

2024 ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN WATER FORUM

SPEAKER BIOS



MARCH 6 AND 7, 2024

Otero College Student Center, Banquet Room
2001 San Juan Avenue, La Junta, CO 81050

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS FOR MAKING THIS FORUM POSSIBLE



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

COMMISSIONER KATE GREENBERG

Colorado Department of Agriculture

Kate Greenberg was appointed to serve as Colorado's Commissioner of Agriculture by Governor Jared Polis in December 2018. As Commissioner, Greenberg provides leadership and direction to the Colorado Department of Agriculture and its 300 employees. Commissioner Greenberg has worked in agriculture for more than 12 twelve years, from boots-on-the-ground experience to advocating for family farmers through two federal Farm Bills.

Prior to her appointment, Greenberg was the Western Program Director for the National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC), where she established and grew the organization's presence and membership across the West. In her role as Western Director, she organized farmers and ranchers to advocate for state and federal policies that best serve them. Her work focused on farmland affordability, ag education, protecting water for agriculture and expanding access to capital and credit for young and beginning producers.

Leading up to her tenure at NYFC, Greenberg farmed on various operations across the West, managed Western policy field programs through her alma mater, Whitman College, and worked in natural resource education and restoration from eastern Washington to Mexico's Colorado River Delta. Greenberg was also involved in the development of the Colorado Water Plan and Colorado River Basin water policy, advocating for policies that keep water in agriculture.

Greenberg is the recipient of the Emerging Conservation Leader Award from Western Resource Advocates and an awardee of the 2019 Who's Who In Agriculture recognition from Colorado Farm Bureau and the Denver Business Journal. She graduated from Water Education Colorado's Water Leaders flagship course in 2018 and sits on the board of the Quivira Coalition, which brings ranchers, scientists, and conservationists together to practice land stewardship at the radical center.

As Commissioner, Greenberg serves on numerous boards and commissions, including the Colorado Water Conservation Board, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the Colorado State Fair Board. While she currently spends much of her time on Colorado's Front Range and traveling the state, she still calls Durango, Colorado home.

PLENARY SESSION - CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF THE ARKANSAS RIVER COMPACT & JOHN MARTIN RESERVOIR

MODERATOR: LISA PACE

Colorado Springs Utilities

Lisa Pace is a Senior Water Conservation Specialist at Colorado Springs Utilities. She develops, implements, and manages multiple outdoor water efficiency and regulatory programs to stretch water supply and help limit the need for acquiring new water resources. She collaborates with community stakeholders, local contractors, homeowners, and manages a 3-acre demonstration garden. She is enthusiastic about helping our community save water while promoting valuable outdoor spaces that provide mental, socio-economic, and environmental benefits.

KEVIN SALTER

Kansas Division of Water Resources

Kevin Salter is a licensed engineer working for the Kansas Division of Water Resources since 1993. His primary responsibilities are related to the Arkansas River Compact between Kansas and Colorado (Compact), Compact compliance, and distributing Arkansas River surface water to the Southwest Kansas irrigation ditches. Kevin provided technical support for Kansas in the U.S. Supreme Court Kansas v. Colorado case and continues to monitor Colorado's Compact compliance. He serves as the Assistant Operations Secretary for the Arkansas River Compact Administration. He also has been a member of the Ditch and Reservoir Company Alliance since 2009 and currently serves on its Board as an ex-officio member.

DAVID ROBBINS

Hill and Robbins P.C.

David Robbins is president and co-founder of Hill & Robbins, P.C., where his practice emphasizes the fields of water and natural-resources law, water quality, and environmental law. Prior to entering private practice, Mr. Robbins served in the U.S. Army (Captain, 1969-1972) and with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VIII (1973-1974). He then joined the Colorado Attorney General's Office as a First Assistant Attorney General and head of the Natural Resources Section (1975-77) and was later appointed the Deputy Attorney General (1977-1978). Mr. Robbins represented the State of Colorado in a variety of interstate water matters and served as counsel to the state engineer in adjudication proceedings and trials concerning basin-wide rules and regulations. He also represented the Colorado Water Conservation Board, and successfully defended the constitutionality of the state's first instream flow protection law.

