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Shifting Water from Agriculture to Municipal and Industrial Use [outline]

William Raley

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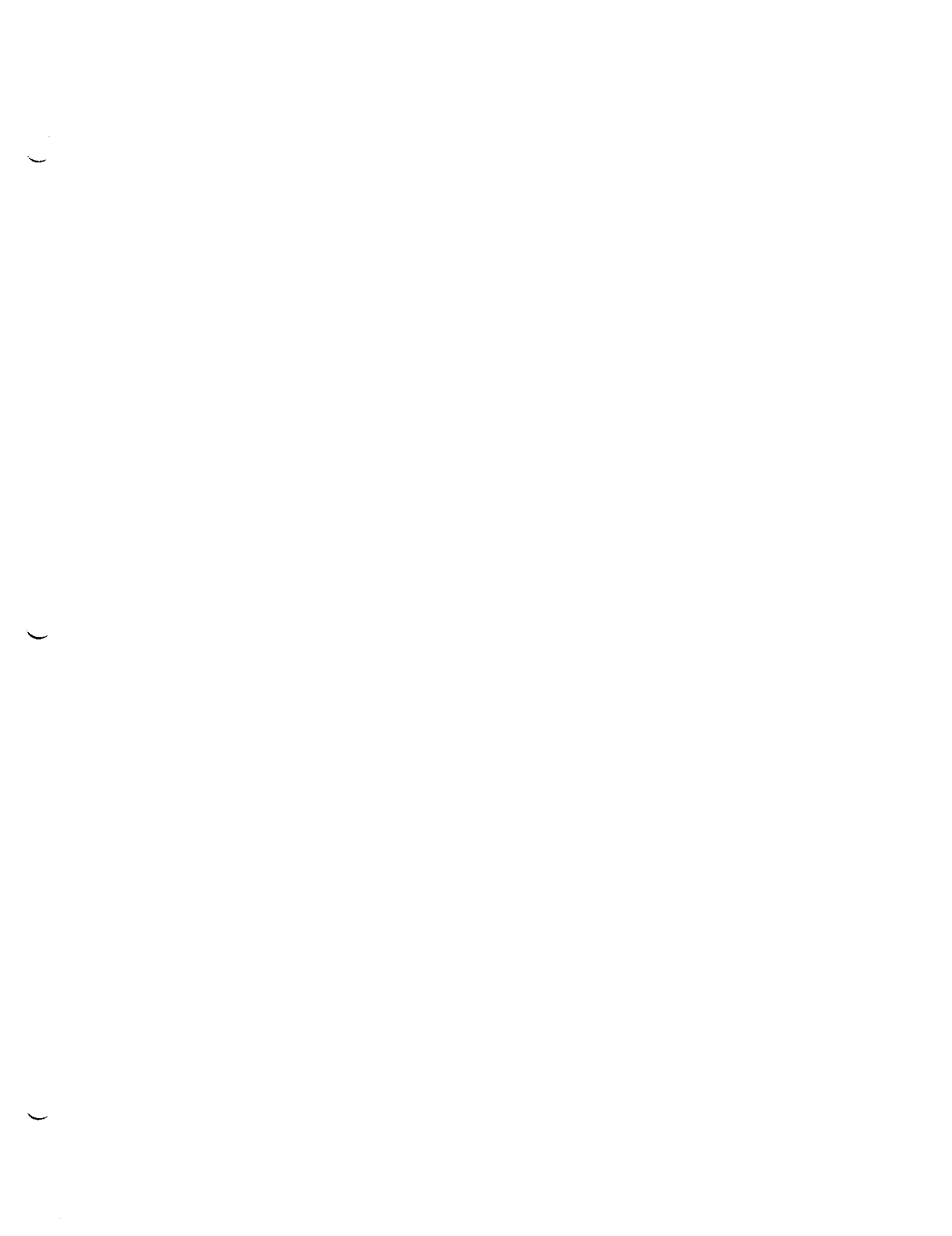
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SHIFTING WATER FROM AGRICULTURE
TO MUNICIPAL AND INDUSTRIAL USE

William Raley
Extension Water Resource Specialist
Colorado State University

New Sources of Water for Energy
Development and Growth: Interbasin Transfers

a short course sponsored by the
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OUTLINE

I - Background

- (1.) The shift of water from Agriculture to Municipal and Industrial use has occurred because people, in the United States, have migrated to jobs, not to water. (Farmline, Vol.III April '82, ERS)
- (2.) People have migrated from the water abundant East to the water scarce West, with very little knowledge or concern about the water supply.
- (3.) Water is shifted through the free market system and generally, in western states, no agency allocates water.
- (4.) "Beneficial Use" and "Consumptive Use" concepts must be clearly separated and understood.
- (5.) Water is an emotional issue, in the West that has developed into a "water culture".
- (6.) "Boom and Bust" energy development cycles may indicate that there will be a gradual rather than a sweeping shift of water from Agriculture to Energy.

II - Water Quantity Aspects of the Shift

- (1.) Inter-basin transfers, in some cases, can actually enhance agriculture and the environment.
 - (a) The Denver Water Board's transmountain diversions

- (2.) The shift of water causes conflict between cities and farmers, especially for those farmers who remain in agriculture adjacent to municipalities. (Anderson et al, 1976, Completion Report No. 75 Colo. Water Resources Research Institute. C.R.S. 1973 Section 38-6-201 ET.SEQ.)
- (3.) There is an economic loss to the Agriculture sector when the shift occurs, but the loss may be partially regained when the water is used downstream by Agriculture. (Anderson et al, 1976, Completion Report No. 75, CWRRI)
- (4.) Environmental decay, strictly due to the shift of water, is very gradual because 60% of the water used by cities is returned to the stream and used by agriculture. (Hendricks and Morel-Seytoux, 1978, Completion Report No. 90, CWRRI)
- (5.) Economic population density trends and water conservation efforts may slow down the rate of shift by promoting more efficient use of water. (Water: Understanding the Future, Colorado Front Range Project, 1981)
- (6.) Water is not an effective tool for land use planning and allocation. (Water and Land Use, Colo. Dept. of Natural Resources Study, 1978)

III - Water Quality Aspects of the Shift

(Personal Observations)

- (1.) Efficient management and re-use of water promotes degradation of water quality.
- (2.) There should be a continued effort to clean up our water, within the limits of economics and technology.
- (3.) Water Quality problems may be more serious than Water Quantity problems.
- (4.) Some water quality consideration should be integrated into water laws.
- (5.) Water quality must become an integral part of the overall water management scheme.

IV - Water Management Aspects (Overview)

"Water Management Options for Colorado" -- a slide presentation