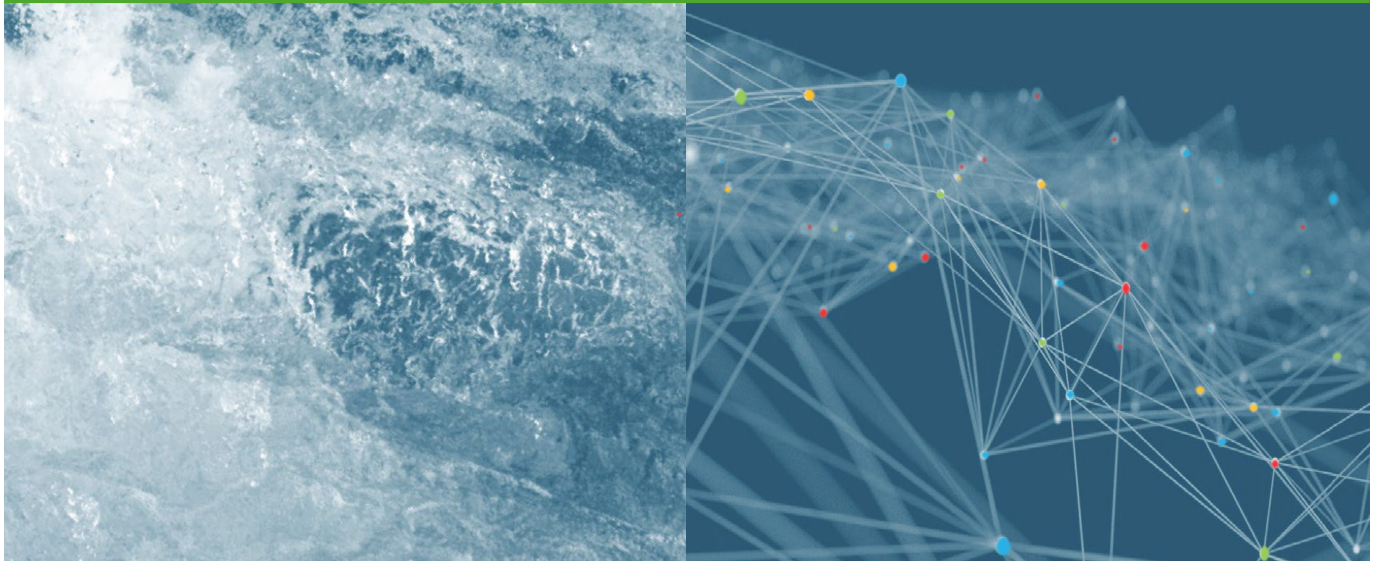


WATER REIMAGINED

STRATEGIES FOR A CHANGING WORLD



**SOUTHWESTERN WATER
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT'S 41ST ANNUAL
WATER SEMINAR**

**MARCH
28TH**

SKY UTE CASINO RESORT

SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN
RESERVATION

2025

swwcd.org

PROGRAM

AGENDA

Thank you for attending Southwestern Water Conservation District's 41st Annual Water Seminar. This year, we aim to facilitate an engaging day full of thinking differently about water and what technology, changing culture, and coming together means for the water world.

8:00 a.m. **Registration & Breakfast**

8:30 a.m. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Steve Wolff – General Manager, Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD)

Tribal Leadership - Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Tribal Blessing & Welcome

Charlie Smith – Board President, SWCD

9:00 a.m. **Strength in Water Collaboration**

Collaboration remains the center of solving our watershed's most critical issues. From funding to stakeholder engagement, we'll dive into our successes and lessons learned in the face of a changing world.