Since 1981, Mr. Robbins has served as general counsel to the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, where he has led the efforts to defeat speculative proposals to mine the ground water of Colorado's San Luis Valley (see *AWDI v. City of Alamosa*), which ultimately resulted in Congressional action on a bill Mr. Robbins initially drafted to create the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. From 1985-2011, Mr. Robbins has served as counsel of record for the State of Colorado in the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Kansas v. Colorado*, No. 105 Original (October Term, 1985), involving the Arkansas River Compact, both before the special master and the Court. Mr. Robbins has served as general counsel to the Republican River Water Conservation District since its creation in 2004 and served as special counsel to the Southwestern Water Conservation District for over twenty years.

Mr. Robbins is a former member of the Colorado Water Conservation Board (1980-89) and served as its chairman in 1985-86. Mr. Robbins was a member of the Colorado River Salinity Control Forum and the Colorado River Salinity Control Advisory Council, representing Colorado from 1979 until 2003 and from 2008 up to the present. He served as the Forum's vice chairman from 1981 to 1984 and from 2001 to 2003, and as its chairman from 1984 to 1990. He is a member of the Colorado Water Congress and has served on its board of directors for many years and as its President in 2005-06 and he was named the Colorado Water Leader of the Year in 2012. Mr. Robbins is a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American Bar Foundation and serves on the board of directors of the Colorado Water Trust, of which he is a founding board member. He is a member of the American Bar Association and the Colorado Bar Association and is a past chairman of the Water Law Section of the CBA.

CONCURRENT SESSION 1A - BUILDING RESILIENCE: HELPING VALLEY WATER USERS THROUGH INVESTMENTS IN IRRIGATION MODERNIZATION PROJECTS IN THE LOWER ARKANSAS VALLEY

MODERATOR, JOHN KNAPP

Knapp Farms

John Knapp of Rocky Ford, Colorado is a lifelong agriculturist and natural resource conservationist. He is part of a fourth-generation irrigated farm and working ranch near Rocky Ford. He also worked as a water management specialist, agronomist, and area conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service throughout Colorado, with special experience in the Arkansas River Basin. He holds degrees from Colorado State University in Agronomy and Agricultural Economics. He has served on various community and education organizations and is recognized for their accomplishments. He is also currently a director on the Arkansas River Basin Water Forum board.

BRAD LUBBERS

Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District

Brad Lubbers, Water Resources Specialist with Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District (Lower Ark) is responsible for the Water Quality Grant work within Lower Ark's Service area. Lower Ark pursues grant funds to implement BMP's with the purpose of improving on-farm efficiency for local producers while also improving water quality for the people of the Lower Arkansas Valley, and their downstream neighbors.

Brad earned a B.S. degree in Integrated Pest Management and M.S. degree in Plant, Soil, and Environmental Science from West Texas A&M University in Canyon, TX. His experience stems from time spent managing environmental compliance, farming operations, machinery acquisitions, and infrastructure maintenance and repair with large cattle feedyards in the high plains while working for Texas Cattle Feeders Association in the

Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas areas. Then later with Five Rivers Cattle Feeding with company operations in Alberta, Idaho, Kansas, Colorado, Texas, and Arizona. Brad also helps operate the family farm near Lamar, CO where they grow Alfalfa, Corn, Milo, and Wheat under the Fort Lyon and Amity Canal Systems.

BLAKE OSBORN

Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District

Blake Osborn is a water resources specialist for the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District where he manages the District's Rule 10 operations. He enjoys working with multiple water sectors to develop collaborative and innovative approaches to ensure maximum beneficial uses while improving environmental conditions. Blake is also active in several state and local committee's providing water education and outreach including the Arkansas Basin Roundtable, Water Education Colorado, and the Colorado Water Congress. He is a 2022 Graduate of the Colorado Water Leaders program and a proud alumnus of both Colorado State University and the University of Wyoming.

