



COLORADO
WATER CONGRESS
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Shaping Our Future

2021

VIRTUAL

ANNUAL CONVENTION

February 9 and 12

2021 CWC ANNUAL CONVENTION
Shaping Our Future

February 9 and 12, 2021

Tuesday, February 9

8:00 am **Annual State Affairs Breakfast**
How the 2021 Legislative Session Is Shaping Up
Hosted by the Colorado Water Congress State Affairs Committee
Moderators: **Chane Polo**, Colorado Water Congress
Dianna Orf, Orf & Orf

Speakers: **House Agriculture**, Livestock, and Water Committee
Rep. Jeni Arndt, Chair
Rep. Marc Catlin, Ranking Member

We will hear from Colorado's House and Senate water leadership on what the impacts of COVID-19 during the 2020 Legislative Session will mean for the water community in 2021 and the future. Where will water priorities fit and how will they be handled? What new legislation can the water community expect? What will the Interim Committees' schedule look like after the suspension last summer?

9:00 am **How the Future Looks Now**
Moderator: **Linn Brooks**, Colorado Water Congress President

Views of Colorado Water Conservation Board
Speaker: **Becky Mitchell**, Colorado Water Conservation Board
Kevin Rein, Colorado State Engineer

We will open the session with a discussion with CWCB Director Becky Mitchell. What are the priority issues for CWCB in 2021?

We will help present the results from our January 2021 Member Survey. What are the challenges, plans, and expectations for the year ahead?

Next, State Engineer Kevin Rein joins us to review the Colorado water supply picture and 2021 priority issues for the Division of Water Resources 2021. Opportunities for audience interaction with both speakers will be provided.

Recognition of David Merritt*

** Throughout our program, we will briefly recognize several CWC Board members and Aspinall winners.*

10:00 am **Agricultural Transfers**
A Tale of [Mitigating] Two Transfers
Moderator: Robert Sakata, Sakata Farms

Speakers: **Scott Campbell**, Innovative Conservation Solutions
Alex Funk, Colorado Water Conservation Board
Emily Hunt, City of Thornton / Thornton’s Northern Properties Stewardship Plan
Ed Roberson, Palmer Land Conservancy / Bessemer Farmland Conservation Project

Water providers continue to look to irrigated agriculture to satisfy a portion of the state’s municipal water supply gap. In response, agricultural to municipal transfers in Water Court become more sophisticated each year to ensure protection to water rights, and local jurisdictions enact their regulating authority to protect against local impacts. Water providers still have significant discretion in how they navigate the land management decisions related to the transfer, and these decisions often have far reaching consequences. Some water providers and communities have embraced innovative—and voluntary—efforts to help navigate the land management and community impacts of agricultural-to-municipal transfers. Panelists working on two different transfer mitigation efforts—one led by farmers and conservation groups, another led by a municipal water utility—will discuss the issues at play, the approaches used, the lessons learned, and the implications for other transfers—whether temporary or permanent.

11:00 am **Aspinall Recognition**
Moderator: Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek and Associates

John Porter Tribute
Announcement of the 2021 Aspinall Water Leader of the Year Award
(Presentation of the Award is planned for the Summer Conference)

11:15 am **Water for the Lower Arkansas Valley**
Moderator: Kevin Karney, Otero County

Speakers: **Alan Hamel**, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District
Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek and Associates
Seth Clayton, Pueblo Board of Water Works
Jim Broderick, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

The Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC) will be a 130-mile pipeline serving 40 communities and 50,000 people east of Pueblo who face compliance issues with State salinity or radionuclide standards. The AVC was authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1962 as part of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project, however construction costs exceeded the capacity of many participants to repay. We will place this story in context of the historic hardships the lower Arkansas Valley has faced and how the AVC is a game changer for the Ark Valley.

12:55 pm **How the Economy Might Shape Your Financial Decisions in 2021**
Moderator: Keith McLaughlin, CO Water Resources & Power Development Authority
Speakers: Michael Lund, Stifel
Chad Morganlander, Washington Crossing Advisors

Did any of us predict the Dow Jones Industrial Average would top 30,000 if the pandemic lasted until the end of the year? Remember when borrowing even one trillion by the Federal government was a big deal? These are crazy times indeed! How should we be managing money in 2021? Stocks. Bonds. Borrowing. Interest rates. Budgets. Let's get some advice.

