



**THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
Developing and Conserving the Waters of the  
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES  
IN SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO

**West Building – 841 East Second Avenue  
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301  
(970) 247-1302**

October 21, 2013

The Honorable Scott Tipton  
United States House of Representatives  
218 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Tipton:

On behalf of the Southwestern Water Conservation District ("District"), we thank you for sponsoring the *Hermosa Creek Watershed Protection Act of 2013*, H.R. 1839. This bill, which is based on the culmination of a collaborative local process, would create a long-term management plan for the Hermosa Creek Watershed in the San Juan National Forest north of Durango, Colorado.

Our District was established by the Colorado legislature to conserve and protect the waters of the San Juan and Dolores Rivers and their tributaries. Following this mandate, the District joined together with San Juan Citizen's Alliance to found the River Protection Workgroup process through which community members representing a diverse array of interests could seek ways to protect streams within the region while still allowing needed water development.

We are pleased with your introduction of H.R. 1839 instituting a long-term management plan to protect more than 100,000 acres of the Hermosa Creek Watershed, based on recommendations from the Hermosa Creek Workgroup (a part of the River Protection Workgroup). The group was the first to fulfill its mission and produce a report suggesting ways to protect natural, social, and recreational values in the basin. This success was the product of more than 20 community meetings with up to 40 people including local water officials, sportsmen, mountain bikers, outfitters, property owners, conservationists, grazing permit holders and other interested citizens.

The District encourages the House of Representatives to pass this legislation without delay. We thank you for introducing the *Hermosa Creek Watershed Protection Act of 2013* and for your leadership in safeguarding Colorado's values and future development.

Sincerely,

John Porter  
President

Bruce Whitehead  
Executive Director