KENAN DIKER

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Kenan Diker, Agricultural Water Quality Specialist with the Water Quality Control Division is responsible for restoring/protecting water quality from non-point source pollution through implementation of BMPs. He has expertise in water quality and quantity, irrigation and nutrient management for water quality. He taught agricultural engineering at the University of Cukurova and conducted research on nutrient management to protect groundwater quality for USDA ARS - water management unit in Fort Collins. Kenan received his B.S. degree in Agricultural Engineering Department from Cukurova University in Turkey and his M.S. degree in saline water use in agriculture in Italy. He holds a Ph.D. degree in Agricultural and Chemical Engineering (Colorado State University, go RAMS).

CONCURRENT SESSION 1B - EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE FORAGES IN THE UPPER COLORADO RIVER BASIN FOR DROUGHT TOLERANCE AND REGIONAL ADAPTABILITY

MODERATOR, DR. TESSA PETERS

The Land Institute

Dr. Tessa Peters holds a B.S. degree in Physics from Colorado State University, a B.S. degree in Agroecology from the University of Wyoming, and a Ph.D. in Plant Breeding and Plant Genetics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. With a background in organic seed systems gained at the Organic Seed Alliance, she brings valuable experience in troubleshooting production and economic challenges while engaging with growers.

DAVID POSS

US Department of Agriculture

David Poss holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Soil and Crop Sciences from Colorado State University. Through his work as a Soil Scientist at the Central Great Plains Research Station in Akron, CO he oversees projects, spanning triticale variety selection, soil reclamation techniques, and precision agriculture, to advance sustainable and efficient farming practices.

DR. PERRY CABOT

Colorado State University

Dr. Perry Cabot holds a B.S. Degree in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University, and a Ph.D. in Agricultural Engineering and Land Resources from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As an Extension Professor at the Western Colorado Research Center, he specializes in innovative irrigation technologies, sustainable water management, and alternative cropping systems.

HUNTER DOYLE

The Land Institute

Hunter Doyle holds a B.S. Degree in Environmental Science and Technology and a M.S. Degree in Soils and Crop Sciences from Colorado State University. His thesis on Intercropping Alfalfa with Select Grass Species for Improved Yield and Quality under Deficit Irrigation Regimes served as translational research for his work as a field agronomist for The Land Institute.

CONCURRENT SESSION 1C - PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE LAND RESOURCE DURING A WATER TRANSFER

MODERATOR, JACK GOBLE

Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District

Jack received his B.S. degree in civil engineering from Colorado State University in 2005 and worked as a water resource engineer in the private industry until 2013, when he was hired as the lead engineer with the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District. In 2021, Jack was promoted to his current position as general manager of the District. He is responsible for carrying out the District's mission of finding ways to conserve, protect, and enhance the water resources of the Lower Arkansas Valley.

Jack has served on various volunteer boards and committees, including as the governor-appointed Arkansas River Basin Representative on the Colorado Water Conservation Board, as the Bent County Representative on the Arkansas Basin Roundtable, and as a member of the McClave School Board of Education, among others. During his term on the CWCB, he was able to help secure a \$100 million dollar grant and loan package for the construction of the Arkansas Valley Conduit, as well as tens of millions of dollars in grants and loans for numerous other water projects across Colorado.

Jack grew up on the Jack Sniff Ranch in Bent County that his family homesteaded in 1910. He and his wife, Melissa, value being able to raise their two seventh-generation sons on this same land. Jack has a passion to ensure that the next generation has the same opportunity to raise their families in Southeastern Colorado, which won't be possible without the Lower Arkansas Valley's most valuable natural resource, its water.

