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Colorado Water Trust, Colorado Water Conservation Board, The Nature Conservancy and Cerveza Imperial Lease Water Again for Yampa River

Steamboat Springs, Co., (July 14, 2017) – Colorado Water Trust has finalized an agreement with the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (“CWCB”) to release water to the Yampa River from Stagecoach Reservoir this summer. Releases, preliminarily set at 10 cubic feet per second, began on July 11 to respond to dropping streamflows on the Yampa between Stagecoach River and Lake Catamount.

These dropping streamflow levels have prompted the CWCB to exercise its final year of the three-year approval to use Stagecoach Reservoir water for instream flow. Under current law, this approval may not be renewed. The CWCB’s role has grown this year by committing to pay for any water used for instream flow, up to \$46,692. And as in past years, the City of Steamboat Springs may be a municipal user of the released water, pulling that water down the river to the City’s wastewater treatment outfall. Lastly, the Town of Hayden may use the water in their system as well.

“This year’s effort highlights the limits of what current law allows, but also highlights the resolve and commitment, both in hours and funding, our partners have to continue to work together for the Yampa River,” said Zach Smith, staff attorney for the Water Trust.

Also new this year is an increased level of partnership between the Water Trust and The Nature Conservancy. The Conservancy, which has had a strong presence in the Yampa River basin since 1990, has brought \$50,000 to the project this year, and is exploring sustainable funding for future years. “Protecting and restoring the Yampa River Basin is a top priority for The

Nature Conservancy in Colorado,” says Carlos Fernandez, the Conservancy’s Colorado State Director. “This project is a great example of partners coming together to achieve more than each could do on their own.”

Importantly, Cerveza Imperial from Costa Rica, as a part of their Water Positive campaign to support water improvement efforts in Colorado, provided early funding to ensure the project had legs as the partners began to watch dipping streamflow forecasts this spring. Cerveza Imperial is also providing publicity for the project including involving the Colorado Water Trust in its Denver Days South Platte River cleanup planned for the morning of August 5th. The CAN’d Aid Foundation and Tri-State Generation & Transmission also made critical contributions.

In 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016 the Water Trust and its partners leased water out of Stagecoach for release to the Yampa River to help maintain healthy stream flows and water quality.

As always, the project wouldn’t be a success without the help of Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Catamount Development, Inc., Catamount Metropolitan District, and other cooperative water users.

ABOUT COLORADO WATER TRUST:

Colorado Water Trust is a private, nonprofit organization that restores flows to Colorado’s rivers in need. Water Trust has led the effort to restore flows to the upper Yampa River since 2012 through cooperative, market-based approaches. Water Trust is partnering with The Nature Conservancy to pursue a long-term solution to the Yampa River’s flow shortages.

ABOUT THE NATURE CONSERVANCY:

The mission of The Nature Conservancy in Colorado is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. The Conservancy has been working to preserve the Yampa River since 1990, and are partnering with Water Trust to generate support and funding for the Trust’s annual environmental flow releases from Stagecoach Reservoir.

ABOUT CERVEZA IMPERIAL:

Cerveza Imperial, Costa Rica’s, most popular beer, is a product of FIFCO, Florida Ice and Farm Company S.A., founded in 1908. FIFCO is a Costa Rican food and beverage company and has a portfolio of more than 1,500 products, including beer, spirits, wine as well as a nonalcoholic portfolio of juices, water, carbonated soft drinks, milk, among other. FIFCO operates under a triple bottom line business strategy, reporting its economic, social and environmental results through the Integrated Report following GRI Standards and Integrated Reporting methodology. For more information, please visit www.imperialbeer.com.

ABOUT THE COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD:

The Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) was created in 1937 to provide policy direction on water issues and to protect the state’s water for future generations. The CWCB implements the Colorado Instream Flow Program to preserve and improve the natural environment to a reasonable degree, and has partnered with the Colorado Water Trust on numerous projects to restore and protect flows in Colorado’s streams and rivers.