

**First Regular Session  
Sixty-ninth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**ENGROSSED**

*This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted  
on Second Reading in the House of Introduction*

LLS NO. 13-0109.01 Jennifer Berman

**SENATE BILL 13-074**

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**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Hodge**, Baumgardner, Brophy, Giron, Roberts

**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Sonnenberg**, Fischer

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**Senate Committees**

Agriculture, Natural Resources, & Energy

**House Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING THE RESOLUTION OF AMBIGUITIES IN OLD WATER RIGHT**  
102 **DECREES REGARDING THE PLACE OF USE OF IRRIGATION WATER.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)*

**Water Resources Review Committee.** Current law requires irrigation water right decrees to specify the acreage on which the water may be used, but some older decrees do not include an acreage limitation. For such decrees, water courts look to the original appropriator's intent in determining the lawful historical consumptive use of a decreed irrigation water right; however, it is often very difficult to determine the original appropriator's intent, which has resulted in cases that substantially

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

SENATE  
Amended 2nd Reading  
February 19, 2013

decrease the acreage that has historically been irrigated by a water right.

The bill creates a mechanism to determine the amount of acreage for an irrigation water right for which the original decree predates 1937 and is unclear about the amount of acreage that may be irrigated under the water right.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 37-92-305, **amend**  
3 (4) (a) (I) as follows:

4 **37-92-305. Standards with respect to rulings of the referee and**  
5 **decisions of the water judge.** (4) (a) Terms and conditions to prevent  
6 injury as specified in subsection (3) of this section may include:

7 (I) (A) A limitation on the use of the water that is subject to the  
8 change, taking into consideration the historical use and the flexibility  
9 required by annual climatic differences.

10 (B) FOR PURPOSES OF ADMINISTRATION AND DETERMINING  
11 LAWFUL HISTORICAL CONSUMPTIVE USE, IF A DECREE ENTERED BEFORE  
12 JANUARY 1, 1937, ESTABLISHES AN IRRIGATION WATER RIGHT AND DOES  
13 NOT EXPRESSLY LIMIT THE NUMBER OF ACRES THAT THE APPROPRIATOR  
14 MAY IRRIGATE UNDER THE WATER RIGHT, THE LAWFUL MAXIMUM AMOUNT  
15 OF IRRIGATED ACREAGE EQUALS THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF ACREAGE  
16 IRRIGATED DURING THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS AFTER ENTRY OF THE ORIGINAL  
17 DECREE, UNLESS A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION HAS ENTERED AN  
18 ORDER TO THE CONTRARY. IRRIGATED ACREAGE NOT EXCEEDING THE  
19 LAWFUL MAXIMUM AMOUNT MAY BE INCLUDED IN THE HISTORICAL  
20 AVERAGE IN AN HISTORICAL CONSUMPTIVE USE ANALYSIS SUPPORTING A  
21 CHANGE OF WATER RIGHT APPLICATION.

22 **SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act  
23 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the

1 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August  
2 7, 2013, if adjournment sine die is on May 8, 2013); except that, if a  
3 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the  
4 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act  
5 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect  
6 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in  
7 November 2014 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the  
8 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.