GERRY KNAPP

Valley Resource and Water Management

Gerry is a long-time resident of the Arkansas Valley, having been raised on an irrigated farm in Rocky Ford. He has over 30 years' experience in all aspects of revegetation of formerly irrigated lands in southern Colorado and in the management of water and water rights within the Arkansas River basin.

His revegetation of formerly irrigated lands in the Arkansas basin includes all aspects of development and implementation of revegetation programs along with the evaluation of revegetated lands. Having participated in the initial revegetation activities conducted by Aurora Water for lands from which water was being transferred from irrigated agriculture to municipal uses beginning in the 1980s and continuing through the early 2010s on Aurora lands as well as other water transfer lands. Throughout this period and following he observed the transformation of revegetation requirements on lands being dried up as waters were removed from lands within the basin. He has made multiple presentations on revegetation and dry-up land management at conferences and venues during this time.

He also managed the Arkansas River water rights within the Arkansas basin for Aurora Water as the Arkansas/Colorado Basin Manager where he oversaw the development and administration of water rights along with the activities required within water right transfer decrees. Throughout his tenure he has worked to develop innovative and cooperative solutions to the many water and revegetation issues involved within the Arkansas River basin.

RICH RHOADES

Range and Reveg LLC

Education

Bachelor's degree from Colorado State University in Range/Forest Management. Areas of focus were range management, forest management, and soils.

Work Experience

Rhoades is the sole member of Range and Reveg LLC. Rhoades provides contracted assistance to engineering firms and towns on revegetation projects such as surface mines and revegetation after the removal of irrigation water.

USDA NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) for 40 years in the Sterling, Eads, and Pueblo Field Offices. Retired in 2016. Managed various Farm Bill programs authorized by Congress including the Conservation

Reserve Program. Areas of land use experience include rangeland, dry cropland, irrigated cropland, urban land, and forestland.

Revegetation Experience

Assists Bent County with oversight and review of revegetation efforts under a 1041 Permit. Was appointed by District Court, Water Division 2 to head the Revegetation Panel for Rocky Ford Ditch Sellers Group/City of Aurora. Conducted evaluations on several thousand acres and provided the court with a report of revegetation needs and successes. NRCS experience extended to developing reclamation plans for gravel mines, clay mines, urban sites, construction sites, and critical areas. Developed seeding plans for burned forest lands.

RICK KIENTIZ

Aurora Water

Rick Kienitz is the Water Resources Basin Manager for Aurora Water based in the lower Arkansas River Basin of Colorado. Rick has a B.S.I.E. degree (Industrial Engineering) from Colorado State University - Pueblo and has worked for Aurora Water as a Water Resources Engineer since 2006. Previously Rick has worked for Bay Valley Foods in distribution and efficiency and Rocky Mountain Steel Mills in Quality Control and Assessment. Rick has grown-up, lived, and worked in the Arkansas Basin and SE Colorado most of his life. He and his wife have raised 6 Children and have 6 grandchildren, all living and working in Colorado.

In his capacity for Aurora Water, Rick has administered and managed all of Aurora's Colorado River Basin and Arkansas River Basin water rights, working in Operations, Protection, Planning and Development. Aurora gets approximately 50% of its water from these two basins (25% from the Colorado River and 25% from the Arkansas River) and is committed to responsible and sustainable watershed health and protection. Aurora is Also committed to developing partnerships and relationships with Arkansas Basin farmers and the farming community to create alternative and win/win solutions to reducing Colorado's water gaps.

CONCURRENT SESSION 1D - HARMONY UNVEILED: THE TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT OF PROJECT PARTNERING AND BEYOND ON COLORADO'S WATERWAYS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

JERRY NARANJO

Naranjo Civil Constructors

Jerry Naranjo, the visionary leader of Naranjo Civil Constructors, seamlessly merges construction complexities with engineering intricacies. A Colorado School of Mines civil engineering graduate, Jerry spent six years as a consulting engineer before rejoining the family business in 1999. Under Jerry's leadership, Naranjo expanded into river/stream restoration work, transforming compromised waterways into functional, beautiful, and safe environments and leaving an indelible mark on Colorado's landscape. His passion and authenticity make him more than a business leader; he's a trailblazer redefining the construction industry with innovation and dedication. Join Jerry as he shares insights into his transformative journey, showcasing how commitment, collaboration, and ingenuity can reshape the possibilities of construction and river restoration.

