



**2024 COLORADO WATER CONGRESS ANNUAL CONVENTION
RISK, RESILIENCE, AND VISION**

**Hyatt Regency Aurora Denver Conference Center
January 31 – February 2, 2024**

WORKSHOPS

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31
8:30 to 11:45 a.m.**

New Challenges and the (surprising) Work of DWR

Aurora Ballroom

8:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Moderator and Speaker: Tracy Kosloff, Acting State Engineer

Speakers: Jason Ullmann - Deputy State Engineer

Sarah Brucker - Deputy State Engineer

Division 1 Engineer - Corey DeAngelis

Division 2 Engineer - Rachel Zancanella

Division 3 Engineer - Craig Cotten

Division 4 Engineer - Bob Hurford

Division 5 Engineer - James Heath

Division 6 Engineer - Erin Light

Division 7 Engineer - Rob Genualdi

Our popular session with our Colorado Division Engineers will be back again this year. Get an update about State Engineer leadership and then panel discussions about how shepherding water really works, water administration drivers on the Colorado River mainstem, and the surprising work of DWR.

Wildfire Crisis Strategy in Action!

Conference Room I

8:30 – 11:45

Moderator: Patt Dorsey, National Wild Turkey Federation, Director of Conservation Operations, West

Catastrophic wildfires present the greatest threat to watershed health and water supplies. The USDA, Forest Service, National Wild Turkey Federation and the 50+ Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI) partners recognize the strong connection between healthy forests and healthy watersheds, the work of our partners, and the importance of cross-boundary coordination (federal, state, private and tribal). Join us to learn more about creating healthy watersheds for clean water supplies through active forest restoration.

Section 1: Leading Through Crisis

Doug Vilsack, BLM, State Director

Dan Gibbs, DNR, Executive Director

Frank Beum, USFS, Regional Forester

Clint Evans, NRCS, Colorado State Conservationist

Matt McCombs, CSFS, Colorado State Forester



Section 2: Success stories along CO Front Range: The From Forests to Faucets Partnership

Esther Vincent, Northern Water, Director of Environmental Services

Chris Sturm, CWCB, Watershed Program Director

Madelene McDonald, Denver Water, Watershed Scientist

Molly Pitts, NWTF, Wildfire Crisis Manager

Section 3: Getting it Done at Landscape Scale

Danny Margoles, Executive Director, Mancos Conservation District

Dave Neely, USFS, San Juan NF Forest Supervisor

Alison Layman, La Plata County Wildfire & Watershed Mitigation/Protection Fund Coordinator

Section 4: Forest Health Council

Dan Gibbs, DNR

Christina Burri, Denver Water

Commissioner Jody Shaddock-McNally, Larimer County

Wrap-up

Dan Gibbs, DNR, Executive Director

Patt Dorsey, NWTF, Director of Conservation Operations, West

Frank Beum, USFS, Regional Forester

Thriving in the Deluge – Managing High Flows in Colorado

Conference Room V

9:00 – 11:45 a.m.

Moderators: Alan Searcy, City of Lakewood and Kevin Houck, CWCB

In Colorado's water community, we spend a lot of time working on how to acquire and manage water resources. In this first ever workshop (for the Water Congress) we will look at the other side of the coin with a comprehensive overview of dealing with too much water. Here are the topics:

Introduction

Alan Searcy, City of Lakewood

Kevin Houck, CWCB

Overview of CWCB Watershed and Flood Protection Section

Kevin Houck, CWCB

What is the authority/role of the CWCB in developing floodplain maps. How is floodplain mapping accomplished? How are floodplain maps used? What is the role of counties?

Reservoirs and Floods

John Hunyadi, Colorado Division of Water Resources

The safety of dams during major high flow events is directly related to spillway capacities. Why? Do all reservoirs have to be able to pass the Probable Maximum Floods? How are PMFs calculated? What is the role of the State in ensuring adequate sizing of spillways?

Case Study: 2013 South Platte Flood

Kevin Houck, CWCB

We are just past the 10th anniversary of the most destructive natural disaster in State history. Kevin will take us on a guided tour of the event.

Restoring Ag Diversion Structures after the Flood

Kevin Houck, CWCB

After flood water recede, ag diversion structures can suffer significant damage. Many irrigation companies do not have the budget and/or resources to rebuild them.

