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## 1937 Transcript of Hearing Before the Secretary of Interior on the Colorado - Big Thompson TransMountain Water Diversion Project Colorado

United States Department of the Interior

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HEARING  
 before the  
 SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
 on the  
 COLORADO-BIG THOMPSON  
 TRANSMOUNTAIN WATER DIVERSION PROJECT  
 COLORADO  
 Washington, D. C. November 12, 1937

STATEMENTS PRESENTED AT THE HEARING BEFORE THE  
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR ON THE COLORADO-BIG THOMPSON  
TRANSMOUNTAIN WATER DIVERSION PROJECT.  
NOVEMBER 12, 1937.

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10:00 A.M.

Secretary Ickes: The question is whether the Bureau of Reclamation, because the people in Colorado want it, should be allowed to divert from the western slope to the eastern slope of the Continental Divide. The theory is that there is an excess of water on the western slope and a decided deficiency east of the range. Now, in order to make this diversion in what engineers call the most economical and feasible manner, it will be necessary to tunnel under a portion of the Rocky Mountain National Park. The question is raised as to whether Grand Lake would be affected. The lake is a scenic feature of the park area. There will be no construction work in the park itself. There has been a decided difference of opinion developed between those wanting diversion and those who think it might affect seriously and adversely the Rocky Mountain National Park.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, both the Reclamation Bureau and the Park Service are in the Department of the Interior, - and I love them both. I need not protest to this group my interest in the National Parks. I do not think the people of Colorado would want to do anything that would injure the attraction of the Rocky Mountain National Park. It is a national playground and one of the important assets of the State. It is largely a question of fact, it seems to me, whether the park would be adversely affected, or, if it should be affected, whether there could be any compensation for that.

In the discussion today, I want everyone to have full opportunity to say whatever he may want to say. I might suggest that undue repetition of the same points would not help to clarify the issue particularly. Naturally, those representing organizations want to make a record of their approval or disapproval and I want a full expression of the divergent views.

There are three or four people I shall call on first, in an orderly procedure, with a view to expediting the discussion and then the meeting will be thrown open to anyone who has anything he wants to say. Since Commissioner Page will probably have to bear a rather laboring oar, I will give him the floor first.

MR. JOHN C. PAGE,  
COMMISSIONER, BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Mr. Page: Mr. Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen: In presenting the problems of this project, it might be well to give a little historic background. The settlement of the eastern Colorado territory began in the early 70's, the first real colony being that of Horace Greeley in 1871. There grew up communities along the South Platte River in the following years, until the water supply was entirely used. This growth caused a change in the type of agriculture from the early hay and grain crops to the present day intensive agriculture, and with this, an increased demand for irrigation water. A water shortage developed in a territory embracing about one million acres. 615,000 acres are now irrigated in the district to be benefited by this project. That district is one of the most highly developed agricultural areas in the United States and perhaps in the world, having at the present time an assessed valuation of \$125,000,000. It was natural, therefore, that the irrigators would seek other sources of water to supplement their supply. Recent studies show there is an excess quantity of water on the western slope for present and prospective use.

The plan for transmountain diversion has received attention for many years. In 1889, a study was made of a transmountain diversion and surveys have been carried on intermittently ever since. The Bureau of Reclamation, in 1904 and 1905, outlined plans for the so-called Grand River Project, similar to the Colorado-Big Thompson Project now proposed, and having a tunnel twelve miles long. Surveys have been carried on with the hope that a feasible plan could be devised. In 1935 an allotment of \$150,000 was given to the Bureau of Reclamation by the Public Works Administration to make a complete survey. The plan now proposed is a result of that study.

Transmountain diversions have been in operation and recognized in the courts for many years in that territory. A number of them have been in existence in Colorado and elsewhere in the west for many years. Typical examples are the diversion from the Colorado River to Imperial Valley in California and the diversion through the Metropolitan Aqueduct to the neighborhood of Los Angeles. The Colorado Compact recognized the equity of diversion from the Colorado Basin to other basins where water supplies were deficient in the States of the Colorado Basin. It is evident that the background or basis of this project comes from a long established procedure. The project itself, I shall not describe, but ask that Mr. Preston be permitted to describe the engineering details.

There are a few points which the Secretary has described as controversial as to the methods of construction. The need for trans-mountain diversion was so apparent for many years that at the time the Rocky Mountain National Park was organized, State action in the cession of the land for that park was long delayed. The final outcome was that a provision was included in the enabling act by which the Bureau of Reclamation was obligated to develop areas in the park for a reclamation project. It was only then that the Colorado legislature ratified legislation for the park. That indicates the intention or desire for this type of project, and the understanding which existed at the time the park was created.

The plans for the project have been very carefully worked out and we hope adequately to effect the least possible disturbance of the scenic value of the park area. There will be no construction within the park, and that outside the boundaries will be handled in such a way that it will meet with little or no objection on the part of the tourists. People within the area are themselves conservationists and the Bureau of Reclamation prides itself on being a conservation agency. I want to assure all of you who are here that there is no thought of so building this project as to create any particularly objectionable features.

The benefits to the long established areas and the possibility of producing large amounts of cheap power sorely needed in that territory have lead us to the conclusion that the project is entirely feasible and that the return of the Federal investment is entirely secure.

The project will cost about \$44,000,000 when all the power facilities are installed. The cost of the irrigation works will be in the neighborhood of \$24,000,000, and the rest of the investment will be in power equipment. This equipment will be installed as the market grows and plants are required. Many erroneous statements have been made as to the cost of this project. One statement in particular was to the effect that it might run to \$60,000,000. We feel, however, that our estimates are conservative and the cost will not exceed \$44,000,000.

The complaint has been made that little study has been given to other routes. I want to deny that, because study was made of possible location of a tunnel around the southern border of the park and it was found that the construction cost would be increased by 50% and power revenues would be decreased \$600,000 a year. This would render the project an infeasible undertaking under the Reclamation law. The tunnel would have to be 21.5 miles long as against 13.1 miles under the park. A sincere effort was made to find a location which would not in any way affect the park

and it is proposed, with the Secretary's authority, to make an interbureau agreement to create benefits for the park. This agreement would provide an adequate water supply and furnish free power and such other items as are required for the beneficial use of the recreational area. The interbureau agreement has been drafted and has been agreed to in all its essential points by all people interested, but has not yet been signed.

