



# State Engineer's Office

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wyoming State Engineer Patrick T. Tyrrell announced today that, in accordance with Wyoming water law, priority administration remains in effect on water rights diverting from the North Platte River and its tributaries upstream of and junior to Pathfinder Reservoir's December 6, 1904 priority. Additionally, between Pathfinder Dam and Guernsey Reservoir, regulation will replace the April 20, 1923 call with a December 6, 1904 call for the Inland Lakes. This priority administration will remain in effect through the month of April or until climatic conditions warrant a change. Priority administration on the North Platte River has existed since February 5, 2013.

The April storage and runoff forecasts for the coming season total 614,579 acre-feet, well below the 1,100,000 acre-foot "trigger" value which represents a full North Platte Project ownership supply. Forecasted supplies provided by the Bureau of Reclamation have continued to decline since the February 2013 forecast.

Dry conditions continue to exist throughout the entire North Platte River basin. Mr. Tyrrell indicated, "the facts that the Inland Lakes Ownership are not full, plus the lack of water supply due to low snowpack and carry-over storage, combine to cause the regulation throughout the basin." Priority administration is required by Wyoming water law and is initiated by the request for regulation as provided by the Modified North Platte Decree, in order to protect senior Wyoming water rights held by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for storage in their reservoirs.

The continued effects of the priority administration would mainly affect those junior priority water rights held by some municipalities, industries, irrigators and storage reservoirs that may divert or store water. To prepare for a potential dry summer, seven municipalities have entered into Pathfinder Modification Project (PMP) service agreements with the Wyoming Water Development Office. These agreements secure water for municipalities, via the municipal account in Pathfinder Reservoir, which was developed with the completion of the PMP.

The priority administration actions for the affected water users will be carried out pursuant to state law by water commissioners and hydrographers assigned to various portions of the North Platte River basin, working under the direction of Brian Pugsley, Division I Superintendent.

The Wyoming State Engineer's Office can be contacted at:

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