Urban Stormwater Systems

Alan Searcy, City of Lakewood

Stormwater in the cities must be managed to protect structures and downstream water quality. What are stormwater collection and detention infrastructure designed to do?

Case Study: Mile High Flood District

Bruce Rindahl, Mile High Flood District

Storms are a part of every climate, everywhere in the world and no matter where you live, they're a fact of life. The larger the storm, the bigger the impact and the flooding repercussions from the more severe events can send out ripple effects—from physical damage to the community to the emotional psyche of residents. The Mile High Flood District works to minimize adverse impacts from flooding the Denver Metro area.

Flood Warning Systems

Bruce Rindahl, Mile High Flood District

Flash flood prediction programs have been developed to ensure safety of citizens during floods. Information from partnerships with NOAA National Weather Service and local governments is used to provide notifications of heavy rain and flood threats. Once notified, local officials can act according to their respective emergency plans and warn people in affected high risk areas when a flooding threat becomes more likely.

Water Quality and Stormwater

Nathan Moore, Colorado Water Quality Control Division

The Water Quality Control Division monitors and reports on the quality of state waters to prevent water pollution, protect, restore and enhance the quality of surface and groundwater while ensuring that all drinking water systems provide safe drinking water. The WQCD inspects water systems, issues permits, ensures compliance, and takes action when entities violate state and federal regulations. We will learn how the Division implements state and federal rules to protect Colorado's water quality from pollutants discharges during wet weather.

Case Study: South Platte Water Quality Trends

Craig Wolf, GEI Consultants

Craig will explore trends in water quality and volume of storm flows in the South Platte River over the past 20 years.

The Advocacy of the Colorado Stormwater Council

Alan Searcy, City of Lakewood

Federal regulations require stormwater management practices to reduce water pollution discharges. The Colorado Stormwater Council is an organization of local governments with storm drainage systems serving populations over 10,000, which are termed Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems or MS4s. What is the role of the CSC?

Projects to Restore Natural Stream Systems

Training on SB270

Conference Room II

9:00 – 11:45 a.m.

**Moderators and Speakers: Jackie Corday, Corday Natural Resources Consulting and Abby Burk, Audubon
Speakers: Julie Ash, PE, Sr. Restoration Engineer, Stillwater Sciences**

The Co-chairs of the [Colorado Healthy Headwaters Working Group](#), Abby Burk (Audubon) and Jackie Corday (Corday Natural Resources Consulting) will present information about what types of stream restoration projects fit within the SB270 Minor Restoration Activities, which may not, options on how to proceed in either case, other key legal language in the bill, and guidelines to reduce the risk of potential conflicts for restoration projects. Abby and Jackie have traveled all around the state giving this presentation to numerous water stakeholders, including DWR staff, and have incorporated many of their helpful questions/comments/ideas into this updated version.

Will Gen Z Change the Way We View Water Issues?

Conference Room VI

9:00 – 11:45 a.m.

9:00 - 9:40 Water Programs in Colorado's Universities: Challenges and Opportunities

**Moderator: John Tracy, Colorado State University
Aditi Bhaskar, University of Colorado Boulder
Kaitlin Mattos, Fort Lewis College
Nona Shipman, Metropolitan State University of Denver
Wyatt Sassman, Sturm College of Law, University of Denver**

9:40 - 10:20 Gen. Y, Z and A: Current Projects and Hope for the Future

**Moderator: Gregor MacGregor, University of Colorado Boulder
Amy Nash, Colorado State University
Jorge Santiago Ramirez Núñez, University of Colorado
Mary Slosson, University of Colorado
Amelia Marsh, University of Denver
Brooke Laughter, Fort Lewis College
Brooke Klocker, Metropolitan State University
Alexia Lor, Metropolitan State University**

10:20 - 11:20 Breakout Session – Small Group Discussions between Water Users and Students

Moderator: Jennifer Gimbel, Colorado State University
Moderators for Individual Group Discussions:
John Tracy, Colorado State University
Kaitlin Mattos, Fort Lewis College
Nona Shipman, Metropolitan State University of Denver
Karen Schlatter, Colorado State University
Jessica Thrasher, Colorado State University



Water Users Represented by: CWC Board Members and Aspinall Award Recipients
Jim Yahn, North Sterling Irrigation District
Mark Pifher, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District
Aaron Citron, The Nature Conservancy
Lisa Darling, South Metro Water Supply Authority
Erin Wilson, Wilson Water Group