The engineering features, I think, will be of interest, and I will ask Mr. Preston to describe those.

Secretary Ickes: I think it might be better to hold him in reserve to answer any questions on the engineering features which may develop during the discussion. I will ask Mr. Cammerer to speak.

MR. ARNO B. CAMMERER,  
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mr. Cammerer: The National Park Service necessarily recognizes and respects the law providing an appropriation of \$900,000 with which to initiate this project. Also, it recognizes and respects the proviso in the Act of 1915 establishing Rocky Mountain National Park, which reads: "that the United States Reclamation Service may enter upon and utilize for flowage, or other purposes, any area within said park which may be necessary for the development and maintenance of a Government reclamation project."

On the other hand, we remember too that Congress, about a year later, in setting up the law under which the National Park Service was created, emphasized that national parks are established to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and wildlife therein by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. Five years later, the Congress again emphasized and affirmed that principle by amending the Federal Water Power Act to provide that no permits for work under that Act shall be granted in national parks and monuments without specific authority of Congress. We are opposed, of course, to the introduction into Rocky Mountain National Park, or any other such superlative area, of any element that is not in accord with the principle of inviolability upon which Congress now bases the establishment of national parks.

At the time the park was established general public understanding of the purposes of national parks and national monuments, and the need to keep them in as nearly a natural state as possible, was not widespread. The great present day social value of our National Park System, as a form of land use, was not understood and even very fully anticipated at that time, although reclamation policies and practices were already well comprehended.

The Federal Government has already expended more than \$6,000,000 in making the park available to the people. The park was visited by more than 650,000 people last travel season. When we consider that direct financial investment, the recreational and inspirational values of the park, and the fact that the park is itself an economic resource yielding millions of dollars annually to the State of Colorado upon which tourist and transportation industries have based their existence, it would seem reasonable to expect the Federal Government to make every effort to protect that investment.

Turning, now, to the details of the project, the eastern portal of the tunnel lies in the Wind River extension which was recognized by Congress as being of national-park caliber and was authorized by act of Congress for addition to the park. The debris from the main

tunnel, the covered conduit, and, possibly, from the Giant-Track Mountain Tunnel is to be disposed of within this authorized addition to the park. Without entering into a discussion of how that debris is to be handled, I simply wish to point out that such construction features will impair the natural scenic qualities of that authorized park addition.

On the western side of the park, a portion of Grand Lake has been authorized by Congress for addition to the park. A portion of that authorized addition will be flooded by an artificial reservoir and Grand Lake, itself, will become an artificial reservoir with a canal 67.5 feet wide and 15 feet deep leading from its eastern shore to the tunnel. Again, without entering into a discussion of how these features of the project are to be treated, they are in themselves a subversion of the natural features of authorized park lands.

The use of the park is not limited, literally, to the area within its present boundaries, but to the scenic and recreational edifice of which the park is the culmination. The scenic quality and natural landscape of the immediate approaches to the park will be impaired by the project, since the highways will pass through or by the various features of a large irrigation and power project. Specifically, the Big Thompson and the South St. Vrain approach roads must parallel power lines, power plants, tunnels, siphons, and ditches, according to the local features of the project, for several miles. The road from Granby to Grand Lake on the western side of the park will be parallel, on its northern end, several features of the project and about one-half of this section of the road will be flooded by reservoirs and must be replaced. The road must also pass by the Granby reservoir which will fluctuate greatly in water level.

Construction activities of the magnitude and scope of the proposed diversion project located near and on the two main entrances to the park and at the villages of Grand Lake and Estes Park cannot help interfering with the travel and activities of tourists visiting the park. These two typical western towns are the actual use centers of the park, regardless of the present boundaries, and Glacier Basin campground, the largest and most heavily used campground within the park, will be located less than a mile from the scene of construction activities at the eastern portal of the tunnel.

In view of these facts, Mr. Secretary, we urge that the project, if finally approved, provide every possible safeguard for the park and for authorized park lands. To effect such protection we propose consideration of the following safeguards in connection with your consideration of the project:

1. That no construction work shall be undertaken on the surface within the existing park boundaries, nor shall



any construction camps or construction activities be located therein, nor shall the surface be otherwise disturbed by the project.

2. That the location of roads, trails, camps, transmission lines, and other works outside the present boundaries but within the present authorized boundaries of the Rocky Mountain National Park incidental to the construction of the project, and the obliteration of evidences of construction upon the completion thereof, including planting and screening of debris, shall be jointly satisfactory to the Director of the National Park Service and the Commissioner of Reclamation.
3. That the Secretary of the Interior may, by agreement with the Grand Ditch Company, provide for the abandonment of its diversion ditches at the head of Phantom Valley. It is understood, of course, that such an agreement can be consummated only when the Grand Ditch Company voluntarily abandons its present method of conveying water. Excess capacity of the proposed tunnel should be kept available so that the company will be encouraged to use it instead of the present ditches.
4. That there shall be made available from the project, without charge to the National Park Service, not to exceed a total of three second feet of project water for consumptive use within Rocky Mountain National Park, or for release to compensate lower water users for loss by reason of such consumptive use within the park. In the event of an adjudication of water rights for the use of the project water, the final decree shall make special mention of the United States as being entitled to that amount of water for consumptive use for park purposes. In addition, the National Park Service may make such nonconsumptive uses of water as it deems necessary, including storage for park purposes of not to exceed 35 acre-feet per annum, provided that the water so used shall not be rendered unavailable to the project. In addition, sufficient electrical energy shall be made available to the National Park Service at plants and transformer stations of the project, for necessary uses in Rocky Mountain National Park, without charge for so much of the electrical energy as is used for governmental purposes. It is understood that there is no objection to these proposals regarding the availability of water and power.