JERRY CORDOVA

City of Colorado Springs

Jerry Cordova is the Stormwater Specialist for the City of Colorado Springs Stormwater Enterprise. Many of his duties are similar to those of an Education & Outreach Coordinator. He educates thousands of youths each year through STEM school programs and engages with community members on the Adopt-A-Waterway Program, storm drain marking efforts, and the Storm Drain Art Program. He is a founding member of Creek Week and initiated Trash Mobs (costume litter cleanups). He is creating a culture for Complete Creeks that promotes educational and recreational opportunities throughout the community. Jerry also serves as the Board President for the Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC), served on the Colorado Stormwater Council as Chair of the Education & Outreach Committee, and co-leads the Pikes Peak Children's Water Festival each year.



THURSDAY, MARCH 7

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ROBERT SAKATA

Agricultural Water Policy Advisor, Colorado Department of Agriculture

Robert Sakata serves as the Colorado Department of Agriculture Ag Water Policy Advisor, a new position approved by the 2023 legislative session, beginning his new position in January 2024.

The establishment of an agriculture ag water policy advisor ensures that there is a dedicated liaison between CDA and other state agency partners who work with agricultural stakeholders, including the Colorado Water Conservation Board, the Colorado Water Quality Control Division, and the State Engineer's office. Robert will focus on building relationships with water entities and organizations around the state while still acting as president of Sakata Farms in Brighton, Colorado.

Robert has a wide range of water experiences beyond his family's irrigated farming operation, where he currently serves on the mutual ditch company board of directors for the Brighton, Fulton and New Brantner Irrigation Ditch Companies. He previously was appointed to serve on the Agriculture Groundwater Advisory Board that was formed as a result of SB90-126. Because of his role on the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission, where he was appointed by 4 different governors, he has already spent more than 15 years in State service. Additionally, he served on the Colorado Foundation for Water Education Board of Directors (now known as Water Education Colorado), where he helped put together the first Water Quality Citizen's Guide.

When the basin roundtables were formed in 2005 as a result of the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act, Robert joined the Metro Basin Roundtable and served as the agricultural representative, helping form the non-profit Colorado Ag Water Alliance. During that time, he served as a Governor appointee to the InterBasin Compact Committee until his appointment to the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) in 2021. He served 3 years on the Colorado Water Congress Board of Directors before beginning his current role with the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Robert will remain active with the CWCB Board of Directors by acting as the Commissioner's proxy when needed and attending meetings in his new capacity.

Robert was born and raised in Colorado and has been involved in numerous farm organizations. Beginning in 1989, he served on the Adams County Farm Bureau Board, leading to further involvement on the American Farm Bureau Federation National Horticulture Advisory Committee. In 1997, he was elected to the Colorado Onion Association board of directors and later served on the National Onion Association Board of Trustees. In 2013, with the help of dedicated CSU Cooperative Extension staff, he helped form the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (CFVGA) and served as the founding president until his appointment to the CWCB. The formation of the CFVGA has led to a lasting partnership with the Western Growers Association.

Having grown up on the family farm, Robert attributes his hard work ethic and desire to serve the community from the inspirational example that his parents set as well as motivation to become involved in other areas including the Adams County Open Space Advisory Board, Adams County Cooperative Extension Advisory Committee, CSREES Northern Plains and Mountain Region Advisory member, Colorado Ag Council (chair in 2011), and National Produce Safety Training Advisory Council. Robert is thrilled to be able to apply his farming experience in this new role with the Department of Agriculture, especially since food and water connect us all.