2024 COLORADO WATER CONGRESS ANNUAL CONVENTION

All sessions in Aurora Ballroom unless otherwise shown

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Colorado Forest Health Council Quarterly Meeting

Conference Room VIII

12:45 Opening General Session

Aurora Ballroom

Welcome

Travis Smith, CWC Board President and National Wild Turkey Federation

Introduction of Career Accelerator Award Winners and CSU Water Fellows

Emily Hunt, CWC EDI Committee Chair and City of Thornton

12:50 Convention Keynote

Erica Gies author of *Water Always Wins: Thriving in an Age of Drought and Deluge*

Join independent reporter and author, Erica Gies, for a captivating keynote address centered around her book, "*Water Always Wins: Thriving in an Age of Drought and Deluge.*"

Floods and droughts are growing more frequent and intense not just from climate change but also due to our development patterns. But today, across the world, people are asking a revolutionary question: What does water want? We've erased many of water's slow phases in wetlands, floodplains and forests. What water wants is to reclaim that space. Practitioners of what Gies is calling the "Slow Water movement" -- inspired by ancient geology, microbes, beavers, older cultures, and cutting-edge science -- are now making space for water within our human habitats. Delve into the profound narratives and insightful research as Gies navigates the complex relationship between humanity and the formidable forces of water. This keynote promises an inspiring exploration of our dynamic coexistence with water and unveils pathways toward a more sustainable future amidst nature's relentless ebbs and flows.

Purchase the book [here](#). Meet the author after the session in the Café Lounge.

1:30 2024 Aspinall Award Presentation

Moderator: Patti Wells, 2023 Aspinall Award Winner

This award, established in 1980, is presented to that person exemplifying the courage, dedication, knowledge, and leadership qualities shown by Wayne N. Aspinall in the development, protection, and preservation of the water of the State of Colorado. Please join us to honor the 2024 Aspinall Award winner.

2:00 Meet the Author

Café Lounge

Meet Erica Gies, author of *Water Always Wins: Thriving in an Age of Drought and Deluge*. Erica will be available to answer any lingering questions and sign copies of her book. Please purchase your copy in advance via the [Tattered Cover](#).

2:00 Break for Concurrent Sessions – Block A

2:15 Concurrent Session A1

Aurora Ballroom

Don't Bet the Farm – Strategies for Protecting the Many Values of Irrigated Agriculture

Robert Sakata, Sakata Farms

Jack Goble, Lower Arkansas Water Conservancy District

Amy Moyer, Colorado River Water Conservation District

Agriculture is a critical component of our state's economy, and it is a foundational driver of the culture and environment in our rural areas. Changes to agriculture driven by factors such as buy-and-dry, groundwater sustainability, and socioeconomics can disrupt the benefits and values that irrigated agriculture provides. The Colorado Water Plan includes an Agency Action (Action 2.6) to identify the values associated with irrigated agriculture (economic, environmental, cultural, etc.) and strategies that can be implemented to protect those values. This session will feature a panel discussion that explores the values of irrigated agriculture and promising strategies for maintaining those values in the face of increased competition for water and climate change.

Concurrent Session A2

Conference Room I

Stack & Scale: An Innovative Approach to Funding Water Projects

Chris Wolff, Quantified Ventures

Colorado communities have a chance to leverage an unprecedented amount of funding to pursue nature-based solutions (NBS) projects that can combat climate change, enhance equitability, improve water quality, sustain watersheds, and more. But individual funding sources aren't always the solution to making paper projects a reality. To catalyze and scale NBS projects in Colorado, organizations, NGOs, and partners need know how to stack funding and financing approaches.

Concurrent Session A3

Conference Room II

Identifying the Problem: Overview of the CBA Survey Results

Sponsored by the Colorado Bar Association, Water Law Section

Speakers: April Hendricks, Burns Figa & Will P.C.; Alyson Scott, Alyson Scott Law LLC; Martha Whitmore, Montrose County

Building on the momentum from the 2023 Summer Conference Workshop, the Water Law Section of the Colorado Bar Association will discuss the role of the State Engineer and Division Engineers in water court, Rulemaking, and the Engineers' development of guidance documents. The goal of this session is for attendees to have a collaborative discussion about your personal experiences with the State and Division Engineers throughout the water court process and identify two common areas of interest or concern that will have a more in-depth focus in the following concurrent sessions.

