

# Committee on Resources

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**Chairman Calvert's Opening Statement  
Subcommittee on Water and Power  
Oversight Field Hearing  
Denver, Colorado  
December 12, 2003**

Throughout this year, this Subcommittee has witnessed the drought's severe impact on the West. Every day, we hear more stories about how western community leaders are faced with increasingly tough decisions on how to provide adequate and reliable water supplies to their citizens while safeguarding the environment.

My home region of ever-growing Southern California has been especially hit hard by the drought and the regulations that decrease our water supplies. Although Colorado certainly does not like to be compared to California, your state is also experiencing the same pressures.

Very much like California, Colorado has one area with most of the water and another area with most of the population. Colorado's population has grown by almost 1 million every decade for the last 30 years, yet no new major storage has been built during the same time due to a number of reasons. This too, is an echo of California's water problems. As we all know, capturing and transporting this water – and paying for the associated infrastructure – are not easy tasks with limited budgets and differences of opinion.

There is a tremendous lack of consensus on how to resolve Colorado's water supply situation. The defeat of Referendum A is a clear symbol that Colorado's water leaders are divided and need to constructively discuss the best way to move forward.

Too often, solutions are not found because there is a lack of communication between key stakeholders. The ones who end up paying the ultimate price for this lack of constructive discussion are the water consumers we are trying to help.

For these reasons, my distinguished colleague, Bob Beauprez, asked for this field hearing. As one who knows firsthand how intractable water issues can be, I commend him for his positive and pro-active leadership and look forward to working with him and the rest of the delegation on these important issues.

I sincerely hope that today's hearing will help foster communication and bring about collaborative, common sense solutions for all of Colorado. Otherwise, you can keep on sending your un-used Colorado River apportionment down to California!