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(Wyo.)-Call On North Platte Rights As Drought Intensifies



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/07/2013 01:10 PM

By MEAD GRUVER
Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) - The first wintertime call on administration of water rights in the North Platte River drainage in Wyoming since 2005 means several cities and towns need to implement other plans to obtain water.

The call affects 16 communities in central and southeast Wyoming, including Casper. The Wyoming State Engineer's Office says all of those cities and towns have backup plans to ensure they have enough water.

Hydrologists estimate that water and mountain snowpack in the river system is only about 64 percent of what would be a full supply right now.

The call issued Wednesday by State Engineer Pat Tyrrell means those with older water rights have priority access to water in the river system. Those with younger rights must make arrangements with senior rights holders or get their water elsewhere.