Concurrent Session A4

Conference Room V

Engaging the Whole Community

Sponsored by the CWC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

Patricia Ferrero, Conservation Colorado, Protége

Rebeca Medrano, Conservation Colorado, Protége

Explore the transformative impact of community engagement within Protége and Conservation Colorado. At various levels — city, county, state, and district — boards and commissions, composed of community members, wield significant influence in decision-making processes, particularly with water. Yet, a need exists for increased representation from all of Colorado's communities. Protége and Conservation Colorado equip people with the tools to better engage community leaders and equip those leaders with a diverse skill set, empowering them to bring their communities to decision-making tables. Discover how their program enables individuals to contribute meaningfully to the equitable implementation of water laws and policies, cultivating more participation from Colorado's communities.

Concurrent Session A5

Conference Room VI

Urban Landscape Transformation – A Lightning Year in Review & What to Expect Next

Laura Belanger, Sr. Policy Advisor, Western Resource Advocates

Lindsay Rodgers, Policy Advisor, Western Resource Advocates

Tim York, Water Conservation Manager, City of Aurora

Water efficient landscaping has emerged as a statewide water conservation priority with great progress achieved in 2023 and more coming in 2024. Last year, the Colorado Water Conservation Board released an updated Colorado Water Plan that calls for transformational landscape change, allocated 100% of funding from its new statewide turf replacement program, and convened an Urban Landscape Conservation Task Force. Local and regional initiatives also made significant progress. These include a project by Western Resource Advocates and WaterNow Alliance to assist communities in scaling up non-functional turf replacement, the production of a Native and Water Wise Grass Guide led by Colorado Springs Utilities, and the passage of new water wise landscaping codes by local governments. 2024 initiatives will include the expansion of Resource Central's Garden in a Box and turf removal programs around the state, the pursuit of landscaping professional water efficiency training and certification, and legislation that would set limits on non-functional turf on some properties. We'll also hear from Aurora, which embarked on landscape transformations almost two decades ago. A combination of incentives and ordinances have shaped a change in their built environment for a more sustainable future. Join us to learn about Colorado's progress in 2023 and what to expect in the year ahead.

2:45 Break

3:00 General Session 2

Resilience Rhythms: Flood and Drought in Colorado

Kathryn Weismiller, Deputy Section Chief - Water Supply Planning, Conservation, & Climate, CWCB

Join us for an insightful session delving into the intricacies of Colorado's water supply planning. Gain a comprehensive overview of the state's approach, examining the challenges, priorities, and goals shaping its water management strategies. Explore the initiatives spearheaded by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) addressing the critical issues of floods and droughts, and discover innovative strategies, proactive measures, and impactful interventions crafted to mitigate these challenges and ensure a sustainable water future for Colorado.

3:10 Drought & Resilience

Gretel Follingstad, NIDIS

Embark on an enlightening session diving into the historical context and contemporary impact of drought on water resources and communities. Explore the far-reaching effects of droughts, examining their profound influence on vital resources and the resilience of communities. Learn about the role played by the National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) in mitigating these challenges through resources and strategies aimed at bolstering resilience against droughts.

3:40 Flood & Risk

Kevin Houck, Chief, Watershed and Flood Protection, CWCB

Gain insights into the specific flood risks that Colorado faces and delve into comprehensive watershed protection initiatives and strategies designed to mitigate these risks. Discover the power of collaboration and community engagement in fostering resilient responses to floods and explore the Colorado Water Conservation Board's (CWCB) initiatives, shedding light on their efforts to address flood risks and their proactive measures towards safeguarding communities.

4:10 Keeping the “Crisis” in Our Wildfire Crisis Strategy

Moderator: Travis Smith, CWC Board President and National Wild Turkey Federation

Speakers:

Brian Ferebee, US Forest Service, Chief Executive for Intergovernmental Relations, Chief Executive of the Wildfire Crisis Strategy

Tom Spezze, National Wild Turkey Federation, National Director of Field Conservation / State Policy

Crisis- a time of intense difficulty, trouble or danger, a time when an important decision must be made.

