

Statement of Congressman Scott Tipton
Before the House Natural Resources Committee
Subcommittee on Water and Power
Oversight hearing on
“Water for Our Future and Job Creation: Examining Regulatory and
Bureaucratic Barriers to New Surface Storage Infrastructure”
Tuesday February 7, 2012

Thank you Mr. Chairman for convening today’s hearing, and thanks to the panelists for being with us today to examine this very important issue. Water storage is the precursor for multiple use water management in arid regions such as the Third Congressional District of Colorado. Achieving improved water storage to meet growing populations is met not only by best management practices but also by the development of new water infrastructure. Prudent water storage can help aid agriculture, residential use, recreation, hydropower production, and environmental protection. The natural cycle of rivers in the West is one of boom and bust, surplus and drought. But with proper water storage, economic cycles don’t have to be boom and bust, recreational opportunities can be reliably provided, water can be allocated where and when it is needed to meet environmental and species protection goals, and we can support our farm and ranch communities. As such, there is no need to see water storage as a partisan issue, or one that divides the interests of water users, but as the means by which the greatest good for the greatest number of water users can be met.

It is my hope that today’s hearing will be a productive step in highlighting some of the shortcomings of the existing water storage regulatory framework, and how it can be streamlined to better support jobs and communities that depend on the availability of water.