In addition to the four conditions just read, I desire to present for your consideration at this time other means of more positive nature whereby the park may be improved and the damages of the diversion project minimized. Today, after 22 years of park status, several of the important valleys in the eastern portion of the park are complicated by privately owned lands that are not accessible to the public. In addition, they are cluttered with a hodge podge of unsightly shacks, ginger bread ornamentation, fences, and "keep out" signs. The finest scenery of the Never Summer Mountains and of the headwaters of the Colorado River is marred by the high line canal, whose scar can be seen from every vantage point along the western half of the park. The park is, itself, a mountain-top park with arbitrarily drawn boundaries that exclude the finest winter range of game animals and do not provide a logical administrative, biotic, or recreational unit. Now that the authorized boundaries are about to be further encroached upon by this project and its scenic and inspirational values further constricted, it is eminently desirable that Congress secure those areas that are of vital importance to the welfare of the park as a whole. The necessary steps in such a program are:

1. The purchase of an adequate strip of land from the city limits of the town of Estes Park to the existing park boundary. This is necessary for the proper protection of the Thompson River park approach highway and the park headquarters which are now surrounded by unsightly developments.
2. The addition of an area south of the present park boundary which would extend the park to its natural terminus in the vicinity of Navajo Peak. This area has been studied in detail by the National Park Service over a period of more than ten years, and we know it is essential to the park since it includes many superlative scenic features which are a natural part of the park and should be given park protection. Because of this proposed extension we request that the transmission line, as planned to extend from Power Plant No. 1 of the project to the proposed Granby Reservoir pumping station, be relocated to a point far enough south to avoid the area. There are, also, two additional areas, one each on the west and east sides of the park, which should be included but which we do not wish to propose for addition until further study of them has been made.
3. The appropriation of funds for the purpose of acquiring privately owned lands within the park. To

date the National Park Service has been able to secure only about 5,000 acres of such land at a cost of some \$500,000. There remain, in numerous tracts, some 7,500 acres to be acquired within the present boundary. Our purchase estimate shows that from \$800,000 to \$1,000,000 will be required to complete the acquisition program.

Because of the present deplorable condition of Rocky Mountain National Park, and the widespread interest in its welfare, we urge that the foregoing proposals be given favorable consideration and support.

In summary, and to elaborate the compensations suggested for the park, I wish to point out that the first four points could probably be handled by interbureau agreement, and the Reclamation Service has signified its approval of such steps. Specifically, that there should be no surface construction activities within the existing park boundaries has been repeatedly assured by the Reclamation Service and by the proponents of the project. That Service has also indicated its approval of landscaping activities and obliteration of construction scars satisfactory to both Services, within the authorized additions to the park, and its approval of the abandonment, as soon as possible, of the unsightly Grand Ditch at the head of Phantom Valley, and the supplying of adequate water and power for Government purposes, from the project, without cost to the National Park Service.

The foregoing measures are admittedly negative: they are designed merely as safeguards in the event of project construction. But, they are of vital importance.

The positive measures that I have suggested would require Congressional action and would make the park the type of national reservation that it ought to be. The privately owned and privately pre-empted lands within its existing boundaries should have been purchased long ago and made available for public use and enjoyment. The proposed parkway strip between the existing boundary and the town of Estes Park is the only means of saving that most important park entrance and, in fact, the front yard of the park, from becoming a permanent wilderness slum. The developments within this strip in the last two years alone have been appalling, from the park standpoint.

The proposed boundary extensions to the east, south, and west are relatively minor in extent, but they involve lands of superlative quality that have been recommended for park status for many years. They have been repeatedly studied and there has never been any question as to their merit.

After Mr. Cammerer's speech, Secretary Ickes called on Senator Alva B. Adams, of Colorado, for a statement. Senator Adams spoke at considerable length as a proponent of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, giving a general description of the area involved, need for additional water, and a summary of the benefits to be derived.

Meeting some of the objections which had been voiced against the construction work, he stated that neither portal would be within the park area and that the tunnel would not touch the park surface. The belief on the part of many that destruction or injury to the park surface would result from the project had come about through a lack of understanding of the local situation and misinformation. Rocky Mountain National Park is one of the major assets of Colorado and it would naturally be to the interest of the people of that State to protect it. Referring to the objection that the project would commercialize the park, Senator Adams stated that considering the facts that no construction would be done within the park area, that ample plans had been made for the disposal of debris from the tunnel bore, and that nothing would be taken in or out of the park for construction purposes, there is no basis for that contention. Demands of the National Park Service for certain concessions if the tunnel were finally approved could be met, he said, although they would add materially to the cost of the project. He denied assertions that if final approval were given to the construction of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, a precedent would be created which might lead to the invasion of other national parks for commercial or reclamation purposes. No precedent could be established, he said, for the reason that the project would not enter the park.

"Do we who live in the State, - who know it, - do we wish to destroy the greatest asset of the State?" Senator Adams asked. "That is the charge in substance. Many papers and circulars have gone out, not intimating, but saying that by subterfuge the Colorado delegation had started to invade the park and destroy it. I say to you,.....there are none in the land, including the Park Service, who will rise to defend the parks as vigorously as the citizens of Colorado. We resent being charged with plans and intent to destroy our State and its greatest asset. On the contrary, .....Rocky Mountain National Park will be improved by this project."

Following Senator Adams' presentation, Secretary Ickes called upon Congressman Taylor of Colorado to make a statement in behalf of his people in the western slope area who might possibly be affected adversely by the proposed Colorado-Big Thompson Project, through loss of water to the eastern slope area. Congressman Taylor made the definite statement that in view of certain concessions which had now been agreed upon, there would be no opposition to the project on the part of Colorado people on the western slope. He did express the doubt, however, as to whether a sufficient amount of water had been set aside for the consumptive use of Rocky Mountain National Park.

Mrs. C. N. Edge, representing the Emergency Conservation Committee, then spoke briefly on the question of whether a precedent would be established should an engineering project be permitted to enter Rocky Mountain National Park. "This precedent," she said, "might later on be used to set aside laws protecting the inviolability of other national parks."

After determining from Secretary Ickes that Congress had actually appropriated money for the project and that construction awaited only a finding of feasibility together with final approval by the Secretary of the Interior and the President, Mr. J. Horace McFarland of the American Planning and Civic Association expressed a regret that the work was to be carried on so near to the park area, but stated that many of the most objectionable features appeared to be mitigated by the setting up of the proper protections and safeguards.