Catastrophic wildfire on the American landscape over the last decade has created a crisis that threatens watersheds/water supplies, communities, and all of our natural resources. The US Forest Service launched the Wildfire Crisis Strategy in January 2022 with Congress committing nearly \$5 billion to take on this crisis. The National Wild Turkey Federation, a long-time partner in forest stewardship, recently signed the FIRST Master Stewardship Agreement with the US Forest Service to help implement this important strategy.

Included in this session will be a dive deep into the Wildfire Crisis Strategy, the urgency for a new approach, and the important role of all the partners – federal, state, and private – to implement a long-term strategy to reduce the risk of wildfire impacts.

Do we have the courage and commitment to support a long-term strategy or continue to be subject to the tyranny of the urgent?

4:45 The Colorado River
Michael Elizabeth Sakas, Colorado River Communications Specialist
Rebecca Mitchell, CO Commissioner Upper CO River Commission

5:00 POND Reception
Casino Night

Grab a beverage and light snack and join POND for their annual event. Because the 2024 convention is focused on risk, what better way to get into the spirit than testing your luck? POND is bringing back the popular casino night! Many of the Water Congress Board members will serve as dealers.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1

7:30 General Session 3

2024 Legislative Priorities: Dialogue with Colorado Legislators

Moderator: John McClow, General Counsel, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District and CWC State Affairs Chair

Sen. Dylan Roberts, Rep. Marc Catlin, Sen. Jeff Bridges, Additional Legislators TBA

Our annual session with Colorado legislators. What are the key issues for 2024? How does the Water Congress advocate effectively for water interests in the Colorado Legislature?

8:20 CWC State Affairs Committee: 2024 Advocacy Report

Moderators:

John McClow, General Counsel, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District and CWC State Affairs Chair

Chane Polo, Deputy Director, Colorado Water Congress

CWC Advocacy Team: Lee Miller, Southeastern Water Conservancy District; Aaron Citron, The Nature Conservancy District; Beth Van Vurst, Van Vurst Law, LLC; Dianna Orf, Orf & Orf, P.C.; Richard Orf, Orf & Orf; Sara Orrange, Orrange Political Strategies

The Colorado Water Congress is putting every effort into its advocacy. As a result, we have expanded our advocacy team to ensure we are as prepared and proactive as possible during the 2024 Legislative session, and beyond. Come meet ‘the team’ and learn about CWC’s advocacy strategy.

8:40 Colorado River Drought Task Force

Speaker: Kathy Chandler-Henry, Eagle County Commissioner; Kelsea Macllroy, The Langdon Group

During the 2023 legislative session, the Colorado Legislature formed a task force to provide recommendations for programs to assist Colorado in addressing drought in the Colorado River Basin and the state’s interstate commitments related to the Colorado River and its tributaries. A report of recommendations for and narratives on drought resilience in the Colorado River Basin was released on December 15, 2023. This report identifies areas of opportunity for legislative action and continued discussion that prioritizes the well-being of Coloradans and citizens of sovereign nations, but does not cause undue harm to any residents, citizens of sovereign nations, or the environment of Colorado.

9:00 Integrating Equity into Water: Best Practices in Action

Moderators: Jared Romero, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Panelists: *Jessica Thrasher, Colorado State University; Breanna Gonzalez, Environmental Justice Supervisor for CDPHE and Metro Roundtable member; TBA (tribal perspective)*

Join our panel discussion dedicated to exploring avenues for enhancing equity within the water industry. Delve into the multifaceted approach encompassing education, workforce development, and community engagement, all aimed at fostering greater inclusivity. Embrace the unique perspectives offered by tribal communities in shaping equitable water practices. Learn from experts as they share innovative strategies and opportunities to broaden access, diversify participation, and promote equity across all facets of the water field.

9:30 General Session 4

EPA Priorities and Water Updates

Speaker: *KC Becker, EPA Region VIII Administrator (Mountains and Plains Office)*

With the resources available through President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is making historic investments in our nation's water infrastructure, climate change mitigation, and environmental justice programming. EPA Regional Administrator KC Becker will address these topics in addition to upcoming water related rulemaking and funding opportunities.

