

ADMINISTRATION PROTOCOL

Recharge

Division One – South Platte River

The purpose of a “recharge structure” as referenced in this document is to introduce water to the river alluvium that will result in accretions to a live stream. For the purposes of this document, a recharge structure does not include a well that is used to artificially recharge a Denver Basin bedrock aquifer. With that qualification, a recharge structure is defined as:

- A section of ditch, the losses from which can be reasonably modeled as a single source of water.
 - A pond or group of ponds that receive water from the same delivery location and can be reasonably modeled as a single source of water.
1. A written notification for each recharge structure must be provided to the water commissioner and division engineer. **The Division of Water Resources will not acknowledge any recharge activity conducted without the knowledge of the water commissioner.** The notification must include:
 - a. a map showing the location of the structure and the court case number of the plan for augmentation authorized to use the structure;
 - b. a map showing the location of the diversion point and the court case number for the decree authorizing the diversion, if any;
 - c. a map showing the location of and all information for the metering location;
 - d. the maximum water surface area of the structure;
 - e. for ditch structures, if the ditch is divided into more than one recharge reach, an explanation of how the volume diverted will be allocated to the various sections.
 2. Upon receiving written notification or decree by the water court, the division engineer will assign the structure a WDID number. The WDID number is the identification number that will be used for the administration of the structure and must be included in all correspondence and accounting reports. **(For structures that were included in a decreed plan for augmentation but were not physically constructed at the time of the decree, a written notification of the intent to construct the structure must be provided.)**
 3. Any structure that intercepts groundwater must be permitted as a well and included in a plan for augmentation or substitute water supply plan approved by the state engineer. The division engineer strongly recommends avoiding recharge structures that intercept groundwater, in order to simplify the accounting process.
 4. The flow into **EVERY** recharge structure **MUST** be metered and equipped with a continuous flow recorder unless the water commissioner in conjunction with the division engineer determines adequate records may be kept without such equipment. If the recharge structure is designed to discharge water via a surface outlet, such discharge must also be metered and equipped with a continuous flow recorder. The water commissioner **MUST** approve the use of the recharge structure **BEFORE** any credit will be given for water placed into recharge.

5. All recharge ponds must have a staff gauge installed such that the gauge registers the lowest water level in the pond. The staff gauge must be readable from a readily accessible location adjacent to the pond.
6. All recharge areas must be maintained in such a way as to minimize consumptive use of the water by vegetation. **No recharge area may be used for the planting of crops during the same irrigation year that it is used as a recharge site without prior approval from the water commissioner or division engineer.**
7. The amount of water recharged to the alluvial aquifer is determined by measuring the amount of water delivered to the recharge structure and subtracting:
 - a. the amount of water discharged from the recharge structure,
 - b. the amount of water lost to evaporation (see item 8, below),
 - c. the amount of water lost to consumptive use due to vegetation located within the recharge structure, and
 - d. the amount of water retained in the recharge structure that has not yet percolated into the ground.
8. Net evaporative losses from the recharge structure must be subtracted from the volume of water delivered to the pond. Evaporative losses must be taken every day the pond has a visible water level. If the pond does not have a stage-surface area curve approved by the water commissioner, the maximum surface area of the pond must be used to determine the evaporative losses. Monthly loss factors prorated for the number of days the pond had a visible water level may be used as may real time evaporation data from NOAA or a local weather station. If the pond is not inspected on a routine basis through the month, no prorating of monthly factors will be allowed.
9. The amount of accretions from the recharge structure will be credited only in accordance with a decreed plan of augmentation or substitute water supply plan approved by the State Engineer.
10. All water delivered for recharge must be fully consumable:
 - a. changed reservoir rights or the CU portion of changed senior ditch rights;
 - b. transbasin water that has been imported into the South Platte River basin;
 - c. nontributary water;
 - d. excess (unused) accretions from the previous recharge of fully consumable water;
 - e. water diverted in priority after "notice" of intent to fully consume the water;
 - f. water diverted under free river.
11. Water may be delivered to recharge only if the net impact of the associated plan for augmentation is not negative. Water must first be delivered or exchanged to offset negative impacts of the plan for augmentation before it may be diverted for recharge.
12. Accounting must be performed on a daily basis with reports submitted at least monthly and within 30 days of the end of the month for which the accounting is being made. The volume of water diverted into recharge must be provided to the water commissioner weekly when requested by the water commissioner.