Recognition of Reagan Waskom

Friday, February 12

8:00 am **Annual Federal Affairs Breakfast**
2021 Federal Policy Forecast
Hosted by the Colorado Water Congress Federal Affairs Committee
Moderator: Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek and Associates
Speakers: Ian Lyle, National Water Resources Association
Andy Colosimo, Colorado Springs Utilities
Carlee Brown, House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources,
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans and Wildlife

With a new Administration will come a series of new appointments including a new Secretary of Agriculture, Interior Secretary, and EPA Administrator. Session panelists will review cabinet appointments and provide an update on committee leadership affecting the legislative agenda on water. We will also review the priorities and strategy outline set at the National Water Resources Association Leadership Forum and what is anticipated with the Biden Administration, including plans to alter Trump-era regulatory reforms, a potential infrastructure stimulus initiative, and the water piece of climate change policy efforts. Finally, we will look at what our congressional delegation priorities for water are, including our newest members, Senator Hickenlooper and Congresswoman Boebert.

9:00 am

How Do You Like Your Smoke?

Moderator: Travis Smith, Colorado Water Congress Vice President and National Wild Turkey Federation

Speakers: **Patt Dorsey**, West Region Director of Conservation Operations for the NWTf
Cindy Dozier, Past Board Chairman of Club 20, CoFWA Member, Former Hinsdale County Commissioner, RMRI Partner
Jason Lawhon, US Forest Service SW RMRI Program Manager

Our current approach to addressing the Western wildfire crisis is not working. The two largest fires in Colorado's history -Cameron Peak (204,000 acres) and East Troublesome (193,000 acres) extensively damaged Colorado River headwaters, wildlife, scenery, recreation, roads and trails.

Most experts believe things will get worse without a new strategy. Every year, there is yet another "record fire season".

It is time for a new conversation and action to deal with our unhealthy forests in Colorado - a focused, comprehensive, and proactive approach involving state, federal and local entities to bring together the right people. To succeed, this plan may mean changes to existing national forest land management plans and will require investments – and the private sector.

Is there an Operation Warp Speed in the future for forests?

10:00 am

Making Water Quality Great Again

Hosted by the Colorado Water Congress Water Quality Committee

Moderator: Gabe Racz, Vranesh Raisch, LLP

Speakers: **Peter Butler**, Bonita Peak Community Advisory Group
Nicole Graziano, Water Quality Control Division
Nicole Poncelet, Denver Water
Mark Rudolph, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

There was a time when we could have straight-forward conversations on water quality policy. However, numerous complex aquatic issues have had their day as the crisis of the moment - acidification of mountain reservoirs, abandoned mine drainage water, nutrients, contaminants of emerging concern (are they still emerging?), lead in drinking water, etc. Maintaining focus on water quality is no small feat in today's world. The number of entities working on a wide range of water quality matters is staggering. Yet we don't have an overarching, comprehensive water quality plan/strategy. So what to do?

In this session, we will focus on how the Water Congress can be of service to our members on water quality policy matters now. Our emphasis is to improve communication and member engagement. We will do our best to keep the conversation fun, relevant and informative.

Recognition of Mark Pifer

2/8/2021

11:00 am Some Grassroots Perspectives on Colorado River Demand Management

Moderator: Andy Mueller, Colorado River Water Conservation District

Speakers: Don Schwindt, Southwestern Water Conservation District and Dolores Water Conservancy District

Pat O'Toole, Family Farm Alliance

Bill Trampe, Trampe Ranches

Demand Management is the concept of temporary, voluntary, and compensated reductions in the consumptive use of water in the Colorado River Basin. A Demand Management program would have a goal of filling a 500,000 acre-foot Demand Management Pool in Lake Powell. Although the IBCC, Basin Roundtables, CWCB, and other State authorities will shape and implement any Demand Management process; many entities are discussing Demand Management in their own forums. This is a complicated topic with many layers and potentially significant implications – too much information to cover at once. CWC offers a forum to share perspectives of its various members. So that we can clearly hear and understand each perspective, we will listen to one at a time. Other points of view will be presented in the near future. Some of our members are concerned that agriculture, the major user of water, may be asked to carry the burden of a Demand Management program. This panel will feature some of those concerned West Slope agricultural water users.

**12:00 pm What Broadband and Australia Can Teach Us About Water in Colorado
An Invitation to Collaborate**

Speaker: Phil Weiser, Colorado Attorney General

12:30 pm POND Networking Activity

A fun and interactive event hosted by the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee and the POND Committee. Join us for friendly competition, prizes, and an opportunity to learn about unconscious bias!

POND Auction

POND is sponsoring an online auction to support four students enrolled in Colorado State University's Water Sustainability Fellowship program. Click [HERE](#) to view the fun items and experiences waiting for you. Get your bids in now! All proceeds go towards the Water Sustainability Fellowship program which focuses on providing meaningful support to students of diverse backgrounds.

1:30 pm Convention Concludes
