



**2025 COLORADO WATER CONGRESS SUMMER CONFERENCE
CONSERVATION: MEETING DEMANDS, MANAGING RESPONSIBLY**

*Steamboat Grand
August 19 – 21, 2025*

WORKSHOP CONCURRENT SESSIONS

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 19TH
9:00 to 11:30 a.m.**

Workshop Concurrent Session I

Burgess Creek

9:00 – 11:30

Forging a Path Forward for Urban/Ag Water Sharing in the Arkansas River Basin

Moderator: *Nora Flynn, Agricultural Water Planning Specialist, Colorado Water Conservation Board*

Speakers: *Bill Tyner, Former Division Engineer, Colorado Division of Water Resources and owner of Tyner Engineering & Sciences, LLC; Greg Felt, General Manager for the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District; Kim Gortz, Manager Water Supply Resources for Colorado Springs Utilities; Todd Doherty, Western Water Partnerships; Matt Heimrich – Arkansas Valley Farmer*

The CWCB's 2025 updated report for Collaborative Water Sharing Agreements notes the sustained interest in developing these agreements in the Lower Arkansas Valley. Yet, urban growth is seen as a barrier by some for maintaining a robust agricultural sector. The panel will discuss the realities of this flashpoint and opportunities to build knowledge and interest in a viable vision for leveraging water sharing to meet the needs of all users of the river.

Workshop Concurrent Session II

Spring Creek

This workshop will be recorded

9:00 – 11:30

Pathways to a Pool - How to Make Voluntary Conservation Add Up

Moderator: *Governor Bill Ritter*

Speakers: *Mike Preston, Consultant, Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Water Resources; Mike Higuera, Agricultural Operations Manager, Western States Ranches; Dr. Dan Mooney, Assistant Professor of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Colorado State University; Seth Mason, Principal Hydrologist, Lotic Hydrological LLC; Brett Bovee, Intermountain Regional Director, WestWater Research; Hannah Holm, Associate Director for Policy, Southwest Region, American Rivers; Dan Waldvogle, Program Officer, Conscience Bay Research and Western States Ranches; Bill Fales, Owner, Cold Mountain Ranch; George Raftopoulos, Owner, Loma Livestock LLC*

This workshop will showcase a range of voluntary conservation practices currently being implemented in the Upper Basin and explore both the opportunities and challenges of achieving meaningful, measurable water savings. We will examine the biological, economic, and social factors that must be considered when designing a future program. Through on the ground examples of seasonal fallowing, split season irrigation, and crop switching, a central question we will address is: How can we sustain the viability of farms, ranches, and rural communities while balancing the increasing demands on the Colorado River? Participants will have the opportunity to engage directly with agricultural producers, community leaders, and researchers to shape durable, collaborative solutions for the river's future.

Workshop Concurrent Session III

Korbel Ballroom

This workshop will be recorded

9:00 - 11:30

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser

The workshop will begin with remarks from the Attorney General. Following, we will hear from a panel of public interest attorneys representing the State of Colorado.

**Meet the Public Interest Attorneys Representing the State of Colorado on the Front Lines of
Colorado's Interstate Water Law**

Moderator: Amy Ostdiek, Colorado Water Conservation Board

Speakers: Lain Leoniak, First Assistant Attorney General for the Federal & Interstate Water Unit – lead attorney on the Colorado River; Chad Wallace, Second Assistant Attorney General for the Federal & Interstate Water Unit – lead attorney on the Rio Grande and South Platte Rivers; Dan Steuer, Senior Assistant Attorney General in the Federal & Interstate Water Unit – lead attorney on the Arkansas and Republican Rivers

A panel consisting of the lead attorneys for the Colorado Department of Law working on the front lines of current interstate water matters including on the Colorado, South Platte, Rio Grande, Republican, and Arkansas Rivers. The attorneys will describe the existing legal frameworks governing water sharing from these Rivers, from the foundational Compacts, and current day implementation, to what the future might hold for these agreements.

