

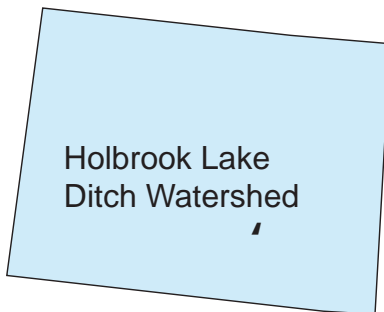
Watershed Operations

August 2009

Investing in the Holbrook Lake Ditch Watershed, Colorado

Introduction

This watershed project will help landowners improve their management strategies and install more efficient irrigation systems on cropland and adjacent properties located along the Arkansas River in southeastern Colorado.



The Holbrook Lake Ditch Watershed is located in southeastern Colorado in Otero County.

Project Description

‡ **Location:** Otero County, 4th Congressional District
 ‡ **SWB #:** V Y \$185,000

This project will fund eight contracts with mostly family-owned farms that will result in significant water quality improvement, conservation of an over-used water supply, and enhancement of wildlife habitat.

Partners

- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- East Otero Conservation District
- Holbrook Mutual Irrigation Company
- Colorado State Conservation Board

Benefits

The project will benefit 2,200 residents by improving water uses that include conservation of irrigation water on cropland, reduction of sediment and salt deposits to the Arkansas River, and a reduction of nitrates in the groundwater aquifer.

Funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, this project is part of the Obama Administration's plans to modernize the nation's infrastructure, jump-start the economy, and create jobs. NRCS is using Recovery Act dollars to update aging flood control structures, protect and maintain water supplies, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands. NRCS acquires easements and restores floodplains to safeguard lives and property in areas along streams and rivers that have experienced flooding.



Center pivot sprinkler systems improve the efficiency of water application, and are one of the practices for which landowners within the watershed can receive cost-share dollars.

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Economic Opportunities

The Holbrook Lake Ditch project will improve water consumption from agricultural to municipal uses and reduce severe economic and environmental impacts. This project will create or save jobs. Once completed, this project will provide \$352,000 in average annual benefits.

Statewide Perspective

Irrigated agriculture drives the economy in southeastern Colorado. Continued improvements to remaining farms will increase the viability of the rural communities within this watershed.

For More Information

USDA, NRCS
655 Parfet Street, Room E200C
Lakewood, Colorado 80215-5517
Phone: 720-544-2810
Fax: 720-544-2962
www.co.nrcs.usda.gov



Installation of improved irrigation systems, like the underground pipe seen here, will reduce irrigation runoff, on-farm irrigation ditch seepage, and irrigation induced soil erosion.



Gated pipe is another practice that will improve irrigation water application effectiveness and water quality.

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