Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

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Fryingpan-Arkansas Project

The Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District was formed in 1958 by farmers, businessmen and cities in the Arkansas River basin, as a way to secure supplemental water supplies for an area where water shortages frequently occur.

The Fryingpan-Arkansas Project was signed into law by President John F. Kennedy in 1962.

Construction began on the Project in 1964, and was complete in 1990, except for the construction of the Arkansas Valley Conduit.
Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

The District includes parts of 9 counties, along the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek corridors.

Its primary responsibility is to allocate Fry-Ark Project water among cities and farms within its boundaries.

The District partners with the Bureau of Reclamation for the operation, maintenance and repair of Fry-Ark Project facilities.

An average of 55,000 acre-feet of supplemental water is brought into the Arkansas River basin each year – roughly equivalent of two years’ supply for the City of Pueblo.
Fryingpan-Arkansas Project features

**Ruedi Reservoir:** Compensatory storage for the Western Slope.

**West Slope Collection System:** Collects water from the watersheds of the Fryingpan River-Hunter Creek watershed.

**Boustead Tunnel:** Brings water into the Arkansas River basin through the Continental Divide.

**Turquoise Lake:** Initial storage of Fry-Ark water.

**Mt. Elbert Forebay and Power Plant:** Pumpback hydroelectric generation.

**Twin Lakes:** Interim storage of Fry-Ark water.

**Pueblo Dam and Reservoir:** Terminal storage for Fry-Ark water.
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The Southeastern District is a participant in Colorado River fish recovery programs, water management strategies and cooperative environmental programs. Court decrees limit the amount of water that can be exported in order to maintain adequate stream flows for West Slope environmental needs.
Fryingpan-Arkansas Project features

**Boustead Tunnel:** Brings water into the Arkansas River basin through the Continental Divide.

**Turquoise Lake:** Initial storage of Fry-Ark water.

The Boustead Tunnel is 5.4 miles in length and brings water into Turquoise Lake near Leadville.

Turquoise Lake’s capacity is 129,432 acre-feet. Reclamation enlarged Sugar Loaf Dam, which was formerly owned by CF&I.

Flows in Lake Fork Creek are of concern to residents of Lake County and require negotiation.
Fryingpan-Arkansas Project features

Mt. Elbert Forebay and Power Plant: Pumpback hydroelectric generation. **Twin Lakes:** Interim storage of Fry-Ark water.

A 96-inch-diameter conduit carries water for 10.5 miles between Turquoise Lake and the Mount Elbert Forebay, 450 feet above Twin Lakes, which holds up to 140,339 acre-feet of water.

The Mount Elbert Power Plant, on the north shore of Twin Lakes, has two turbines that generate up to 200 MW of electricity during peak hours, then run in reverse to pump water back to the Forebay.
Fryingpan-Arkansas Project features

Pueblo Dam and Reservoir: Terminal storage for Fry-Ark water.

Pueblo Dam was completed in 1975 and serves as the primary municipal outlet for Fry-Ark water. An interconnect is planned to connect the North and South Outlets.

Pueblo Reservoir’s capacity is 338,374 acre-feet, but to preserve flood protection capacity is limited to 245,373 acre-feet after April 15. An upcoming issue is how to restore the 9% loss in storage space that has occurred in the past 40 years.
Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District Projects

Pueblo Dam Hydropower
The District plans to begin construction of a $20 million, 7.5-megawatt hydroelectric generation plant at Pueblo Dam later this year. Revenues will support the Enterprise Activity.
Arkansas Valley Conduit
The final piece of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project is the Arkansas Valley Conduit.

It will deliver fresh drinking water to 40 communities serving 50,000 people.

While the AVC has always had support, it was never built because of the expense.

The District is now exploring construction and financing options that could help the AVC become a reality.

Most of the communities in the Lower Arkansas Valley rely on well water, and are relatively small systems. About one-third of the communities are facing water quality compliance issues because of contaminants like radionuclides in their drinking water.
Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District Projects

**Excess Capacity Master Contract**

In 2016, the District signed a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation that allows it to store up to 29,938 acre-feet of water in Pueblo Reservoir annually on behalf of its stakeholders for the next 40 years.

The space is available for lease when Project water does not fill Pueblo Reservoir.

For 2017, subcontracts for 6,525 acre-feet with 16 entities were signed. The number will grow, especially after the AVC comes online.

Pueblo Water, the Southern Delivery System and Aurora also have long-term leases for “if-and-when space.” These revenues will help pay for the AVC construction or debt.