Moderator: Stacy Beagh – Managing Partner, Strategic by Nature; Facilitator, SWCD Water Conservation and Infrastructure Partnership

Celene Hawkins – Colorado River Tribal Partnerships Program Director, The Nature Conservancy

Ben Robinson – Biologist, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Alex Handloff – Collaborative Comms. Manager, Mountain Studies Institute; 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership

Jonathan Paklaian – Executive Director, Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative

10:15 a.m. **Colorado River Updates**

Get an update on Colorado River Issues and Post-2026 Guidelines.

Rebecca Mitchell – Colorado Commissioner, Upper Colorado River Commission

Chuck Cullom – Executive Director, Upper Colorado River Commission

10:30 a.m. **Networking Break**

10:50 a.m. **Keynote Session 1 – AI and its Impact on Water Management & Agriculture**

This presentation will empower the audience with research-based information on how agriculture is slated to embrace information and communication technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, numerous aspects of big-data to transform agronomy and crop and water management systems.

Raj Khosla, PhD – Head of Agronomy, Kansas State University

AGENDA

11:40 a.m.

Women Shaping the Future of Water

Bringing together women in diverse leadership roles, this panel will dive into their contributions, the barriers they have overcome, and the critical role of different perspectives in securing a sustainable water future. Through collaboration and groundbreaking solutions, they are redefining the role of leadership in water conservation and policy.

Moderator: Christine Arbogast – President, Colorado Water Congress; President, Kogovsek and Associates

Lorelei Cloud – Southwest Basin Director, Colorado Water Conservation Board

Chané Polo – Executive Director, Colorado Water Congress

Sonja Chavez – General Manager, Upper Gunnison River District

Erin Karney Spaur – Executive Vice President, Colorado Cattlemen’s Association

12:40 p.m.

Announcements & Lunch

1:45 p.m.

Updates from the Water Information Program

Elaine Chick – Water Information Program; Public Education, Participation and Outreach Coordinator (PEPO) for the Southwest Basins Round Table

2:00 p.m.

A Bold New Chapter for Conservation Agriculture

Join us to meet Evanne Caviness, Colorado's new Director of the Conservation Services Division for the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Evanne will share updates on the critical work being carried out by the division to date and her vision for a robust, producer-focused future for agriculture conservation in the state.

Robert Sakata – Water Policy Advisor, CO Department of Ag.

Evanne Caviness – Director of Conservation Division, CO Department of Ag.

2:15 p.m.

Keynote Session 2 – OpenET: Remote Sensing and Evapotranspiration (ET) Data for Smarter Water Management

OpenET is transforming water management in the western U.S. by making satellite-based evapotranspiration data widely accessible. This talk will explore how OpenET leverages remote sensing and big data to fill critical information gaps, empowering water managers, farmers, and policymakers to make smarter, more sustainable water decisions.

Sara Larsen – Chief Executive Officer, OpenET

2:55 p.m.

Networking & Snack Break

AGENDA

3:15 p.m.

Smart Water, Smart Cities: Managing Municipal Resources

How are our cities keeping up with population growth in the face of less available water? What does a sustainable city look like? Are we there? Join us for a panel focused on municipal resources and smart planning.

Moderator: Jordan Dimick, PE - Water Resources Practice Leader, SGM

Brian Peckins – Public Works Director, City of Cortez

Marty Pool – Sustainability Manager, City of Durango

Justin Ramsey – District Engineer & Manager, Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation

Marshall Brown – General Manager, Aurora Water

4:15 p.m.

Closing Remarks

4:30 p.m.

Happy Hour with Colorado Water Trust and SGM!



**COLORADO
WATER TRUST**



SGM

HAPPY HOUR

SKY UTE CASINO

FRIDAY MARCH 28TH, 4:30PM

Join us after the **Southwest Water Seminar** for happy hour!

The **first 100** people to stop by our informational table will receive a **free drink ticket.**

Presenter Biographies

Alphabetical By Last Name

Christine Arbogast

Christine Arbogast is a native of Colorado with a degree in journalism and political science. She has dedicated her career to public policy and water resource advocacy, beginning her work with Congressman Ray Kogovsek in 1979. Since the founding of Kogovsek & Associates in 1985, Christine has played a key role in advancing resource and tribal issues, as well as supporting local governments, capital construction projects, and healthcare initiatives across the Western states.