Speaking for the National Association of Audubon Societies in opposition to the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, Mr. John H. Baker entered a plea that before definite approval of the project is given that consideration be given to the biological factors involved in the diversion of water, with particular reference to effects in the area of diminishing stream flow.

Using a hypothetical case to illustrate his point, Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted of the American Society of Landscape Architects, stated that had the tunnel been constructed prior to the establishment of the park, he did not believe that it would have been a serious consideration in the determination of the park area. Mr. Olmsted then went on to state that there appeared to him but little evidence that the project would effect any appreciable damage to the park and suggested that the opposition might be "grasping at a shadow at the risk of losing a substance."

Mr. Harold E. Anthony, representing the American Museum of Natural History, spoke further on the dangers of establishing a precedent in permitting an engineering works to enter the park area. "If the barriers are lowered in the case of Rocky Mountain National Park, it is a gesture toward vested interests and the development of resources alien to those for which the park was set up," Mr. Anthony said.

Speaking in behalf of the American Forestry Association, Mr. John H. Collingwood stated that his organization did not wish to take the attitude of obstructing, but that it was his opinion and the opinion of his organization that a tunnel through the Rocky Mountain National Park, involving a diversion and development of hydroelectric power for sale, would be a direct invasion of the park area.

Miss Harlean James, Executive Secretary of the American Planning & Civic Association, supplemented the statements of Mr. J. Horace McFarland. Miss James confined her remarks largely to a request for the protection of approach roads to the park. During the course of her speech, she suggested as an exchange for the economic advantages of the tunnel under the park, the authorization of certain additional areas as a part of the park, the acquisition of private holdings within the park area, and the improvement of approach roads.

Representing the National Parks Association, Mr. James A. Foote, Executive Secretary, placed his organization in direct opposition to the proposed Colorado-Big Thompson Project. "If the result of these hearings proves the go-ahead signal on the Rocky Mountain tunnel," Mr. Foote said, "the policy of keeping national parks free from all industrial use will be violated and a new precedent established dangerous enough to cause justifiable doubt as to the sanctity of the remaining parks in the system."

At this point, Secretary Ickes introduced into the records a letter dated, Washington, D.C., November 10, 1937, from Mr. H. H. Chapman, President of the Society of American Foresters, to show that all in the same category do not agree. In this letter it was stated that the Society of American Foresters had made an exhaustive study of the project and had found no basis whatever for objection or opposition.

Speaking further for the American Planning & Civic Association, Mr. Frederick A. Delano, took the position of not being definitely opposed to the project, but stated that he believed there might be more to be said on the other side. Principal among the points which he brought up were the question of taking water out of one drainage basin and putting it into another, the doubt as to whether the project would pay out under the plan proposed,

and the advisability of proposing a new project as large as this in view of current attempts to balance the budget.

Mr. Delano was followed by Mr. Robert Sterling Yard, a representative of the Wilderness Society, who outlined a history of previous hearings and struggles to establish and maintain the national park system in its present state. He placed his organization on record as being definitely opposed to the proposed Colorado-Big Thompson Project on account of the danger of possible injury to the park surface and possibility of the establishment of an undesirable precedent.

At the close of Mr. Yard's speech, Secretary Ickes explained his position in the matter, after which the hearing was adjourned (1:30 P.M.) for lunch. Before adjournment Secretary Ickes stated that owing to a cabinet meeting, he would not be able to attend the afternoon session of the hearing and that he was designating Assistant Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman to act as presiding officer in his stead.

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY ICKES

Secretary Ickes: I would like to make a short statement. I would like all of you to put yourselves in the position of the Secretary of the Interior. I do not say that I am speaking for the conservationists of America, but I believe that I am a conservationist. I have tried to carry out the principles of conservation since I took this office.

Many misrepresentations have been made about this project. It seems to be forgotten by a good many of those who have spoken that the Congress has spoken through statute, not once but more than once. We talk about the sanctity of treaties in the Rocky Mountain National Park. Senator Adams will testify with what disfavor he was received when he came into my office to propose this tunnel. Like Mr. Delano, I am not convinced that there should be the taking of water from one watershed to another. I am opposed to it, - but, it goes further than the National Park Service.

No one will go further than I in preserving wilderness areas. We have too many roads in the National Parks, - too many approach roads. I wish we had more wilderness areas; but this park came in with a condition, - the condition being the creation of an irrigation project in the future. Now that is not open to dispute. Such a situation does not exist with respect to any other National Park. Under this Administration there have been proposed certain areas for parks with mineral rights reserved, but I have no interest in having some one digging up a National Park, no more than you do. This same situation exists at Big Bend. I have insisted that mineral rights must be extinguished before it be brought into the National Park system. But this condition - reservation of the right to build a water project - was made with respect to the Rocky Mountain National Park and was accepted by the United States Government. The condition is either good today or it is not good today.

It might be said that the declaration of policies in two subsequent acts would be binding as against the original reservation. I am also able to see that that is arguable. But the reply would be that the appropriation of \$900,000 for the specific purpose of starting to build this tunnel would be the most recent declaration of policy with respect to the Rocky Mountain National Park.

I do not see this eye to eye with Senator Adams. I think there is danger of creating a bad precedent. I agree also with



Mr. Delano, and not with some of the others, that if we start a tunnel and have to have an air shaft, the argument of necessity will be made. I can hear the argument ring that we have been spending too much money already. I do not want to throw money away, - there is danger in this thing.

The question has been raised as to whether this might drain the lake. I raised the question long ago, and had a careful investigation made by the Geological Survey.

I am not in agreement with the insinuations which have been made against the Bureau of Reclamation in the past. I know under this Administration it is and has been an agency of conservation, and Mr. Page was not recommended for Commissioner until it was assured that he was a conservationist, nor until I satisfied myself on that point. The President would not have made the appointment if he had not been sure of it. I have no reason to believe that Mr. Page is a proponent of this. He is only an instrumentality.

