

Board reviews pipeline, Pathfinder projects

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The Legislature's Select Water Committee will discuss Gov. Dave Freudenthal's response to a proposal to build a 560-mile pipeline to move water from the Green River Basin to the Front Range in Casper today.

The workshop at the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, 2211 King Blvd., begins at 1:30 p.m.

Colorado entrepreneur Aaron Million has said the funding is secure for the \$3 billion project by the Million Conservation Resource Group that would transfer 250,000 acre-feet of water a year from the Flaming Gorge and Green River to as far south as Colorado Springs. The project will have only a slight effect on Wyoming water.

But Green River and Rock Springs officials have said southwestern Wyoming wouldn't gain anything and could suffer losses in industry, tourism and a world-class fishery.

While Freudenthal has urged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to carefully scrutinize the pipeline's effects on water development and wildlife, he also has stated his opposition to it.

The Wyoming Water Development Commission only will review Freudenthal's response, according to commission Director Mike Purcell. "[Million] is not asking for any funding or assistance from us."

In addition to the pipeline, the Select Water Committee will review reports about Pathfinder and Fontenelle reservoirs, and review construction projects and new applications.

On Thursday, the committee will meet at the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission for a tour of Pathfinder Reservoir and review the Pathfinder Modification Project that would increase the water by up to 2.5 feet, said Sen. Gerald Geis, co-chairman of the select committee.

At 8:30 a.m. Friday, the committee and the Wyoming Water Development Commission will conduct a public hearing about proposed agency rules, and at 9 a.m. begin its regular meeting

The 10-member commission appointed by the governor recommends projects to develop Wyoming water and related land resources.

The Select Water Committee, composed of six senators and six representatives, considers the economics of those projects and passes its recommendations to the Legislature, Geis said. "We handle the money."

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