A respected leader in the water community, Christine is an active member of the Water Congress Federal Affairs Committee and a past President of the National Water Resources Association (NWRA). She currently chairs NWRA's Federal Affairs Committee and is a member of the Colorado River Water Users Association and the Family Farm Alliance. Committed to fostering the next generation of water leaders, she is also the President and Founder of the Women in Water Scholarship Fund.

Christine's contributions to water policy and advocacy have been widely recognized. She was named the 2020 Wayne N. Aspinall Water Leader of the Year and, most recently, received the National Water Resources Lifetime Achievement Award on October 1, 2024.

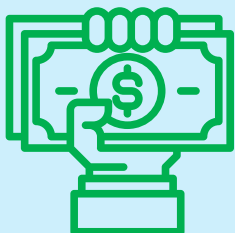
Chairman Melvin Baker

Southern Ute Chairman Melvin J. Baker was elected to lead the Southern Ute Indian Tribe in December 2020. Baker previously served four terms, totaling nine years on Tribal Council. Throughout his tenure, Mr. Baker has served as Acting Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Council Member.

Baker was born and raised on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation and graduated from Ignacio High School. In 1985, Council Member Baker graduated from the Haskell Indian Junior College with his certificate in Auto Body Repair. Throughout his years of service, Chairman Baker worked on the development and implementation of the new Sky Ute Casino & Resort and the Southern Ute Cultural Center & Museum. While serving on Council, Mr. Baker also represented the Tribe on the following committees: Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs, National Congress of American Indians, Southern Ute Elders Committee, Ten Tribes Partnership, and the Southern Ute Indian Housing Authority Board. As Chairman, Baker has prioritized restoring the teamwork within the tribal organization.

Chairman Baker enjoys spending his time away from work with his significant other, three children, and five grandchildren.

Need Funding?



SWCD runs an inhouse grant program. This program funds water projects, education, and studies in our District. Last year, SWCD provided our area with over \$170,000 in grant funding. If you are interested in the SWCD Grant Program, be on the lookout for our 2026 Guidelines (usually available in August). Need other local sources of funding? Contact the Southwest Basin Roundtable (Ed Tolen) or Colorado Water Conservation Board (Laura Spann).

Mo Rock - SWCD Grant Program - morock@swgcd.org

Ed Tolen - Southwest Basin Roundtable Chair - etolen@laplawd.org

Laura Spann - CWCB Regional Water Plan Grant Manager - laura.spann@state.co.us

Presenter Biographies

Stacy Beaugh

Strategic By Nature, Inc. is a woman-owned company that provides expertise and support to those striving for positive outcomes for people, land, water, and the outdoors. As co-owner and managing partner, Stacy supports purpose-driven nonprofits and place-based collaboratives through strategic planning, facilitation, process design, conflict resolution, organizational capacity building, and project design and management. Her work is with water supply planning, river restoration, and forest health initiatives in Colorado and the Four Corners. Stacy has 20+ years of leadership experience in natural resource and outdoor recreation initiatives, has served as Executive Director of two nonprofits, and has held numerous leadership positions in nonprofit and government boards and commissions. Stacy holds a Master of Public Administration (MPA) and a bachelor's in art and environmental studies. She is an alumnus of the Center for Creative Leadership's Nonprofit Executive Leadership Program and the University of Utah's Environmental Dispute Resolution Collaboration Certificate programs.

Marshall Brown

Marshall Brown has been the General Manager of Aurora Water since 2012. His areas of responsibility include potable and reclaimed water, wastewater and storm water. Mr. Brown has over 30 years of experience in the water industry. He began in the private sector, where he worked on water resource evaluation and development, feasibility studies, groundwater modeling and groundwater characterization and remediation. After leaving the private sector, he was the head of Scottsdale Water (AZ).