I agree with Mr. Delano, and not with Senator Adams, that this project may not pay out. The Congress can make and the Congress can unmake laws. It can pass a law that a project must be self-liquidating, and it can change that law; - during the next session or in two or five years from now, the Congress can change it. I have said to western Congressmen who come to me discussing abatement of payments on western Reclamation projects, that they were doing the greatest disservice and damage to Reclamation that could possibly be done. Just to the degree that it becomes necessary to ask the Government for a project on the assurance that it will be self-liquidating, and in later years for the water users and their representatives to come in and say, "We cannot pay out. We want you to reduce our principal payments." Just to that degree the people whose lives are dependent on reclamation are the people who are injuring reclamation. They are doing it at this time. The Congress has passed a law authorizing the Secretary to set up a commission of three for a study of the whole question as to whether there should be an abatement of payments. Well, soon or later, Congress will not be appropriating any more money for so-called self-liquidating reclamation projects that are not self-liquidating in fact.

I cannot follow my own will in the matter before us. I have to follow the law and I tell you very frankly that between the Bureau of Reclamation and the Park Service, I am for the Parks, but I am sworn to obey the law. Congress definitely appropriated \$900,000

to start the Colorado-Big Thompson Reclamation project. Now suppose I, for some trivial reason, would find that it was infeasible, - I am afraid it would have to be a trivial reason. Would I be performing my duty? Are you not asking me to usurp powers that clearly belong to the Congress? The Congress says, "We will let the Park in on this condition," and then says, "You must go ahead and build a Reclamation project as provided by law, reservation for which was made by the Congress."

Now, if I hold this project infeasible, I will probably go to the guillotine. If I should go to the guillotine, how many of you would go with me? I am willing to go if any good would be served, but in doing so would I stop this project? What are we going to do about it? I have to follow the law. I wish the baby had not been laid on my doorstep, but it is there.

What I can do, - and none of you are helping me in this, - is to bring pressure to bear on the Congress to get concessions; to get the Congress to enlarge this area and take in a section of the National Forest. I know there is no reason why the additional area should not be included. The National Forest Association comes in here and asks me to do something that it knows I cannot do. We can get contributions if we insist on them and I will go to the point where I would be an annoyance to Senator Adams and the rest of the Colorado delegation in insisting that we get the additional area; but taking a negative attitude won't get any of us anywhere. I can resign as Secretary of the Interior with a grand gesture. I could do this, but my successor would be confronted with the same problem and he would have to do what I feel I may be forced to do. Now that is what I am up against. Pray for me.

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At 2:20 P.M., Secretary Chapman resumed the hearing by calling upon Congressman Cummings of Colorado for a statement.

Congressman Cummings spoke at some length upon the need for the Colorado-Big Thompson Project to supplement existing water supplies on the eastern slope of Colorado. He gave assurances of the ability of the district to meet the repayment plan and told of the national benefits which would be derived from the project by the use of waters of the Colorado River in the United States rather than allowing them to flow into the Republic of Mexico where they are used for the purpose of growing competitive crops. Congressman Cummings also left for the records a number of letters and telegrams from business men and organizations in the village of Estes Park, Colorado, wherein unanimous approval of the project was expressed.

Speaking in behalf of the Izaak Walton League of America, Mr. Kenneth A. Reid made a further presentation in opposition of the project, summing up points made by previous speakers and placing his organization on record as standing for principles of conservation to protect national parks from any form of water diversion. He stated, "I want to make it clear that the League feels there is a real danger in this project. It involves a basic national principle. It is not a matter of Rocky Mountain National Park, but the entire national park system, and it would be establishing a precedent that would be extremely dangerous to the entire park system."

Mrs. Josephine Junkin Doggett, representing the General Federation of Women's Clubs, then presented an appeal from her organization, urging that if the project were to go forward, every safeguard be employed to maintain and uphold the national park standards, as well as for the protection of the Rocky Mountain National Park.

Following Mrs. Doggett, Secretary Chapman called on Dr. Charles A. Lory, President of the Colorado State College, to speak. As a former resident of the east and a resident of the west for many years, Dr. Lory voiced an understanding of the view points of both sides. He outlined the problems of irrigation and dry farming and explained the historical background which has affected to some extent the view point of the west. In this he brought out particularly the precautions taken by the State of Colorado in making sure that provision for the use of waters of the Rocky Mountain National Park area for irrigation diversion be included before cession of the land to the United States. Reassuring those present that no damage would result to the park if the Colorado-Big Thompson Project were authorized and approved, he closed his statement with a request that the differences in the conditions of the east and the west be remembered in reaching an understanding of what water means to the west.

As secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Estes Park, Colorado, Mr. L. H. Kittell spoke on the Colorado-Big Thompson Project and its effect on the town he represented. He stated that Estes Park depends entirely upon tourists visiting Rocky Mountain National Park for its support and it was necessary for the townspeople to make a thorough study of the proposed diversion project to develop whether the park would be harmed. As a result of that study it had been determined that the project would not only leave the park unharmed but would actually work out as a benefit both to the park and the surrounding region.

Speaking as the official representative of the Colorado State Planning Commission, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, the Colorado Game & Fish Commission, and the Governor of Colorado, Mr. Clifford H. Stone added further to the statements of previous speakers in support of the project. Mr. Stone stated that as a result of studies of the commissions he represented, it had been determined that the interests of both the eastern and western sections of the State had been protected, that the game and fish had been properly provided for, and that the project was approved and urged for construction.

Secretary Chapman then read into the records a telegram received from Mr. A. Lincoln Fellows, President of the Colorado State Forestry Association, stating that the Directors of that Association had unanimously approved the project.

Representing the first Congressional District of the State of Colorado, which is comprised of the city of Denver, Congressman Lawrence Lewis spoke further in behalf of the project. Mr. Lewis stated that precedent for transbasin diversions had been established many years before and cited examples such as the diversion of water to form the water supply for the cities of New York, Philadelphia, and others. ".....some would seek to deny us in the west this right, firmly established long ago as part of our national policy, repeatedly approved by the Congress and by the Supreme Court of the United States, embodied in our State constitutions which we adopted and which were approved by the Congress ....., recognized and followed year after year," Mr. Lewis said.