10:00 General Session 5

Mayors Panel

Land Use & Water Planning

Moderator: Heather Stauffer, Legislative Advocacy Manager, Colorado Municipal League

Mayor Jason Gray, Castle Rock

Mayor Anna Stout, Grand Junction

Mayor Pro-Temp Liz Hensley, Alamosa

This session will feature diverse perspectives from three of Colorado's esteemed mayors as they share invaluable insights into the intersection of land use and water planning. Join us for a unique opportunity to understand how these visionary leaders navigate the intricate balance between land development and water resource management within their respective communities. Explore firsthand accounts of innovative strategies, collaborative approaches, and visionary policies driving sustainable land use practices while ensuring responsible water stewardship.

11:00 Break for Concurrent Sessions – Block B

11:15 Concurrent Session B1

Conference Room VIII

CDSS, Everything Water Data, Everywhere, All at Once

John Rodgers, Hydrobase Coordinator—CDSS Tools

Chris Brown, GIS Coordinator—GIS MapViewer

During this session Division of Water Resources staff will explain the myriad of tools available through the online Colorado Decision Support System (CDSS) landing page (dwr.state.co.us/Tools/) maintained by DWR and the CWCB. This will be a high-level overview of tools that include access to tabular data such as water rights, diversion records, telemetered streamflow and diversion gages, active call data,

groundwater data, climate data and dam safety data. Prepare to be surprised at all the data that is already available to the public regarding their water resources.

Concurrent Session B2

Conference Room I

Platte Valley Water Partnership—Collaboration for Mutual Benefit

Joe Frank, General Manager, Lower South Platte Water Conservancy District

Ron Redd, P.E., District Manager, Parker Water & Sanitation District

Rebecca Tejada, P.E., Director of Engineering, Parker Water & Sanitation District

The Platte Valley Water Partnership (PVWP) is an innovative, long-term water supply solution that will benefit both agriculture and municipal communities in the South Platte Basin. The project, a collaboration between the Lower South Platte Water Conservancy District (LSPWCD) and Parker Water and Sanitation District (PWSD), will store available water on the South Platte River and use new and existing infrastructure to provide much needed renewable water to farms and cities.

Concurrent Session B3

Conference Room II

Discussion of Concerns with Summary of Consultation Process and Engineer’s Participation in Water Court

Sponsored by the Colorado Bar Association, Water Law Section

Speakers: April Hendricks, Burns Figa & Will P.C.; Alyson Scott, Alyson Scott Law LLC; Marti Whitmore, Montrose County

Building on the momentum from the 2023 Summer Conference Workshop, the Water Law Section of the Colorado Bar Association will host a series of discussions concerning the role of the State Engineer and Division Engineers in water court, Rulemaking, and the Engineers’ development of guidance documents. These sessions will cover a variety of perspectives and issues, including reflection on results from a poll distributed to the Water Law Section prior to the workshop.

Concurrent Session B4

Conference Room V

Colorado Water Trust Equity Assessment Toolkit: Putting EDI into Practice

Sponsored by the CWC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

Moderator: Dr. Tom Romero

Josh Boissevain, Staff Attorney, Colorado Water Trust

Dana Hatellid, Deputy Director, Colorado Water Trust

Dr. Patience Crowder, Colorado Water Trust

Directly tied to the Colorado Water Trust’s strategic plan to focus on projects that improve the health of both our rivers and our communities and to use social metrics to measure our success in community resiliency, the Equity Assessment will allow us to understand and engage more deeply and directly with diverse communities where our projects live now and into the future. The primary goal being how our projects can be win-win scenarios for all those humans who so deeply rely on and are connected to our rivers.

Concurrent Session B5

Conference Room VI

Is Turf the Silver Bullet for Urban Water Conservation?

Moderator and Speaker: Julia Gallucci, Water Conservation Supervisor, Colorado Springs Utilities

Panelists: Jenna Battson, Outdoor Water Conservation Coordinator, CWCB; Kate Mack, Sr. Landscape Architect, City and County of Broomfield; Heather Stauffer, Legislative Advocacy Manager, Colorado Municipal League

Is turf grass prohibition an answer to our water woes? This is a conversation about saving water—the best methods, the best savings and in the best interests of Coloradans. Finding water solutions is hard! It’s understandable that we want a simple solution. This panel represents a variety of expertise to share the myths and realities around turf prohibitions.

