES PRESENTED.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS CONCERNING VOTING PROCEDURES, DROP LOCATIONS, OR YOUR ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE, REFER INITIALLY TO THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS NOTICE. FURTHER DETAILS MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING YOUR LOCAL ELECTION OFFICE LISTED BELOW.

ELECTIONS WITHIN SUMMIT COUNTY WILL BE CONDUCTED BY MAIL BALLOT ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2020 FROM 7 AM - 7 PM.

THE MAIL BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS AND WALK IN VOTING LOCATIONS ARE ALSO OPEN DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS THROUGH MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2020.

**YOUR LOCAL ELECTION OFFICE IS:**

**SUMMIT COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER**

**OFFICE HOURS 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**PO Box 1538**

**208 E. Lincoln Avenue**

**Breckenridge, CO 80424-1538**

**Phone (970) 453-3479**

**Summit County Elections**

**(970) 453-3479**

**[www.summitcountyco.gov/vote](http://www.summitcountyco.gov/vote)**

## **IMPORTANT VOTING INFORMATION**

You may cast your ballot by any one of the following methods:

- In person at a Voter Service Polling Center Location
- By mail via Mail-In ballot

There will be 3 strategically located Vote Service Polling Centers in Summit County. Voter Service Polling Centers are designed to provide voters with maximum flexibility and convenience on Election Day. Voters may go to any Vote Service Polling Centers in the county to cast their ballots. Precinct specific polling places will not be used. At the Vote Service Polling Center you will be required to show valid ID such as a driver's license.

You will also have the option of casting your vote prior to Election Day at one of the Voter Service Polling Centers which will be open from Monday, October 28 through Monday November 4. (Hours and locations are listed elsewhere in this pamphlet.)

Monday, October 26, 2020 is the last day ballots will be mailed out. Ballots may be mailed or deposited at any Ballot Drop-off Locations. Ballots must be RECEIVED by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, 2020.

**ALL REGISTERED VOTERS**

**NOTICE OF ELECTION  
ON A REFERRED MEASURE**

**BALLOT TITLE AND TEXT:**

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**Summit County Referred Measure 1A:**

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(Vote Yes/For or No/Against)

WITHOUT RAISING NET TAX REVENUES, PREVENTING THE LOSS OF EXISTING COUNTY SERVICES DUE TO STATE-IMPOSED CHANGES IN ASSESSED VALUE CALCULATIONS BY AUTHORIZING MILL LEVY ADJUSTMENTS FOR THE EXCLUSIVE PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING COUNTY SERVICES

SHALL SUMMIT COUNTY TAXES BE INCREASED ZERO DOLLARS (\$0.00) IN TAX COLLECTION YEAR 2021, AND THEREAFTER SHALL SUMMIT COUNTY BE AUTHORIZED TO MAINTAIN EXISTING COUNTY SERVICES, INCLUDING THOSE RECENTLY APPROVED BY LOCAL VOTERS, BY ADJUSTING ITS MILL LEVIES FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF SUSTAINING SERVICES THAT WILL OTHERWISE BE LOST DUE TO STATE-IMPOSED CHANGES IN THE METHOD OF CALCULATING ASSESSED VALUATION, SUCH AS CHANGES IN STATEWIDE PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT RATES, SO THAT THE ACTUAL TAX REVENUES GENERATED BY THE COUNTY’S MILL LEVIES ARE THE SAME AS THE ACTUAL TAX REVENUES THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN GENERATED HAD THE STATE OF COLORADO NOT IMPOSED SUCH CHANGES, WITH ALL ADJUSTMENTS AND EXPENDITURES SUBJECT TO ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT, AND SHALL ALL REVENUES BE COLLECTED AND SPENT NOTWITHSTANDING ANY LIMITS PROVIDED BY ARTICLE X SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION OR ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW?

**First Fiscal Year Impact of Ballot Measure No. 1(A): \$0.00 (Zero Dollars) in 2021**

The Maximum Dollar Amount of the Proposed Tax Increase for Fiscal Year 2021 (the First Full Fiscal Year of the Proposal) is No Increase in Revenue (\$0.00)

**Total County Fiscal Year Spending**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>		
2020 (estimated)	\$	77,253,629
2019 (actual)	\$	82,001,629*
2018 (actual)	\$	68,072,542
2017 (actual)	\$	62,660,166
2016 (actual)	\$	58,060,929

\*Figures for 2019 through 2021 include actual and estimated increased revenues primarily resulting from a temporary 2018 voter-approved tax levy (4.65 mills) to provide, among other things, wildfire prevention programs, mental health and suicide prevention services, recycling and waste diversion services, and affordable early childhood care and learning for local families and workers