Mr. Porter J. Preston, senior engineer in field charge of the proposed Colorado-Big Thompson Project, was asked to give a brief discussion before bringing the hearing to a close. Mr. Preston described the physical features of the project, using a large model prepared to scale to show the details of the western side. His discussion also developed that extensive studies had been made to arrive at the decision that the proposed route of the 13.1-mile tunnel under the park was the only one which could be termed feasible under the Reclamation Laws; that it was expected that through the power development, firm power could be delivered at the cheap rate of 5 mills per kilowatt-hour and secondary power at the rate of 1.8 mills per kilowatt-hour; and that geologic studies had proved the contention that there was little probability that any drainage could be anticipated in connection with Grand Lake.

## SUMMARY

The Colorado-Big Thompson project comprises 615,000 acres of irrigated lands in northeastern Colorado. On fully three-fourths of this area the water supply is inadequate, in spite of every effort to conserve, store flood water, or otherwise to add to the water supply. Deficiencies in water supply from 1925 to 1934, inclusive, reflected a direct economic loss in crop production of approximately \$42,355,000.

The project contemplates diversion of surplus waters from the headwaters of the Colorado River on the western slope to these lands on the eastern slope in great need of supplemental irrigation water. The project provides for the maximum conservation and use of the waters of the Colorado River. To protect water users in the Colorado River Basin against any depletion of their supply, the Green Mountain storage reservoir will be constructed on Blue River, near Kremmling. Power development will produce a large quantity of cheap hydroelectric power for project use and the Colorado market. It is estimated that 5 mills per kilowatt-hour can be secured for firm energy and 1.8 mills per kilowatt-hour for secondary energy with delivery at the market.

The entrance and outlet portals of the proposed Continental Divide tunnel under the Rocky Mountain National Park are outside the boundaries of the park. The conduit leading from the east portal to the Granby power plant is to be buried and the surface landscaped through the area authorized by Congress to be added to the park. Waste from the east portal of the tunnel placed in this area is to be terraced and planted with trees. Waste from the west portal is to be used to fill up some low places and make the area suitable for the building of summer homes.

In the survey and design of the project every effort has been made not to disturb the natural beauties of the Rocky Mountain National Park and its surrounding areas. The approach to the Western Gateway of the park will be along the shores of Shadow Mountain Lake with its fluctuation of only one foot, instead of the swampy area that now breeds mosquitoes and exposes mud flats in low water. Grand Lake, now a relatively small area of some 500 acres, will be enlarged by the addition of Shadow Lake, to some 1,300 acres.

The project will make available to the National Park Service three second-feet of water for consumptive use within the park. The Park Service, which at present has inadequate water rights, may also make such non-consumptive uses of water as may be found necessary, including storage of not exceeding 35 acre-feet per annum. From the Government power system the Park will be supplied with sufficient electrical energy for necessary uses, without cost.

The Bureau of Reclamation will support the Park Service in its efforts to have the necessary lands purchased to provide a parkway from the town of Estes Park to the National Park boundary. The Park Service wishes to enlarge the present park area by the purchase and inclusion of adjacent areas. These matters require legislation, but the Bureau of Reclamation realizes their importance and will cooperate in every way possible. It is agreeable to the Bureau to provide sufficient tunnel capacity for Grand Ditch water if abandonment of the ditch can be arranged.

With the Secretary's approval, it is proposed to prepare an inter-bureau agreement to create benefits for the park, hereinbefore described, including adequate water supply and free power and other items required for the beneficial use of the recreational area.

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Report on hearing held November 12, 1937, in regard to the proposed Colorado-Big Thompson Project in Colorado.

Exhibit I.

## Letters from:

Mr. H. H. Chapman, President, The Society of American Foresters, Washington, D. C.,  
November 10, 1937;  
Griffith Lumber Co., Estes Park, Colo.,  
November 9, 1937;  
D. G. Godfrey, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 8, 1937;  
The Columbine Lodge, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 8, 1937;  
The Red and White Store, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 8, 1937;  
Mr. L. H. Kittell, Secretary, Estes Park Chamber of Commerce, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 6, 1937;  
Mr. Ronald C. Brodie, Brodie Brothers Store, Estes Park, Colorado, November 5, 1937;  
Mr. Lee Tighe, Estes Park Drug Store, Estes Park, Colorado, November 5, 1937;  
The Big Thompson Canyon Association, Drake, Colorado, November 6, 1937;  
Mrs. Hattie L. Sells, Estes Park, Colorado, November 6, 1937;  
The Bond Agency, Estes Park, Colorado, November 9, 1937;  
Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Thompson, Estes Park, Colorado, November 8, 1937;  
Mr. H. A. Billings, Estes Park, Colorado, November 8, 1937;  
Mr. W. E. Baldrige, Hardware and Electric Shop, Estes Park, Colorado, November 8, 1937;  
Mr. John B. Baird, The Baird Gift Shop, Estes Park, Colorado, November 8, 1937;  
Mr. Bert J. McConnell, McConnell's Pharmacy, Estes Park, Colorado, November 6, 1937;  
Mrs. Maude S. Osborne, Cottage Inn, Estes Park, Colorado, November 8, 1937;

Mr. Eugene W. Davie; Stoney Knob Cottages,  
Estes Park, Colorado, November 6, 1937;  
Church's Place, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 6, 1937;  
Mr. F. E. Williamson, Williamson's Toggery,  
Estes Park, Colorado, November 6, 1937;  
Mr. O. P. Low, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 7, 1937.