2025 COLORADO WATER CONGRESS SUMMER CONFERENCE

All sessions in the Korbel Grand Ballroom unless otherwise indicated

All times are subject to change

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19TH

11:30 Cookout Lunch

Sponsored by Ute Water Conservancy District

Tent

1:00 Opening General Session

Christine Arbogast, Board President, Colorado Water Congress

Steamboat Springs Welcome

Sonja Macys, Chair of the Routt County Commissioners

Governor Jared Polis

Our Washington Leadership's Forecast for Water's Future

Members of our congressional delegation offer their thoughts on future federal funding for water conservation and resource development; watershed health and wildfire and partnering between states and federal agencies in a time of diminished staffing. Confirmed members at this time are **Senator John Hickenlooper, Senator Michael Bennet, and Congressman Joe Neguse.**

2:30 State Conservationist NRCS – Clint Evans

3:15 Break

3:30 General Session 2

Conserving Water on the Domestic Side

Moderator: Alan Salazar, CEO, Denver Water

Speakers: Andrea Lopez, Ute Water Manager of External Affairs, Grand Junction

Sean Chambers, Director of Water & Sewer Utilities, City of Greeley

David Lady, Director of Public Works, City of Salida

Sam Calkins, General Manager at Highlands Ranch Water and Sanitation District

Colorado Communities large and small must work to conserve water, to sustain a firm and even redundant supply of water, make water available for economic development and to keep rates affordable. Our panel will share the techniques they are employing and how their residents are responding.

4:45 Alex Funk, Director of Water Resources and Senior Counsel, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

5:15 POND Reception

Co-Sponsored by Molson Coors Beverage Company

Tent

Drinks and light snacks will be provided.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20TH

7:00 Water for Breakfast

Sponsored by United Water and Sanitation District

Breakfast served in the Tent

8:15 General Session 3

Morning Welcome

Chané Polo, Colorado Water Congress

8:20 Rich Belt, Belt Water

8:45 Local Conservation Trusts Partnering with Local Water Entities

***Moderator:** Jayla Poppleton, Resilient Water & Watersheds Director, Yampa Valley Sustainability Council*

***Speakers:** Kate Ryan, Executive Director, Colorado Water Trust*

Adrian Bergere, Executive Director, San Miguel Watershed Coalition

Dillon O'Hare, Senior Conservation Manager, Palmer Land Trust

Laura Cusick, Executive Director, Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust

The Colorado water community functions best when it partners with other local organizations who join them in supporting responsible growth, a healthy environment and affordable, well-functioning utilities. The panel will share their working relationships with water providers, users, and managers and the projects they are engaged in today.

10:00 Break

10:15 General Session 4

Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation

***Moderator:** Evanne Caviness, Director of Conservation Division, CO Department of Agriculture*

***Speakers:** Ea'mon O'Toole, Ladder Ranch*

Randy Ray, Executive Director, Central Colorado Water Conservancy District

Amber Pacheco, Deputy General Manager, Rio Grande Water Conservation District

All eyes usually turn to agriculture when we talk about water conservation. What programs are available to help? What role does technology play? How do farmers and ranchers feed the nation and the world with less water? How do producers pivot when drought severely limits their ability to grow?

11:30 Karen Schlatter, Director, Colorado Water Center

12:00 Box Lunch

Sponsored by Colorado Water Resources & Power Development Authority
Tent

1:00 POND Activities

Hiking on Steamboat Mountain
Trail running
Golf at RollingStone Ranch Course
Mountain biking

2:00 Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee Meeting

Burgess Creek

2:00 Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority Meeting

5:30 Water Buffalo Reception

Sponsored by the Colorado Bar Association Water Law Section
Mountain View Foyer and Terrace

6:00 Water Buffalo Presentation

Spring Creek

For decades, the Colorado Bar Associations Water Law Section has recognized retired individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of water law through induction into the Ancient and Honorable Order of the Water Buffalo. Nominees to this distinguished group are selected by the Executive Committee of the Water Law Section and honored at this ceremony celebrating their careers. The inductees this year are TBA.

Inductees: Posthumous induction of Justice Gregory Hobbs

Kevin Rein, Former State Engineer

Cynthia Covell, Esq.