Mr. Brown has had the privilege of helping create diversified water portfolios, planning/implementing/managing emerging technologies, communicating/managing through multiple strategic efforts (rate increases, drought restrictions, fee methodology changes, etc.) and policy discussions/creation on a local, state and national level.

Brown received a Bachelor's of Science degree from Brigham Young University in Geological Engineering and a Master's of Science degree from the University of Arizona in Geophysical and Geological Engineering.

Evanne Caviness

Evanne is a rancher, policy and conservation leader with a deep commitment to agriculture and supporting the future of agriculture in Colorado. She lives in Bayfield, CO where she runs a cow/calf and hay operation alongside her husband and three children.

Sonja Chavez

Sonja joined the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District as General Manager in December 2019. She received both her bachelor's degree in Environmental Biology and a master's degree in Limnology (the study of freshwater systems) from the University of Colorado. Her areas of expertise are in water quality, water resources management, funding acquisition, environmental and natural resource sciences, and policy and planning. Previously, Sonja managed her own private water consulting firm and served as the Water Resource Specialist for the Colorado River Water Conservation District (Colorado River District).

Presenter Biographies

Elaine Chick

Elaine Chick is the Program Manager for the Water Information Program (WIP), a public outreach initiative sponsored by water districts, organizations, and agencies across the San Juan and Dolores watersheds of Southwestern Colorado. She is also the producer of the Southwestern Water Conservation District's annual Water Seminar. In her role with WIP, she has significantly expanded partnerships, increased funding contributions, and leads impactful educational programs, including the annual Children's Water Festival, teacher training workshops, community workshops, and public outreach campaigns. Under her leadership, the program has grown its presence through engaging events, social media outreach, and collaborative efforts with regional stakeholders to enhance water education and awareness.

Beyond her work in water education, Elaine is a highly accomplished event producer, fundraiser, and strategic consultant with a proven track record in both for-profit and non-profit sectors. She has extensive experience in sponsorship development, project management, and large-scale event management, having successfully led world-class projects such as the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, the Asia Pacific Economic Corporation (APEC), and Pan American Games, and World Figure Skate Championships, to name a few. Throughout her career, she has managed multi-million-dollar budgets, directed major festivals and conferences, and developed creative strategies that drive engagement and impact.

Lorelei Cloud

Lorelei Cloud is a member of the Southern Ute Tribe. She currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the Colorado Conservation Board for the State of Colorado and is the first Native American to serve on a state water board. She is also the co-founder of The Indigenous Women's Leadership Network, Board Trustee for The Nature Conservancy for Colorado and Board Member for the Colorado Water Conservation Board for the San Miguel, Dolores, Animas, and San Juan River Basin.

Chuck Cullom

Mr. Cullom brings more than 30 years of experience in water resources management and policy. He most recently served as Colorado River Programs Manager for the Central Arizona Project. There, he developed and implemented programs, policies, and partnerships at the interstate and binational levels to address risks and vulnerabilities to the Colorado River water supply and focused on new approaches to improving Colorado River system resiliency. He received his Masters of Science from Northern Arizona University.

Jordan Dimick, PE

Jordan Dimick, P.E. has almost 20 years of water resource experience, including water demand and usage analyses, water supply planning projects, water supply infrastructure planning, water allocation modeling, raw water master planning, and water quality analyses. He has completed water rights engineering support for a myriad of water court applications across all seven Water Divisions in Colorado and has served as an expert witness in multiple water court trials. Jordan obtained his B.S. in Geophysical Engineering and M.S. in Hydrology from the Colorado School of Mines.