12:00 Lunch

1:00 General Session 6

Out of the Silo and Into the Field

How Unlikely Alliances Are Driving Resilience in Agriculture

Moderators: Kate Greenberg, Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture

Greg Felt, Colorado Water Conservation Board Chair

Speakers: Todd Olander, Root Shoot Malting; Nels Wroe, Dry Land Distillers; Brandon Francis, New Mexico State University; TBA

Sometimes in ag, we like to keep things the way they are. But the world is changing, and farmers and ranchers are changing with it. Join us for this panel to hear stories of unlikely alliances that are shaping a more profitable, diverse, and resilient agricultural [and hence water] future.

2:00 Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority Board Meeting

Conference Room VI

2:00 Break for Concurrent Sessions – Block C

2:15 Concurrent Session C1

Aurora Ballroom

Administrative Calls and REST Services

Doug Hollister, Data & Software Implementation Specialist—Administrative Call Tools

Casey Veneman, Chief of Water Information—REST Services

This is a follow up session to the morning where DWR presented an overview of all CDSS tools and will focus on a couple of specific tools. The first tool is the Administrative Calls and Call Analysis, which allows users to access important data regarding the priority that each stream reach is being administered to and allows users to see when their water rights are/were in and out of priority. The second tool is REST Web Services that provides a way for users to programmatically download Hydrobase data for use in their own spreadsheets and models.

Concurrent Session C2

Conference Room I

An Update on the Ongoing Exploratory Analysis of Potential Water Savings, Costs, and Benefits of Turf Replacement in Colorado

Moderators: Russ Sands and Jenna Battson, Colorado Water Conservation Board

Speaker: Doug Jeavons, BBC Research and Consulting

Removing and replacing nonfunctional turf continues to be a topic of much interest across the West and is one of the valuable water conservation tools available in Colorado. As interest gains and more voluntary turf replacement occur, increased information is available to help understand the nuanced components, including potential water savings, the range of costs, and other ecological benefits of turf replacement in Colorado. To take advantage of the growing knowledge base from these efforts, BBC Research & Consulting, in collaboration with CWCB, refined the January 2023 Exploratory Analysis of Potential Water Savings, Costs, and Benefits of Turf Replacement in Colorado. Insights will be shared on incorporating new data and information through the state's Turf Replacement Program and a series of interviews to help further inform Colorado's efforts to remove nonfunctional turf.

Concurrent Session C3

Conference Room II

Potential Solutions

Sponsored by the Colorado Bar Association, Water Law Section

Speakers: April Hendricks, Burns Figa & Will P.C.; Alyson Scott, Alyson Scott Law LLC; Marti Whitmore, Montrose County

Building on the momentum from the 2023 Summer Conference Workshop, the Water Law Section of the Colorado Bar Association will host a series of discussions concerning the role of the State Engineer and Division Engineers in water court, Rulemaking, and the Engineers' development of guidance documents. These sessions will cover a variety of perspectives and issues, including reflection on results from a poll distributed to the Water Law Section prior to the workshop.

Concurrent Session C4

Conference Room V

CSU Water Fellows Panel: Listening to our next generation of water professionals

Sponsored by the CWC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

Speakers: Past and Present Water Fellows

Leah Dory, MSU Denver

Daniel Dominguez, CSU

Robert Lamm, CSU

This panel of future water professionals will reflect on what excites them about a career in Colorado Water issues, challenges they are facing, and how we as a water community can support them.

2:45 Break

3:00 General Session 7

Generational Views on Risk and Water Resources

Moderator: Jennifer Gimbel, Colorado State University

Speakers:

Nona Shipman, Metropolitan State University of Denver

John Tracy, Colorado State University

Dixie Poteet, Colorado State University

Tom I. Romero II, University of Denver

Ruth Elizabeth Morris, University of Denver

Kaitlin Mattos, Fort Lewis College

Brooke Laughter, Fort Lewis College

Gregor MacGregor, University of Colorado

Nathan Boyer-Rechlin, University of Colorado

What are prospective water professionals learning about the challenges and opportunities in the water sector? What do students think about the future sustainability of water and how to address future risks? Join us for a dialogue between students and practicing water professionals. The panel will also provide a summary of the issues and actions explored during the higher education workshop.

4:00 General Session 8

Remarks from Governor Polis

A Conversation with Dan Gibbs and Phil Weiser

Regarding Colorado's Most Critical Natural Resources Priorities

Panelists:

Dan Gibbs, DNR Executive Director

Phil Weiser, Colorado Attorney General

Dan Gibbs and AG Weiser will chat about Colorado's most critical natural resources issues.