PLENARY SESSION - NAVIGATING THE WATERS: INSIGHT INTO DIVISION 2

MODERATOR, BECKY CROTTY

Colorado Attorney General's Office

Rebecca "Becky" Crotty has served as an Assistant Attorney General at the Colorado Attorney General's Office, specializing in water law for the last two years. With almost 30 years of legal experience prior to joining the Colorado Attorney General's Office, Becky has a rich background in both the public and private sectors, having worked at notable firms such as Shapiro Biegling Barber Otteson LLP, Moye Giles LLP, McKenna & Cuneo, LLP, Cooper & Clough, P.C., and as an Assistant United States Attorney.

Becky holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Michigan Law School and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Economics from the University of Iowa. Her extensive experience equips her to navigate the intricate landscape of Colorado water law, contributing valuable insights in her role at the Attorney General's Office.

RACHEL ZANCANELLA

Division 2 Engineer

Rachel Zancanella currently holds the position of Division Engineer for the Arkansas River Basin (Division 2) within the Colorado Division of Water Resources. Originally from Glenwood Springs, Colorado, she obtained a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University in 2008. Following the completion of her education, Rachel began her professional career in water resources consulting in Denver, Colorado, specializing in engineering drainage design at URS Corporation.

In 2011, Rachel transitioned to the Colorado Division of Water Resources, initially serving as a Deputy Water Commissioner in Colorado Springs. In 2013 she attained her Professional Engineering license. From 2014 to 2022, Rachel assumed several progressive engineering leadership positions overseeing the Groundwater, Litigation, and Engineering Operations teams until her appointment to Division Engineer in December 2022.

Rachel currently resides in Colorado Springs, Colorado with her husband and four young children.

BETHANY ARNOLD

Division 2 Assistant Division Engineer

Bethany Arnold is the Lead Assistant Division Engineer in Division 2 at the Division of Water Resources. She holds a degree in Environmental Engineering from the Colorado School of Mines and started her career in the oil and gas industry after graduation. In 2017, she returned to her hometown of Fowler, CO and started at the Division of Water Resources as the Groundwater Resources Engineer.

KASSIDY DAVIS

Division 2 Water Accounting and Technology Specialist

Kassidy Davis is a Colorado Division of Water Resources employee that specializes in water accounting for augmentation purposes and manages Substitute Water Supply Plans. Before DWR, Kassidy obtained a degree from CSU-Pueblo studying Business Economics and Finance. After graduating in 2018, she started her professional career in the banking industry working in the loan department. While in the banking industry, Kassidy took an interest in Real Estate appraisals and started studying to become a Residential Real Estate Appraiser. Then she took a job as the Residential Ad Valorem Appraiser for Otero County Assessor's office. After two years at the assessor's office, Kassidy found herself eager to learn and wanting to find a lifelong career. That's when Kassidy applied to a newly created position with DWR.

Although time has been short at DWR since Kassidy started her current position in October of 2022; she has continuously been learning about Colorado water rights and is excited to expand her knowledge and work with DWR.

CONCURRENT SESSION 2A - ARKANSAS VALLEY DITCH AND CANAL OPERATIONS

MODERATOR, JESSICA MILLS

Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District

Jessica Mills works for the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District (the District) and is responsible for their Educational Outreach Program while also attending to administrative duties. She currently sits on several boards representing the District including the Arkansas River Basin Water Forum board and the Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control and Greenway District (FCWD) Board, while also serving on the Otero County Farm Bureau board and FCWD Citizen's Advisory Group to promote and represent the agricultural community. Jessica is also an active member of the Colorado Farm Bureau's Young Farmers and Ranchers Program. Her professional goal is to always make sure that agriculture has a voice and strives to adequately represent the farming community when it comes to their most valuable resource, their water.