Presenter Biographies

Alex Handloff

Alex's experience in theater and film, ecotourism, communication, collaboration, and sustainability brings a distinct skillset to MSI. Alex works within the Forest Team to elevate voices and capture stories occurring within the innovative collaborative partnerships working across Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico. Alex's communication and coordination work helps these partnerships achieve landscape-scale initiatives and effective cross-boundary management all while informing and engaging broader audiences. Alex grew up in Steamboat Springs, CO, developing an early love for the outdoors and theater. After spending a cultural exchange year in Switzerland, Alex pursued an undergraduate degree in French and Geology before earning a Masters of the Environment, all at the University of Colorado. For five years, he was an adventure tour guide for French speakers in the western US and western Canada after which he held the role of Communications Director for Headwaters Alliance in Creede, CO. Alex has lived in cities and towns across the US and the world, learning that most of our environmental and natural resource problems are people problems — it's all about relationships. He likes to think of creative ways that people can communicate and interact in order to have a future we can all live with. And by all, he means people, plants, animals, mushrooms, and everything else.

Celene Hawkins

Celene Hawkins is a conservation professional and attorney with experience in Colorado River, Tribal water and natural resource management. She serves as The Nature Conservancy's Colorado River Tribal Partnerships Program Director, where she leads the Conservancy's efforts to effectively and ethically partner with Tribal Nations and Indigenous peoples on freshwater conservation projects in the Colorado River Basin. Celene serves on the leadership team of the Water and Tribes Initiative and served two terms on the Colorado Water Conservation Board in her personal capacity (2017-2023). Celene enjoys living near the Animas River in Durango, Colorado with her family.

Raj Khosla, PhD

Prof. Raj Khosla of Kansas State University is a globally recognized authority on Precision Agriculture. He has been engaged in precision agriculture since inception and has made significant contributions in the development and spread of Precision Agriculture worldwide. His group has extensively used remote sensing and other geo-spatial tools to enhance production, resource use efficiency, profitability, and sustainability of managed agro-ecosystems. He has co-authored over 300 publications (book chapters, refereed journal articles, and others) and has been invited globally to over 30 countries.

Most recently, he served as the member of National Academy of Science Executive Committee on Science Breakthrough 2030. In 2012, Dr. Khosla was named the Jefferson Science Fellow by the National Academy of Sciences and was appointed as the Senior Science Advisor on Food Security to the U.S. Department of State. In 2011, he was inducted by NASA to the "US Presidential Advisory Board on Positioning, Navigation and Timing" to work on the US space-based GPS policy.

Presenter Biographies

Sara Larsen

Sara Larsen is the CEO of OpenET, leading efforts to provide accurate, timely, and accessible evapotranspiration data to support sustainable water management across the western United States. With over two decades of experience in water resources and data innovation, she is dedicated to advancing open science and collaborative solutions for water management challenges.

She began her career in water resources at the Utah Division of Water Resources and later worked with the Provo River Water Users Association. After earning a Master's degree in Engineering from the University of Utah, she held roles at Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Western States Water Council, where she focused on open water data-sharing and the water-energy nexus.

Prior to joining OpenET, Sara was the Deputy Director and Chief Engineer at the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC), where she played a key role in advancing scientific tools, collaborative modeling efforts, consumptive use estimation, and infrastructure measurement networks to support Colorado River Basin operations. Her expertise in integrating best-available science with water policy continues to drive OpenET's mission to enhance water sustainability through open, actionable data.

Becky Mitchell

Rebecca Mitchell (Becky) is the State of Colorado's Commissioner to the Upper Colorado River Commission. Mitchell took on this upgraded role in July 2023 to enhance the state's position in Colorado River interstate issues and negotiates on the operations of Lake Mead and Lake Powell. She is an accomplished water leader with over 20 years of experience in the water sector and is highly knowledgeable in Colorado water law. Mitchell was also appointed Director of the Inter-Basin Compact Committee (IBCC) in October 2023. Mitchell's appointment has strengthened and integrated water policy discussions happening across the state and the Colorado River Basin.