Overall percentage change of 33% from 2016 to 2020  
Overall dollar change of \$19,192,700 from 2016 to 2020

County Estimate of 2021 Fiscal Year Spending  
Without Proposed Tax Increase: \$ 80,829,000

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS FOR REFERRED MEASURE 1A:**

Measure 1(A) would maintain existing funding for essential services provided by Summit County, including road and recpath maintenance, snowplowing, public health services, wildfire prevention, open space and trails, workforce housing and emergency services. Many of these services were recently approved by local voters, in recognition of acute community needs and priorities. In 2018, local voters approved a ballot measure to provide funding for mental health services, wildfire mitigation, expanded recycling, community facilities and early childhood learning.

But funding for these and other essential services is now at risk of steep cuts because of state-imposed changes in property tax calculations. Measure 1(A) would grant the County very limited authority to maintain current funding levels by shielding us from outdated, draconian state formulas for calculating the assessed value of property.

This ballot proposal is very limited and specific in scope: It does NOT give the County any authority to raise net tax revenues above current levels – it merely allows the County to maintain services the community already receives. Measure 1(A) would authorize Summit County to adjust County mill levies for the sole purpose of stabilizing existing County services. Other local public organizations, such as Colorado Mountain College, Summit Fire & EMS, and Red, White & Blue Fire District, have received voter support for similar measures in recent years, as they too sought to fend off deep, state-imposed funding cuts.

The need for Measure 1(A) has become especially urgent and serious since the COVID19 pandemic. During the past eight months, the County has provided vital services such as COVID19 mobile testing, outbreak response/containment, recovery planning, and measures to stop the spread of disease. As a result, the demand for County services has significantly increased. The County has already reduced expenditures in other areas in order to dedicate appropriate resources to the COVID19 response. However, there are limits to what the County can cut without impacting local residents and the County’s ability to meet basic community needs.

The impending cuts stem from the Gallagher Amendment to the Colorado Constitution, which causes the "assessed value" of all residential property to drop when statewide residential property values grow at a faster rate than nonresidential properties. In communities like Summit County that have a much higher proportion of residential properties than the state as a whole, the drop in assessed value results in precipitous declines in local funding for public services.

Most of Summit County’s residential properties are owned by investors and second homeowners, who pay the majority of our property tax revenues. So the Gallagher-imposed cuts would amount to a substantial tax break for nonresidents who take advantage of County services.

Because of Gallagher, residential properties now pay only one-quarter as much as they used to. As residential property values continue on their upward trend, revenues for local services are arbitrarily ratcheted downward. Measure 1(A) would NOT cause your residential tax bill to increase over existing amounts, regardless of the outcome of state ballot measures (or false allegations to the contrary).

#### **SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS AGAINST REFERRED MEASURE 1A**

Measure 1A is a proposal on the ballot from your county commissioners. The language used on this ballot measure is confusing. "State imposed changes to home value assessment" mentioned in the measure refers to the Gallagher Amendment. A proposal to repeal Gallagher is on the State ballot this November. If the Gallagher Amendment is repealed, our home assessments will increase. If Measure 1A also passes in Summit County, we could see our Real Estate Taxes go up exponentially.

The complicated language used by the county commissioners starts off with "Zero" increase in 2021. That doesn't mean real taxes will not be increased! Assessment valuations in Summit County are increasing and if we allow Measure 1A to pass, our home values will go down and our real estate taxes will increase.

#### 2014-2019 Total County Revenue, all Governmental Activities.

\$54,938,412 - \$91,323,551 - 66% increase - \$36,385,139.

#### 2020 Budget - Total County Revenue.

\$101,204,625, - 10.8% increase over 2019 - \$9,881,074.

#### 2014-2019 Total County Expenses, all Governmental Activities.

\$49,667,059 - \$67,310,369 - 35.5% increase - \$17,643,310.

#### 2020 Budget - Total County Expenses.

\$105,728,328, - 57% increase over 2019 - \$38,417,959.

#### 2019 Year End Fund Balances.

unrestricted fund balance - \$30,064,474; restricted fund balances - \$52,323,768.

#### 2014-2020 Estimated County Permanent Residents per the Colorado State Demographer.

29,331 to 31,289 - 6.6% increase - 1,958 people.