Jessica was born and raised in Fowler, Colorado on her dad's farm and currently enjoys helping her husband, Wyatt, with his farming operation between Manzanola and Fowler where they grow alfalfa, corn, and sorghum sudan grass under the Rocky Ford High Line and Catlin Canal systems. She and Wyatt have 3 kids they are actively raising to appreciate the agricultural community and its values. Jessica enjoys her garden, reading,

crotchet, and has dedicated her life to her family and farming. Jessica holds a Bachelor of Fine Art degree for photography and graphic design along with a Master of Arts degree in Student Affairs in Higher Education.

CURTIS SNIFF

Fort Lyon Canal Company

Curtis Sniff is the Superintendent for the Fort Lyon Canal Company. Curtis is a lifetime resident of McClave, Colorado and graduated from McClave High School. He attended Lamar Community College where he received his auto mechanics certification. Curtis farmed under the Fort Lyon Canal for several years and received the Colorado Young Farmer of the Year in 1998. He took a job with the Bent County Road and Bridge Department and later was promoted to Road Supervisor and completed 20 years in that position. Curtis has served on numerous boards including the McClave School District Board of Education for 12 years. Curtis lives in McClave with his wife Karle and has two sons, two grandsons, and another grandson expected in June.

DARREN GRAP

Rocky Ford High Line Canal Company

Darren Grap is the current Superintendent for the Rocky Ford High Line Canal Company, whose canal systems expands from Nepesta to Swink, Colorado. Darren has lived in the Arkansas Valley since 1970 when his family moved to Rocky Ford. His family farmed and raised cattle, and this started his life in the agricultural industry. As a young child, he spent time with his uncle who was employed as a Water Engineer for the Division of Water Resource which began his interest in water, one of our most valuable natural resources. While attending school in Rocky Ford, any free time he had was spent working for the Otero Ditch, his first job in the water industry. Nine years ago, he began his career with the Rocky Ford High Line Canal Company as a Ditch Rider and four years ago, he was promoted to Superintendent. Being raised as a farmer and rancher has helped Darren as a Ditch Rider and now as the Superintendent of the High Line Canal as he understood the passion, dedication, and hard work it takes to be a farmer. He has always believed that the key to his job as a Ditch Rider and Superintendent is good communication. People may say that it is difficult, frustrating, or challenging to communicate with farmers, but once you understand that their farms are their livelihood and their legacy, you begin to understand and appreciate their perspective on water.

CASEY WILLIAMS

Catlin Canal Company

Casey Williams has lived in Manzanola, CO his whole life and has been involved with agriculture from the beginning. From custom farming, to being employed on a farm, to working for the Catlin Canal Company, whose canal stretches from between Fowler and Manzanola to Swink. Casey has enjoyed being involved in agriculture. Casey has worked for the Catlin Canal Company for about 6 years; however, he has been around the Catlin ditch system for nearly 40 years as his father, Catlin's Superintendent, Greg Williams has worked for the Catlin Canal since Casey was very young.

CONCURRENT SESSION 2B - THE ARKANSAS VALLEY CONDUIT: IT'S COMING!

CHRIS WOODKA

Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

Chris Woodka, 67, is the Senior Policy and Issues Manager for the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District, and an elected member of the Pueblo Board of Water Works. His day-to-day duties include managing storage accounts in Pueblo Reservoir, providing outreach for District initiatives, organizing tours of the James W. Broderick Hydropower Plant at Pueblo Dam, working as part of the team to build the Arkansas Valley Conduit, and consulting with other water managers on collaborative programs and projects. As a member of the Pueblo Water board, he is part of the policy-making team for a well-run water system that serves more than 110,000 people with more than 40,000 accounts. For 12 years, he was president of the Goodnight Avenue Ditch Company, a lateral on Bessemer Ditch, where he learned how headgates work. That prepared him well for tromping through fields on most every ditch in the Arkansas Valley during his career as a reporter. He is a 1977 graduate of Northern Arizona University, earning a BA, and was named Outstanding Senior Journalist. He completed a post-graduate fellowship at the Indianapolis Star. He was a newspaper journalist for 40 years, including 31 years with the Pueblo Chieftain, where he specialized in reporting on water issues and wrote a satirical column called Saturday Morning Special, later changing the name to Monday Morning Special (which made less sense satirically, but better reflected the date of publication). A proud grandfather of three young men (ages 25, 21 and 16), he often serenades the neighborhood from his front porch, playing guitar and harmonica while trying to sing.