Previously, Mitchell was the Director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board and played a significant role in developing the Colorado Water Plan, working with the state's nine basin roundtables, the Interbasin Compact Committee, and the public.

Johnathan Paklaian

Jonathan has been with the Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative (ARWC) for three and a half years, where he excels at bringing communities together to address watershed challenges. With nearly 15 years of experience in environmental resource management, he has worked across the western U.S. with consulting firms, NGOs, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and USGS.

A skilled collaborator, Jonathan fosters partnerships that drive meaningful, landscape-scale projects in the Arkansas Basin. His broad experience in resource management and stakeholder engagement plays a key role in advancing ARWC's mission to enhance watershed resilience and sustain vital water resources.

He holds an M.S. in Environmental Sciences and Policy from Northern Arizona University.

Presenter Biographies

Brian Peckins

Brian Peckins is a registered civil engineer with 40 years of experience in public works, planning, environmental programs, facilities engineering, and national security. In 2022, Mr. Peckins was selected to be the Public Works Director for the City of Cortez, Colorado. He oversees and coordinates the activities of the Public Works Department which includes the water treatment, water distribution and supply system, engineering services, solid waste, GIS, roads and streets, and water conservation. Mr. Peckins is retired from the US Army Corps of Engineers where he served in a variety of challenging positions to include Chief, Construction Division, Los Angeles District; Chief, Installation Support Programs Branch; Director of Public Works for Camp Zama, Japan and US Army Garrison Humphreys, Korea; and Deputy Garrison Commander for Torii Station in Okinawa. Mr. Peckins also has two deployments to Kuwait as Army Central Theater Environmental Engineer, and the US Army Corps of Engineers Liaison to the Special Operations Joint Task Force Engineers.

Mr. Peckins has received several awards for his services to the Corps of Engineers and to the Army including the Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal, seven Commander's Awards for Civilian Service, and the Meritorious Civil Service Medal. Mr. Peckins has also served developmental assignments with the Strategy and Integration Office, and as Military Programs Chief for the Transatlantic Division.

Chané Polo

Chané Polo was raised on a horse farm in the outskirts of Venice, Italy, until the age of 15 before moving to the family Ranch in Paris, Texas. Chané obtained her B.A. in Plan II Honors from the University of Texas at Austin in 2011. There, she was also awarded the Dedman Distinguished Scholars Scholarship Award. In December 2015, Chané received both her M.A. and J.D. in Environment and Natural Resources with an Energy concentration from the University of Wyoming. Her Master's Thesis, Cargo Ship Emissions: Weaknesses of the Current International Regulatory Framework and a Prescription for the Future, analyzed the global ship emissions framework, scrutinized its three main weaknesses, and prescribed a way to modify the framework to reduce harmful ship emissions. In April 2016, Chané began working at the Colorado Water Congress, and is now the Executive Director. Her growing roles at CWC have enabled her to strengthen her passion for advocacy and water. Chané sat on the Board of the Ditch and Reservoir Company Alliance, and is a member of the State Executives Council of the National Water Resources Association.

Marty Pool

As the City of Durango's Sustainability Manager, Marty oversees programs and coordination across the municipality and community to achieve sustainability goals. Prior to his current role, he oversaw the Environmental Center at Fort Lewis College. Marty began his sustainability career performing assessments of energy, water, and material consumption for building operators and businesses. He holds a BS in Architectural Engineering from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and an MS in Environmental Policy and Management with a focus on Energy and Sustainability from the University of Denver. Like so many Coloradans and sustainability professionals, his love for the natural environment is sparked by spending time in the outdoors. He worked for nearly a decade of summers as a multi-day raft guide on the rivers of the Colorado Plateau. His passion lies in finding ways that modern society can simultaneously improve human welfare while reducing negative impacts on the natural environment.

