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## PRESS RELEASE

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Date: 7/3/12

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### **COMMISSIONERS REQUEST ASSISTANCE FROM SENIOR SURFACE RIGHT OWNERS TO HELP WITH DROUGHT**

WELD COUNTY, CO – Today, the Weld County Board of Commissioners mailed letters to approximately 30 senior water right holders in Colorado requesting their consent to allow farmers in Weld County to pump their wells.

Three weeks ago, the Board declared a disaster emergency for Weld County and urged Governor Hickenlooper to authorize the pumping of restricted irrigation wells for 30 days to provide relief from emergency conditions. That request was denied by the Governor, who based his decision upon an informal opinion from the Office of the Attorney General. The Board requested a formal opinion from the Attorney General but to date has received no correspondence from that office.

Since the disaster declaration, the Board and the Weld County Attorney have consistently offered ideas, resources and tools to the Governor's Office, the Attorney General's Office and the State Engineer's Office in an attempt to find a solution to help area farmers.

Today's letter requests senior water right holders to consider assisting Weld County by providing their consent to allow farmers to pump their alluvial wells for 30 days in order to irrigate their fields during this time of unprecedented drought.

"We understand times are tough for all in the agricultural community in Colorado, and we thank you in advance for your consideration of this request," the letter states. The letter was signed by all five Weld County Commissioners.

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