7:00 Mountain Jam VI

Tent

Bring your voice and musical instruments, and let's jam! Open to all experience levels (including no experience). Please note that this is an informal musical gathering and not a performance

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21ST

6:30 Registration, Networking & Breakfast
Tent

7:30 General Session 5
Building the Colorado Water Congress Team
Chané Polo, Executive Director

Former Commissioner of Reclamation Camille Touton

8:30 Colorado River: The Emerging Role of Tribes in the 2026 Negotiations

***Moderator:** Celene Hawkins, Western Colorado Water Project Director, The Nature Conservancy*

***Speakers:** Lisa Yellow Eagle, Water Legal Counsel, Southern Ute Indian Tribe*

Letisha Yazzie, Water Resources Director, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Erika Pirotte, Assistant Attorney General, Navajo Nation Department of Justice

Frank Venegas, Water Technician, Quechan Indian Tribe

While Native American Tribes hold very significant water rights in the Colorado River Basin, their role in the management of the system has been limited to “observer” until recently.

Panelists for this session are deeply involved in the discussion and the current negotiation on the post-2026 guidelines. They will share their views on the negotiations; the Tribes’ challenges in developing and putting their water to use on their lands or even directing its use through leasing to others.

10:00 Break

10:30 General Session 6
CWC Awards Session

10:45 Samantha Barncastle Salopek, Incoming Executive Director, Family Farm Alliance

11:15 Closing Remarks

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Colorado Water Congress
2025 Summer Conference Program

Tuesday, August 19			Wednesday, August 20		Thursday, August 21							
	Sessions	Presentations	Sessions	Presentations	Sessions	Presentations						
7:00	Registration & Networking	Registration Opens	Registration, Networking & Breakfast	Water for Breakfast (7:00-8:45) Networking with Exhibitors Tent	Breakfast and Networking with Exhibitors	Grab n Go Breakfast (7:00 - 8:15)	7:00					
7:15		Coffee and Networking with Exhibitors					GENERAL SESSION 3	Morning Welcome & Rich Belt, Belt Water	GENERAL SESSION 5	Former Commissioner of Reclamation Camille Camlimlim Touton	7:15	
7:30											Colorado River: Emerging Role of the Tribes in the 2026 Negotiations	7:30
7:45												7:45
8:00					Concurrent Workshops 9:00 - 11:30	GENERAL SESSION 4						Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation
8:15		BREAK	BREAK	8:15								
8:30				8:30								
8:45				8:45								
9:00	Concurrent Workshop I Forging a Path Forward for Urban/Ag Water Sharing in the Arkansas River Basin			Local Conservation Trusts Partnering with Local Water Entities		Colorado River: Emerging Role of the Tribes in the 2026 Negotiations	9:00					
9:15		GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation				GENERAL SESSION 6	9:15				
9:30								BREAK	BREAK	9:30		
9:45					Concurrent Workshop II Pathways to a Pool - How to Make Voluntary Conservation Add Up					Concurrent Workshop III Meet the Public Interest Attorneys Representing the State of Colorado on the Front Lines of Colorado's Interstate Water Law	9:45	
10:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6					10:00	
10:15		BREAK	BREAK				10:15					
10:30							GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6		10:30	
10:45					GENERAL SESSION 4					Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6	10:45
11:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						11:00
11:15		GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation									GENERAL SESSION 6
11:30							GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6			
11:45					GENERAL SESSION 4					Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6	
12:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						
12:15		GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation									GENERAL SESSION 6
12:30							GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6			
12:45					GENERAL SESSION 4					Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6	
1:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						
1:15		GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation									GENERAL SESSION 6
1:30							GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6			
1:45					GENERAL SESSION 4					Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6	
2:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						
2:15		GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation									GENERAL SESSION 6
2:30							GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6			
2:45					GENERAL SESSION 4					Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6	
3:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						
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3:45					GENERAL SESSION 4					Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6	
4:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						
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5:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						
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5:30							GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6			
6:00					GENERAL SESSION 4					Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation	GENERAL SESSION 6	
7:00	GENERAL SESSION 4			Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation		GENERAL SESSION 6						
7:30		GENERAL SESSION 4	Tools and Techniques in Agricultural Water Conservation									GENERAL SESSION 6

	Ballroom
	Pre-Function or Alt. Session Rooms
	Break
	Reception space