Presenter Biographies

Justin Ramsey

In May of 2015 the Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District (PAWSD) hired Justin Ramsey as the District Engineer. In January 2017 the PAWSD Board of Directors promoted Mr. Ramsey to District Manager. Mr. Ramsey has over thirty years of water and wastewater design and construction administration experience. Mr. Ramsey has a Bachelor's of Science degree in Environmental Engineering and a Masters of Engineering in Civil Engineering both from Northern Arizona University. Mr. Ramsey is a registered professional engineer in four states and has designed and overseen the construction of water and wastewater treatment, conveyance and disposal facilities throughout the southwest. Mr. Ramsey has multiple operator certifications in Water Treatment, Water Distribution, Wastewater Collection, and Wastewater Treatment Operations.

Ben Robinson

Ben Robinson is a biologist for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, where he focuses on species conservation, habitat restoration and natural resources management planning. His current projects include tamarisk removal, low-tech processed-based restoration in various ecosystems, and wildlife disease management. The success of these projects largely depends on extensive collaboration with partners throughout the West, from universities to non-profit organizations and other governments. He currently represents the Tribe on the Biology Committee of the San Juan Recovery Program and was previously treasurer for Hesperus Ski Patrol.

Monika Rock

Monika Rock (Mo) accepted her position as Programs Coordinator of the Southwestern Water Conservation District in February 2023. Mo is an experienced Program Coordinator and advocate for the environment. Mo also serves on the Water Education Colorado Board (WEco). Prior to her position she served as a Program Coordinator for Conservation Legacy, helping young adults fulfil their passion working for the National Park Service and other agencies through year-long internships. Mo also has served with the NASA DEVELOP Program – helping connect various stakeholders with processed satellite data and scientific narratives. Mo has also held natural resource positions in Jackson, Wy and Kona, HI. She has a double major from Rocky Mountain College in Environmental Management and Policy and Environmental Science.

Robert Sakata

Robert Sakata serves as the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) 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 has a wide range of water experiences beyond his family's irrigated farming operation, where he served on the mutual ditch company board of directors for the Brighton, Fulton and New Brantner Irrigation Ditch Companies. Because of his role on the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission, he was appointed by 4 different governors, serving the state in that capacity for 15 years. 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.

In 2013 he was elected to serve on the Colorado Water Congress Board of directors where he served for 9 years. 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.

Robert was born and raised in Colorado and has been involved in numerous farm organizations

Presenter Biographies

Erin Karney Spaur

Erin Karney Spaur serves as Executive Vice President of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association. As Executive Vice President for the nation's oldest cattlemen's association, Erin works closely with state and national legislators, agencies, media, and consumers to promote the beef industry and speak out on behalf of CCA's members and the broader Colorado beef industry. Karney earned her undergraduate degrees in animal science and agriculture business from Colorado State University and a Master of Science degree in meat science from Colorado State University. Erin was raised on her family's ranch in Southeast Colorado and is still involved in the family operation.

Charlie Smith

Charlie Smith was appointed by San Juan County, has been a Director on the Board since 2017. Mr. Smith was elected as board president in February 2025. Mr. Smith came to Southwest Colorado for a climbing trip in 1992 and has been living here ever since.

Mr. Smith served as General Manager of the Lake Durango Water Authority from July 2009 to January 2022. He is currently a director for the Pine Ridge Ditch Company. After graduating from Washington University in Saint Louis with a degree in Applied Science and Engineering, he worked as a researcher and managed a chemical plant in the Midwest.

After moving to Colorado, Mr. Smith learned to ski, worked in the oil and gas industry, and then was Vice President of Trimble Hot Springs for 11 years. He spends his free time hiking, climbing, and backcountry skiing with his wife Amy and their two dogs.

Steve Wolff

Steve Wolff currently serves as the General Manager of the Southwestern Water Conservation District. The District is comprised of nine counties covering southwest Colorado. The District's statutory authority is to protect, conserve, use and develop the water resources of the Southwestern basin for the welfare of the District, and safeguard for Colorado all waters of the basin to which the state is entitled. Steve also serves as the Chair of the Upper Colorado River Commission's Engineering Committee.

