**SCRIPT— WATER DESK**

**TITLE: Cooling a River (02)**

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| **VIDEO** | **AUDIO** |
| **SUGGESTED LEAD-IN**  Kelly Romero Heaney  City Water Manager  Carolina Manriquez  Deputy State Forester  Tully Miller  Environmental Engineer  Johnny Spillane  Owner, Steamboat Flyfisher: | **In a remote corner of northwestern Colorado, drought and climate change are threatening one of the West’s most bountiful rivers, but hundreds of citizens are planning to change that.**  **Fresh Water News’ Jerd Smith reports.**  **--------------------------------------------------------------------------**  “There are a couple of things that are a problem for the Yampa. It regularly exceeds the state standard for stream temperature and that’s important for preserving aquatic life. The other piece we’ve seen is the loss of the river’s forest. Those two things combined present a challenge for this river.”  **(TRACK 1) -- It’s a challenge the citizens of the Yampa Valley are meeting with a combination of science, elbow grease and hundreds of young trees.**  “The main objective of this project is to provide shade, to lower the temperatures of the river.”  Nat – “We’re going to be putting two trees per hole.”  **(Track 2) -- To get that shade, volunteers plant young native cottonwoods that have been carefully cultivated to give them the best shot at surviving in this cold, high-altitude region.**  Nat – “And in 10 years, hopefully these cottonwoods will be 20, 30 feet tall.”  **(Track 3) -- But it’s not just shade that will save this river. Some parts of it actually have to be rebuilt.**  Nat – “How will you re-shape this bank?”  “So first and foremost what we have to do is take the brunt of the current and force it off of this bank. That’ll help to reduce the amount of erosion occurring, and after that we’re able to go ahead and plant our vegetation on that nice graded slope.”  **(Track 4) -- The river’s health is critical to the environment and also to the valley’s thriving ski and recreation economy.**  “Anybody who has commercial use on the river has concerns…and we need to act now and we need to do it quickly.”  **(Track 5) -- Speed is critical because rivers across the American West are facing the same challenges, and desperately need the data and techniques being developed here in the Yampa Valley.**  (Romero-Heaney) --“The Yampa River can be like a lab for us to try out different strategies. Lessons learned here can translate to other rivers in the state of Colorado.”  **(Track 6) -- Despite the rapid advance of global warming, workers who toil along the river’s banks know that patience and long-term vision are key.**  Nat: “So it’s going to take a long time for these trees to grow. Can you be patient?”  Kids: “Yes”.  **Jerd Smith, Fresh Water News, reporting for the Water Desk** |