The County has seen increased sales tax revenue year after year and increases in assessed valuation, driving up property tax collections. County leadership has convinced voters to vote for numerous **additional taxes since 2003** beyond traditional sales tax and property tax revenues. As identified in the 2020 budget:

\$1,590,000 -2003 election;

\$3,020,669 for open space - 2008 election;

\$1,123,761 for early childhood - 2005 election;

\$2,141,888 for public lands, fire mitigation, affordable housing, and rec paths - 2008 election;

\$1,719,354 for the General Fund - 2008 election;

\$5,373,823 for public safety - 2014 election;

\$10,455,469 for recycling, mental health, fire mitigation, pre-K funding, public facilities - 2018 election.

The County expected to collect an additional \$4,063,913 for capital expenditures permitted by Colorado State Statute 29-1-301.

This has been a trying year for individuals and businesses, and everyone has had to prioritize spending priorities. The economic downturn is likely a temporary event in the long-term future of the County. BUT, real estate activity in the County has continued to be strong and the Referred Measure will result in a permanent mill levy increase that will increase everyone's property tax. Combined with prioritized spending cuts, the County should use the fund balances of \$82,388,242 to address the projected short-term drop in revenues.

This ballot measure focuses on the feel-good aspect of government programs and ignores the very real contribution of local taxes to your cost of living. The 112.9% increase in County spending since 2014 is not justified by any increase in population. This issue is not about the value of various County services. It is about finally holding our politicians accountable for a lack of discipline in prioritizing program spending.

**BALLOT TITLE AND TEXT:**

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**Buffalo Mountain Metropolitan District Ballot Issue 6A:**

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(Vote Yes/For or No/Against)

SHALL BUFFALO MOUNTAIN METROPOLITAN DISTRICT TAXES BE INCREASED \$600,000 ANNUALLY BEGINNING IN 2021 AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS ARE RECEIVED IN ANY YEAR THEREAFTER BY THE APPROVAL OF A DISTRICT-WIDE SALES TAX NOT TO EXCEED 4% UPON EVERY TRANSACTION OR OTHER INCIDENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH A SALES TAX IS LEVIED BY THE STATE THAT OCCURS WITHIN ANY AREA OF THE DISTRICT; SUCH TAX TO BE USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR SAFETY PROTECTION, STREET IMPROVEMENT, AND TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS AND SERVICES; SUCH TAX TO COMMENCE ON JULY 1, 2021; PROVIDED THAT THE TAX TO BE LEVIED SHALL BE IN ADDITION TO ANY OTHER TAXES LEVIED BY THE DISTRICT; AND PROVIDED THAT THE BOARD MAY ANNUALLY ADJUST THE PERCENTAGE OF THE SALES TAX COLLECTED DOWN AND UP WITHIN THE NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF 4.0%; AND SHALL THE PROCEEDS OF SUCH TAXES AND INVESTMENT INCOME THEREON BE COLLECTED, KEPT AND SPENT BY THE DISTRICT AS A VOTER-APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITS THAT WOULD OTHERWISE APPLY TO THE DISTRICT UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION OR ANY OTHER LAW AND WITHOUT LIMITING IN ANY YEAR THE AMOUNT OF OTHER REVENUES THAT MAY BE COLLECTED AND SPENT BY THE DISTRICT; ALL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BUFFALO MOUNTAIN METROPOLITAN DISTRICT ON AUGUST 18, 2020?

**Total District Fiscal Year Spending:**

2020 (estimated)	<u>\$ 1,319,373</u>
2019 (actual)	<u>\$ 1,066,376</u>
2018 (actual)	<u>\$ 1,066,419</u>
2017 (actual)	<u>\$ 980,256</u>
2016 (actual)	<u>\$ 964,891</u>

Overall percentage change increase from 2016 to 2020: 36.74%  
Overall dollar change increase from 2016 to 2020: \$ 354,482

**Proposed District Tax Increase:**

Estimated first full fiscal year maximum dollar amount of increase: \$600,000  
Estimated first full fiscal year spending without the increase: \$1,310,136

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS FOR BALLOT ISSUE 6A**

As of July 1st, 2020, a new 3-year contract servicing Buffalo Mountain District took effect. The contracted services include essential snow plowing, sanding and de-icing, maintenance and repair of roads, sidewalks, gutters, drainage systems, retaining walls and guardrails. With the increased cost of these newly contracted services, a revenue shortfall of over \$500,000 in operating expenses is expected. The sales tax proposal will generate additional revenue to address this shortfall without the need for an immediate increase in property taxes, spreading the costs more equitably across full time residents, 2nd homeowners, short- and long-term renters. We strongly support a sales tax to sustain the infrastructure and essential services for Wildernest rather than incurring a property tax increase. A sales tax provides an

equitable means for visitors and short-term renters to pay their fair and appropriate share towards supporting services and infrastructure in Wildernest. The community of Wildernest is located in an extreme high elevation climate. The wear and tear from freeze/thaw ground movement and subzero temperatures reduces the life span of infrastructure a lot faster than other areas. For the safety of our residents, I am voting yes on 6A. This will allow continued maintenance and repairs for snowplowing, roads, pedestrian path, guardrails, and drainage and ditches. We cannot risk a reduction in these essential services for the safety of our community and protection of our property values.

