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Organizational Structure, Responsibilities and Authority: Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

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**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, RESPONSIBILITIES
AND AUTHORITY
NORTHERN COLORADO WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

**Larry Simpson
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WATER ORGANIZATIONS IN A CHANGING WEST

**Natural Resources Law Center
University of Colorado
School of Law
Boulder, Colorado**

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OUTLINE

ORGANIZATIONAL, STRUCTURE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND AUTHORITY

By Larry D. Simpson
General Manager
Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

A. The Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District is a quasi-municipal corporation formed under the Water Conservancy District Act of the State of Colorado for the purpose of providing a regional water supply for the northern Colorado area within its boundaries. The District is governed by a board of directors selected from within the counties represented by the District based upon their demonstrated expertise in various fields applicable to the administration and management of the affairs of the District. This board of directors is selected for staggered 4-year terms by the presiding judges of the represented counties meeting in an en banc session. The staff of the District is headed by a general manager who works at the discretion of the board and is solely responsible for the management and administration of the affairs of the District.

The District employs a staff of operation and maintenance specialists, an engineering and planning staff, administrative staff, public information specialists and legal counsel.

B. The District is responsible for the operation, maintenance and distribution of the water developed by the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, the Windy Gap Project and the long-range planning for the conservation, management and development of future water supplies for the northern Colorado region within its boundaries. It is also responsible for the legal protection of the water supplies under its jurisdiction and, at the request of its constituents, for the water supplies of the region. The District is also responsible for the administration of the free-market transfer of water supplies from the C-BT project both on a permanent transfer and an annual rental basis.

C. The District's authority is derived from the powers given to the board by the Water Conservancy District Act and the Local Governments Act of the State of Colorado. These authorities include the power to set water rates for the various classes of service as well as a limited assessment power set and controlled by the State Legislature to assess up to 1 mill against the ad valorem valuation of the property within the District's boundaries for the purpose of the administration, operation and maintenance of the District and the projects utilized for the delivery of water to its constituents.

The board is also empowered to utilize all of the powers of a local government under the local government act including the power of condemnation, the power to incur indebtedness, the power to modify boundaries, to contract for services and such other powers necessary to conduct the business of the District on behalf of its constituents.

The power to assess the properties within the District may have been recently modified by Amendment 1 and may now require the vote of the electorate prior to the use of the assessment power. In the case of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, the use of the 1 mill Ad Valorem Assessment was put to a vote of the electorate in 1937 and was set until the year 2002 by the electorate. The District has never used the assessment power without a vote of the electorate and so the effect of Amendment 1 should be minimal.

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