



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

**Steamboat Grand
August 19 – 21, 2025**

WORKSHOP CONCURRENT SESSIONS

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 19
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 and Speakers TBD***

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

9:00 – 11:30

**Updates on Colorado Supreme Court Opinions involving Water/Water Rights
*Sponsored by the Colorado Bar Association Water Law Section***

Workshop Concurrent Session III

Korbel Ballroom

9:00 - 11:30

**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: Phil Weiser, Colorado Attorney General; 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 19

12:00 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

1:15 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** and **Congressman Joe Neguse**. Stay tuned for more!

2:30 State Conservationist NRCS – Clint Evans

3:00 Break

3:15 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 Centennial 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.

4:30 Alex Funk, Director of Water Resources and Senior Counsel, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

5:00 POND Reception

Co-Sponsored by Molson Coors Beverage Company
Tent

Drinks and light snacks will be provided.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20

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 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

Speakers: Evanne Caviness, Director of Conservation Division, CO Department of Agriculture
Ea'mon O'Toole, Ladder Ranch

Randy Ray, general manager of the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District

Additional Panelists To Be Confirmed

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

2:00 Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee Meeting

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

Burgess 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.

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 21

7:00 Registration, Networking & Breakfast

Tent

7:30 General Session 5

Welcome

Chané Polo, Colorado Water Congress

Former Commissioner of Reclamation Camille Camlimlim 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

Lower Basin Invitees To Be Confirmed

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 Stay Tuned!

12:00 Closing Remarks

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**Colorado Water Congress
2024 Annual Convention Program**

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