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS AGAINST BALLOT ISSUE 6A**

No comments were filed by the constitutional deadline.

**BALLOT TITLE AND TEXT:**

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**Lake Dillon Fire Protection District Ballot Issue 6B:**

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(Vote Yes/For or No/Against)

SHALL THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED AREA BECOME A PART OF THE LAKE DILLON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT UPON THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS?

DESCRIPTION OF AREA: ALL REAL PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE COPPER MOUNTAIN CONSOLIDATED METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.

SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS:

1. IF THE PROPOSED INCLUSION IS APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF THE ELIGIBLE ELECTORS, COPPER MOUNTAIN CONSOLIDATED METROPOLITAN DISTRICT SHALL REDUCE THE MAXIMUM OPERATIONAL MILL LEVY IT CAN CERTIFY (INCLUDING ANY PRIOR VOTER-APPROVED MILL LEVY ADJUSTMENTS) BY 9.055 MILLS FOR TAXES ASSESSED IN 2020 AND COLLECTED IN 2021 AND EACH YEAR THEREAFTER; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT NOTHING HEREIN SHALL PRECLUDE COPPER MOUNTAIN FROM THEREAFTER SEEKING VOTER APPROVAL TO INCREASE ITS OPERATIONAL MILL LEVY;
2. UNLESS APPROVED BY THE VOTERS IN ADVANCE, AND SUBJECT TO PRIOR VOTER-APPROVED MILL LEVY ADJUSTMENTS, THE MAXIMUM PROPERTY TAX MILL LEVY THAT MAY BE IMPOSED BY LAKE DILLON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT IS 9.055 MILLS, EXCLUSIVE OF REFUNDS AND ABATEMENTS; AND
3. THE PROPOSED INCLUSION IS SUBJECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE LAKE DILLON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AND COPPER MOUNTAIN CONSOLIDATED METROPOLITAN DISTRICT PRE-INCLUSION AND FIRE AUTHORITY DISSOLUTION INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT DATED APRIL 3, 2020.

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS FOR BALLOT ISSUE 6B**

This is the next step in a process that began in 2017 with the agreement between Lake Dillon Fire and the Copper Mountain Consolidated Metropolitan District to establish Summit Fire and EMS by an Intergovernmental Agreement to provide both fire and emergency services within their joint jurisdictions. Inclusion of Copper Mountain Metro fire services into Lake Dillon Fire is revenue neutral as Lake Dillon will assess an operational property tax of 9.055 mills and Copper Metro will reduce its mills by 9.055. The merger will retain the benefits of having created the Summit Fire and EMS Authority including enhanced fire and emergency services through integrated infrastructure, streamlined processes, access to additional resources and uniformity in training and operations, but without duplicative expenses and administrative costs and is a benefit to all residents of Copper Mountain.

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS AGAINST BALLOT ISSUE 6B**

No comments were filed by the constitutional deadline.

**TO ALL REGISTERED VOTERS**

**NOTICE OF ELECTION TO INCREASE TAXES  
ON A REFERRED MEASURE**

Colorado River Water Conservation District

Including all of Delta, Eagle, Garfield, Grand, Gunnison, Mesa, Moffat, Ouray, Pitkin, Rio Blanco, Routt, and Summit Counties, and those parts of Hinsdale and Saguache Counties lying west and north of the continental divide and within the drainage basin of the Gunnison river, and that part of Montrose County not included in the Southwestern Water Conservation District as set forth and described in section 37-47-103 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.

**Election Date:** Tuesday, November 3, 2020

**Election Hours:** 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

**Local Election Office Address and Telephone Number:**

Colorado River Water Conservation District  
201 Centennial Street, Suite #200, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601  
Telephone: (970) 945-8522

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**Colorado River Water Conservation District Ballot Issue 7A:**

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(Vote Yes/For or No/Against)

SHALL COLORADO RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, ALSO KNOWN AS THE COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT, TAXES BE INCREASED BY AN AMOUNT UP TO \$4,969,041 IN 2021 (WHICH INCREASE AMOUNTS TO APPROXIMATELY \$1.90 IN 2021 FOR EVERY \$100,000 IN RESIDENTIAL HOME VALUE), AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS ARE GENERATED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER FROM AN ADDITIONAL PROPERTY TAX LEVY OF 0.248 MILLS (FOR A TOTAL MILL LEVY OF 0.5 MILLS) TO ENABLE THE COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT TO PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD WESTERN COLORADO WATER BY:

- \* FIGHTING TO KEEP WATER ON THE WEST SLOPE;
- \* PROTECTING ADEQUATE WATER SUPPLIES FOR WEST SLOPE FARMERS AND RANCHERS;
- \* PROTECTING SUSTAINABLE DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES FOR WEST SLOPE COMMUNITIES; AND
- \* PROTECTING FISH, WILDLIFE, AND RECREATION BY MAINTAINING RIVER LEVELS AND WATER QUALITY;

PROVIDED THAT THE DISTRICT WILL NOT UTILIZE THESE ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING TO FALLOW IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE; WITH SUCH EXPENDITURES REPORTED TO THE PUBLIC IN AN ANNUALLY PUBLISHED INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AUDIT; AND SHALL ALL REVENUES RECEIVED BY THE DISTRICT IN 2021 AND EACH SUBSEQUENT YEAR BE COLLECTED, RETAINED AND SPENT NOTWITHSTANDING ANY LIMITS PROVIDED BY LAW?

**Total District Fiscal Year Spending**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>		
2020 (estimated)	\$	<u>4,535,680</u>
2019 (actual)	\$	<u>3,741,037</u>
2018 (actual)	\$	<u>3,904,492</u>

2017 (actual)	\$	<u>3,949,075</u>
2016 (actual)	\$	<u>4,433,415</u>

Overall percentage change from 2016 to 2020	<u>2.3%</u>
Overall dollar change from 2016 to 2020	<u>\$102,265</u>

**Proposed Tax Increase**

District Estimate of the Maximum Dollar Amount of the Proposed Tax Increase For Fiscal Year 2021 (the First Full Fiscal Year of the Proposed Tax Increases):

BALLOT ISSUE NO. 7A: \$4,969,041

District Estimate of 2021 Fiscal Year Spending Without Proposed Tax Increase: \$4,554,680

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS FOR BALLOT ISSUE 7A**

Funding is needed so that the River District can continue protecting water supplies for the farmers and ranchers that put food on our tables. The District will use this funding to protect drinking water supplies on the Western Slope. The District has clearly demonstrated the need for new revenues to protect West Slope water and keep our water on the Western Slope. The District's mill levy is consistently one of the lowest levies on the West Slope. 7A is a modest increase of less than 1/4 of a single mill. The District developed a robust fiscal implementation plan that explains exactly how these revenues would be spent. Without additional resources, the District will be forced to reduce its workforce even more, and this will jeopardize its ability to protect the West Slope's water security. The District is accountable to taxpayers and undergoes regular independent audits to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely. The District's Board members are appointed directly by County Commissioners in each of the 15 counties within the District, so every county has a say guiding the work of the River District.

My role as a water resources engineer has provided me with the opportunity to really understand the importance of investing more in the protection of West Slope water and agricultural, industrial, municipal, and environmental/recreational users. The River District's mission is to protect these resources and the challenges in front of us with changing climate, hydrology, and water quality only emphasize the critical nature of your role.

This effort is non-partisan and enjoys broad support from conservative and progressive communities -- agricultural associations, conservation organizations and chambers of commerce have all come together to support and to protect West Slope water. The increase in property taxes is very small but will go a long way towards protecting West Slope water and keeping our water on the Western Slope. The Colorado River District is accountable to taxpayers and has created internal safeguards within a Fiscal Implementation plan to describe exactly how the money will be spent. It is good that this measure does not include a sunset provision because the need for protecting West Slope water will not go away. Front Range cities are buying up water rights and drying up productive farmland on the West Slope - some of which has been in families for

generations. The Colorado River District needs the resources to protect our water, keep local food production, and preserve healthy rivers that contribute to our quality of life and outdoor lifestyle. I support this because it would mean only \$1.90 per year for each \$100,000 in home value per year. That is a very modest amount.

**SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS AGAINST BALLOT ISSUE 7A**

Unlike most other districts with taxing authority, the River District is an appointed, not an elected board and does not have direct accountability to the taxpayers. The increase in mill levy does not have a sunset date and does not require the board to come back to the voters to prove they've used the money wisely in order to reauthorize the tax. There is no clear list of projects that this money will be used for. The River District refers to a Fiscal Implementation Plan but refused to bind the tax increase to this plan. As taxpayers, we don't have assurance that they will use the money as they say, and a future board could change the plan. The mill levy is a significant increase rather than something more incremental. The language of the measure is noble in its ambition but vague in its application. Please vote 'NO' on Ballot issue 7A.