Telegrams from:

Estes Park Parent Teachers' Association,  
Estes Park, Colorado, November 9, 1937;  
Mr. Charles A. Chapman, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 9, 1937;  
Mr. W. A. Gray, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 9, 1937;  
Cleo McKnight, President, American Legion  
Auxiliary Unit, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 10, 1937;  
Mr. C. N. Rockwell, Mayor, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 10, 1937;  
Estes Park Women's Club, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 11, 1937;  
Mr. Glen Preston, President, Estes Park Chamber  
of Commerce, Estes Park, Colorado, November 10,  
1937;  
Mr. John A. McIntyre, Commander, American Legion  
Post, No. 119, Estes Park, Colorado, November 10,  
1937;  
Mr. J. C. Caldwell, Supt. of Schools, Estes Park,  
Colorado, November 10, 1937;  
Paul Monahan Motor Co., Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 9, 1937;  
National Park Hotel, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 10, 1937;  
Mr. Donald McGregor, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 12, 1937;  
Mr. Lee O. Tighe, Estes Park Drug Store,  
Estes Park, Colorado, November 9, 1937;  
Dr. J. O. Mall, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 9, 1937;  
Mr. Glen V. Swearingen, Brinkley Drug Co.,  
Estes Park, Colorado, November 9, 1937;  
Mr. A. Schwilke, Estes Park, Colorado,  
November 9, 1937;  
Mr. Charles F. Hix, President, The Estes Park Bank  
Estes Park, Colorado, November 11, 1937;



Mr. Albert Bevard, Manager, M.S. & T. Co.,  
 Estes Park, Colorado, November 10, 1937;  
 Mr. George Watson, Estes Park Ice and Fuel Co.,  
 Estes Park, Colorado, November 10, 1937;  
 Mr. F. E. Brainard, Estes Park Market Co.,  
 Estes Park, Colorado, November 10, 1937;  
 Mr. C. Byron Hall, Estes Park, Colorado,  
 November 11, 1937;  
 Mr. Carl B. Sanborn, President, The Estes Park  
 Development Co., Greeley, Colorado, November  
 9, 1937.

Exhibit II.

Statement of the Colorado Planning Commission in re. Colorado-  
 Big Thompson Water Diversion Project (no date);

Letter from Mr. Harold Watson, President, Colorado Game and Fish  
 Commission, Denver, Colorado, November 9, 1937.

Exhibit III.

Telegram from Mr. Ray P. Holland, Editor, Field & Stream, New  
 York City, N.Y., November 10, 1937;

Letters from:

Mr. William B. Greeley, Chairman, Committee on  
 Conservation of Forests and Wild Life of the  
 Camp Fire Club of America, New York City,  
 New York, November 10, 1937;  
 Mr. Edward D. Foster, Director, Colorado State  
 Planning Commission, Denver, Colorado,  
 November 8, 1937;  
 Western Colorado Protective Association, Grand  
 Junction, Colorado, October 22, October 23, and  
 November 8, 1937;  
 Mr. C. P. Low, Estes Park, Colorado, November 7,  
 1937;  
 Mrs. Charles C. Marshall, President, National Life  
 Conservation Society, New York City, New York,  
 October 27, 1937; October 31, 1937 (3); and  
 November 2, 1937;

Mr. M. M. Walters, President, Colorado Mountain Club, Denver, Colorado, October 29, 1937;  
Mr. G. W. Collingwood, Forester, The American Forestry Association, Washington, D. C., October 29, 1937;  
Mr. John S. Van Berger, Architect, Ravinia, Illinois, October 28, 1937;  
Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Reed Brown, 610 Center Ave., Lake Bluff, Illinois;  
Mr. C. B. Andrews, Secretary, The Friends of our Native Landscape, 8 East Huron St., Chicago, Illinois;  
Mr. Dan. W. Greenburg, Director, State Planning Board, Cheyenne, Wyoming, October 22, 1937;  
Honorable John A. Martin, House of Representatives, October 17, 1937;  
Mr. Henry S. Graves, Yale School of Forestry, New Haven, Connecticut, October 16, 1937.

Exhibit IV.

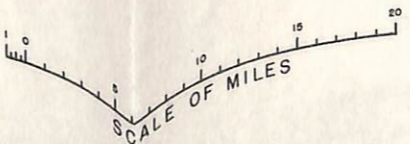
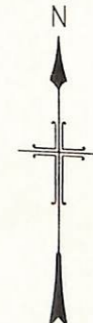
Speech of Honorable Lawrence Lewis of Colorado delivered in the House of Representatives, July 9, 1937. (See pages 9095-9098, Appendix of the Congressional Record, July 9, 1937).

Exhibit V.

Letter from Miss Harlean James, Executive Secretary, American Planning and Civic Association, Washington, D. C., November 16, 1937.



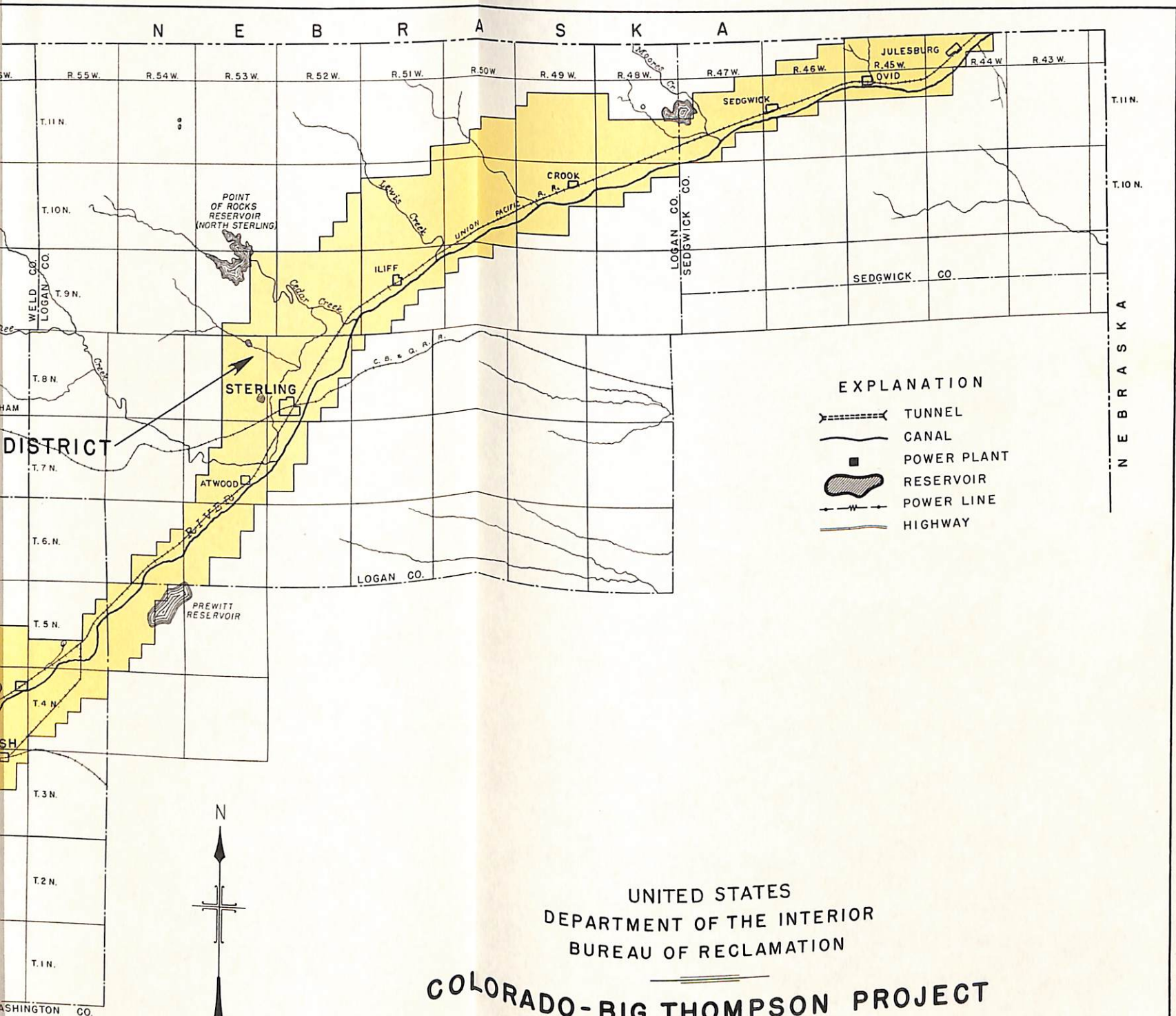
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- TUNNEL
  - CANAL
  - POWER PLANT
  - RESERVOIR
  - POWER LINE
  - HIGHWAY