5:00 Presentation & Tasting Reception

Coors Banquet, 150 Years of Colorado Legacy in the Water Community

Ben Moline, Director, Water Resources & Environmental Policy, Molson Coors

Neal Santangelo, Sr. Manager of Water Resources, Molson Coors

Join Molson Coors Beverage Company's Ben Moline and Neal Santangelo for a pub-style discussion on the history of Coors in Colorado. Coors Banquet celebrated 150 years in 2023 and continues to grow across the country, while only being brewed in Golden! Ben and Neal will talk about the history of the brewery, water innovations that allow for the brewery to operate, and interactions along Clear Creek.

This will be a casual discussion and we encourage you to grab a Banquet before the session and engage with Ben and Neal as they share the legacy of Coors and the Rocky Mountain water that makes it all possible.

6:00 Adjourn for the day.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2

8:30 General Session 9

Colorado Water Congress Member Survey

The Top 3 Things We Must Do Now

Moderator: Linn Brooks, CWC Immediate Past President

Speakers:

David Kennedy, Corona Insights

Travis Smith, National Wild Turkey Federation and CWC Board President

Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek and Associates, Inc. and CWC Board Vice President

Chane Polo, Deputy Director, Colorado Water Congress

In 2023, the Colorado Water Congress retained Corona Insights to conduct a survey of its members. This survey will shape the future direction of the organization, and the resources needed to achieve this vision.

Members of the Colorado Water Congress Executive Committee will share the survey results and how we plan to turn them into reality.

8:55 Honorary Life Membership Award: Recognition of Kevin Rein

9:00 General Session 10

CWC Federal Affairs Committee: 2024 Advocacy Report

Moderator: *Andy Colosimo, Colorado Springs Utilities*

Speakers: *Chane Polo, Deputy Director, Colorado Water Congress; Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek & Associates; Zane Kessler, Colorado River Water Conservancy District; Kathy Kitzmann, Aurora Water; Sandy Fabritz, Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold*

Join our Federal Affairs Committee leadership to get an update and the latest information on Colorado's 2024 Federal Priorities. We will also learn more about the National Water Resources Association, their work and connection to the Colorado Water Congress.

9:30 2024 Western Water Priorities

State Executives Panel

Moderator: *Doug Kemper, Executive Director, Colorado Water Congress and Chair of NWRA State Executives Council*

Speakers:

Chris Udall, Agribusiness and Water Council of Arizona

Mark Rude, Kansas Water Congress

Vanessa Silke, Baird Holm (Nebraska)

Doug will lead a discussion with some of his fellow State association executives on the top priority issues in neighboring States. What do we have in common? On what do we differ?

10:00 Meet the First-Ever CDA Agricultural Water Policy Advisor

Robert Sakata

10:15 General Session 11

Cooperation Over Conflict – A Lower Basin Perspective

Moderator: *Sandy Fabritz, Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Colorado Water Congress Board*

Panelists:

Tanya Trujillo, Water Policy Advisor to the New Mexico Governor, Deputy New Mexico State Engineer

Pete Silva, Silva Silva International

Ted Kowalski, Walton Family Foundation

Jeff Kightlinger, Acequia Consulting (retired General Manager and CEO of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California)

Meghan Scott, Noble Law Office (Yuma, Arizona)

The panel will discuss the development of cooperative solutions to some the issues that have arisen since the establishment of the 2007 Guidelines, including the Drought Contingency Plan, agreements with Mexico and NGO interests, as well as addressing some of the common myths around Lower Basin activities.

11:15 General Session 12

2024 Political Landscape

Election Coverage: Media Picks Main Contests

Moderator/Speaker: Floyd Ciruli, Ciruli and Associates

Speakers:

John Frank, Axios

Marianne Goodland, Colorado Politics

Ernest Luning, Colorado Politics

What was the 2023 political surprise of the year? How will the Congressional delegation change in 2024?

After the loss of Prop. HH, what's next for legislation/initiatives on taxes? Can Democrats unify their moderates and the far left to pass legislation on affordable housing, crime, etc.? Does Governor Polis have a better year?

What is the legislature's role in water this year? What's the urban-rural divide: wolves, agriculture? If Joe Biden and Donald Trump are the presidential nominees in 2024, is a third party the winner?

12:00 Closing Remarks

Travis Smith, CWC President, National Wild Turkey Foundation