

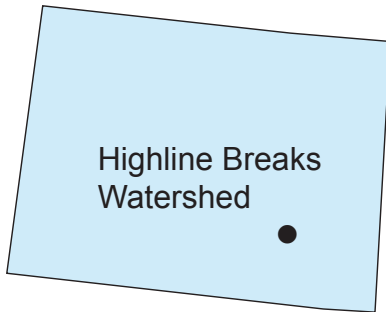
## Watershed Operations

May 2009

## Reinvesting in the Highline Breaks Watershed, Colorado

### Introduction

This watershed project is designed to help landowners improve their management strategies and install more efficient irrigation systems used on cropland and adjacent properties located along the Arkansas River in Southeastern Colorado.



Highline Breaks Watershed is located in southeastern Colorado in Otero and Pueblo Counties.

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.

### Project Description

- **Location:** Otero and Pueblo Counties, 3rd and 4th Congressional Districts
- **Federal Funding:** \$629,000

This project will contract with mostly family-owned farms to implement conservation practices. The project will improve the water quality in both surface and groundwater, reduce soil erosion, and provide a more effective system to conserve and use available water supplies by improving on-farm irrigation water management.

### Partners

- West Otero/Timpas Conservation District
- East Otero Conservation District
- Colorado State Conservation Board

### Benefits

When the project is complete, the 9,450 residents within the watershed, along with other adjacent communities, will receive benefits through the use of less water on irrigated cropland and reduced soil erosion, creating less sediment deposits in the Arkansas River and improved fish and wildlife habitat along stream corridors.



Solar surge valve used to regulate distribution of water for increased efficiency.

---

## Reinvesting in the Highline Breaks Watershed, Colorado

---

### Economic Opportunities

The Highline Breaks Project contracts will provide for the installation of various conservation management practices and structures. As a result, the project will create or save jobs. The local economy may see a net project benefit of \$168,200 per year.

### Statewide Perspective

Irrigated agriculture drives the economy in southeastern Colorado. More efficient water use will reduce severe economic and environmental impacts. Continued improvement of water quality and supply for 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](http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov)



Installation of concrete ditch to conserve water.



Burning holes into plastic and planting seed melons in a drip irrigation system to conserve water.

***Helping People Help the Land***

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