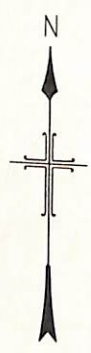
UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

**COLORADO-BIG THOMPSON PROJECT**  
 GENERAL MAP  
 SHOWING PROJECT FEATURES  
 AND  
 NORTHERN COLORADO WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

OCTOBER - 1937



- EXPLANATION**
- TUNNEL
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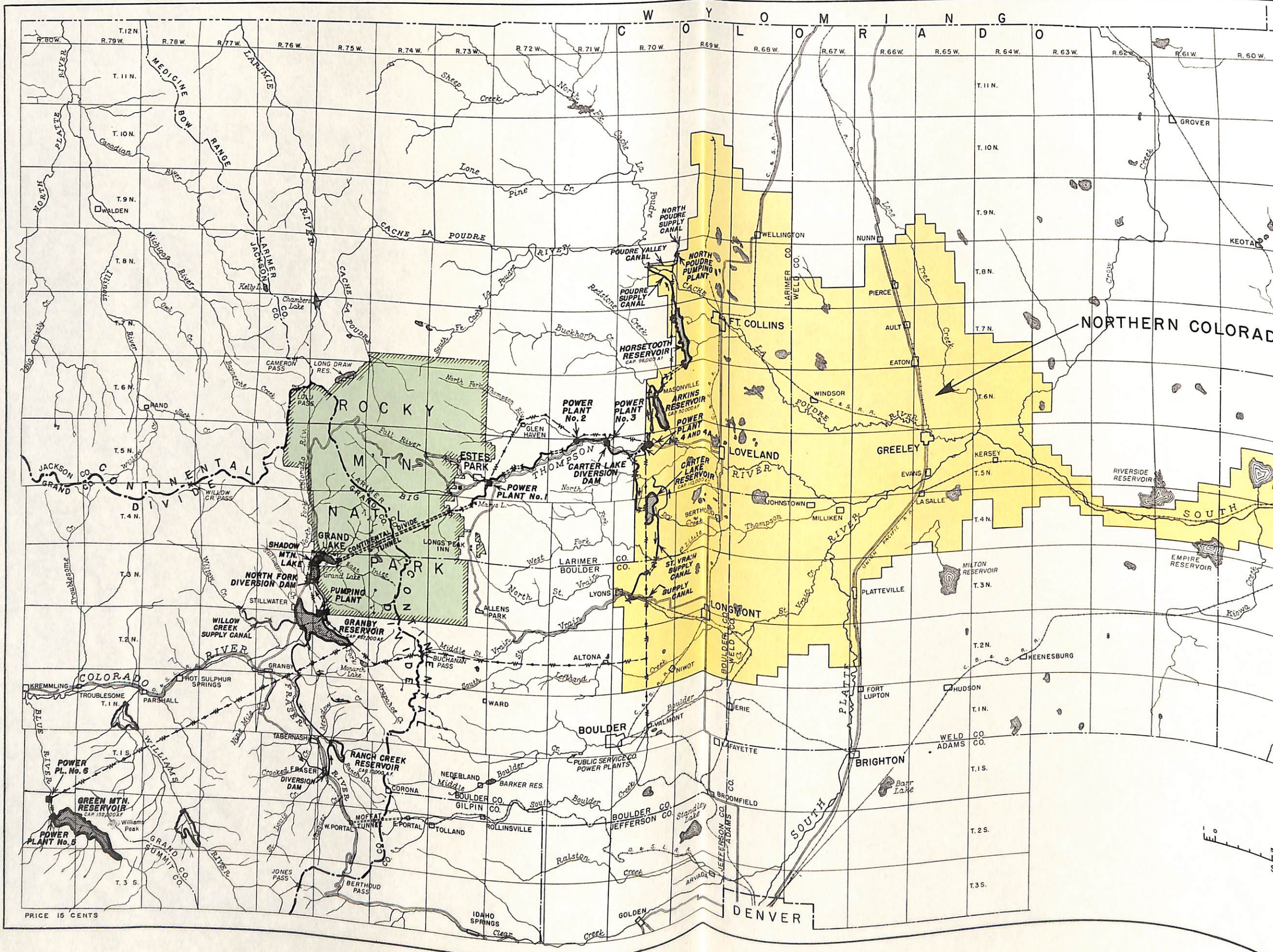
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MAP NO. 26400



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