JEFFERY REIKER

Bureau of Reclamation

Jeff Rieker is the Area Manager for the Eastern Colorado Area Office within the Missouri Basin Region of the Bureau of Reclamation. In this capacity he oversees Reclamation's two major water supply and power generation projects on Colorado's front range: the Colorado Big-Thompson Project and the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. Jeff began his career with Reclamation in 1999 as a hydraulic engineer in Denver, Colorado. Since that time, he has overseen a variety of water resource planning and management issues for Reclamation in Nevada and California, as well as Washington D.C. Prior to returning to Colorado, he was the Operations Manager for Reclamation's Central Valley Operations Office, where he was responsible for the day-to-day water and power operations of Reclamation's Central Valley Project. Jeff holds a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the Missouri University of Science and Technology, a Master's degree in Civil Engineering with an emphasis in Water Resources Planning and Management from Colorado State University, and a Ph.D. in the same subject from Colorado State University. Jeff is also a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Nevada.

CONCURRENT SESSION 2C - AG WATER LAW 101

CASSIDY WOODARD

Bushong and Holleman P.C.

Cassidy's practice focuses on representation of clients in all aspects of water rights in Colorado. This includes water court adjudications in all seven of Colorado's water courts, water rights transactions and due diligence investigations, and everything in between, like water supply planning and water rights title research. Cassidy is also experienced in Colorado groundwater permitting, real estate transactions and litigation, and conservation easements. With her agricultural background, Cassidy combines her knowledge of farming and ranching with her practice experience to bring the best possible representation to farmers and ranchers throughout the state. Cassidy also represents municipalities, homeowners' associations, ski resorts, developers, and recreational interests. A fifth-generation Colorado native, Cassidy grew up on a Limousin and Lim-Flex cow-calf operation in east-central Colorado. Outside of work you can find her on the family ranches, reading, cooking, baking, watching Colorado sports teams, and attempting to keep up with her and her husband's Australian Shepherd.

Education and Bar Admissions

- Master of Laws in Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment, University of Colorado School of Law, 2016
- Juris Doctor, magna cum laude, Texas Tech University School of Law, 2015
- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with emphasis in International Business and Minors in Leadership Studies and Italian, University of Denver, 2011
- Admitted to practice before the bar, State of Colorado, 2015
- Admitted to practice before the Federal District Court of Colorado, 2022

CONCURRENT SESSION 2D - TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS AND SELECT IONS STUDY IN THE ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN BY REGIONAL RESOURCE PLANNING GROUP

LISA MILLER

U.S. Geological Survey

Lisa is a hydrologist at the U.S. Geological Survey's Colorado Water Science Center Southeast office in Pueblo. Since joining the USGS in 1994, she has conducted a variety of surface-water, groundwater, and water-quality studies throughout the country. Her areas of interest include groundwater/surface-water interactions and developing tools and techniques to help water managers optimize water use and water quality in their daily activities. Lisa has a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and a Master of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time outdoors, gardening, hiking, traveling, and hanging out with friends and family.

ANNIE BERLEMANN

Colorado Springs Utilities

Annie is the Fountain Creek Watershed Project Manager in Watershed Planning at Colorado Springs Utilities. She has been with the Utilities for 16 years, with 12 of those years working in the water laboratory in microbiology and general chemistry performing environmental and water quality analysis. In her current role, she provides water quality data analytics, permit and regulatory support and managing watershed wide issues such as nutrients and PFAS. Annie has a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Master of Science in Applied Natural Science. In her free time, she enjoys riding her horses across the Colorado countryside, camping, and spending time with her family.