Prior to this position, Steve served as the Interstate Streams Division Administrator in the Wyoming State Engineer's Office. The Interstate Streams Division provides primary oversight for Wyoming's rights and responsibilities relative to the seven interstate water compacts and three interstate water decrees the State is signatory to. While in Wyoming, Steve also served as Chair of the Management Committee of the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

Water Education in Southwest Colorado



SWCD has a longstanding commitment to water education in our region. We match every dollar donated to the Water Information Program and administer the program, contribute to Water Education Colorado, and support local organizations in their outreach efforts through our Grant Program. If you need water education materials, are seeking a partner, or have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to SWCD! See 'Our Programs' for more information on WIP.

About the District

The Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD) was created on April 16, 1941 by the Colorado General Assembly through House Bill #795 (Statute 37-47-101).

The District is comprised of nine counties: Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, San Juan, San Miguel, and parts of Hinsdale, Mineral, and Montrose. Each Board of County Commissioners appoints a representative to the District Board of Directors, which meets bi-monthly.

SWCD's statutory authority is to protect, conserve, use and develop the water resources of the Southwestern basin for the welfare of the District, and safeguard for Colorado all waters of the basin to which the state is entitled. Following this mandate, the District has assumed a broad strategic role on behalf of its diverse constituents. District representatives advocate for southwestern Colorado's water interests at the local, state and regional level.

Our Board of Directors

Charlie Smith - President
San Juan County

Steve Garchar
Dolores County

Rusty Hinger
Mineral County

JR Ford - Vice President
Archuleta County

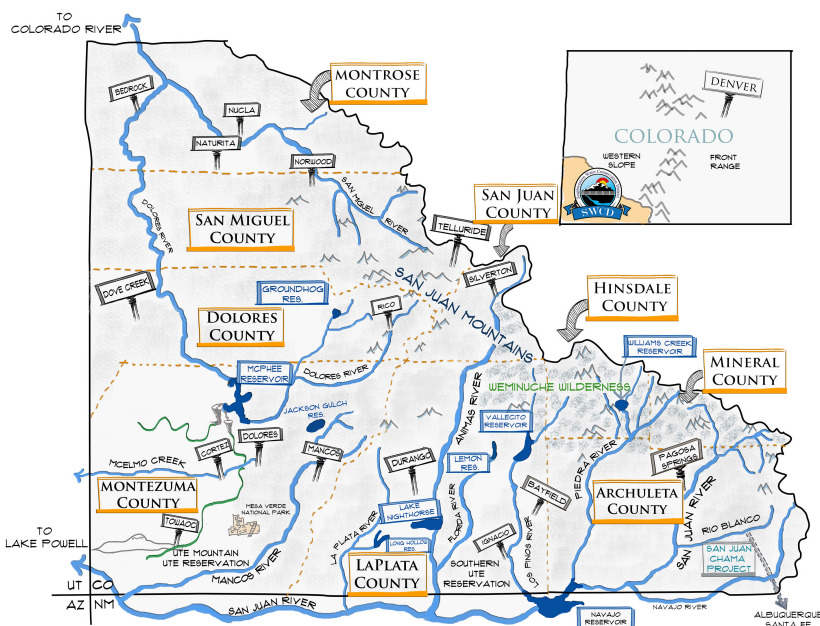
David Guilliams
Hinsdale County

Gerald Koppenhafer
Montezuma County

Amy Huff - Secretary/Treasurer
La Plata County

Kenny Heldman
Montrose County

Jenny Russell
San Miguel County



Staff

Steve Wolff
General Manager

Monika Rock
Programs Coordinator

Contact Us:

morock@swwcd.org
www.swwcd.org
(970) 247 - 1302

Our Programs



SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S WATER CONSERVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP

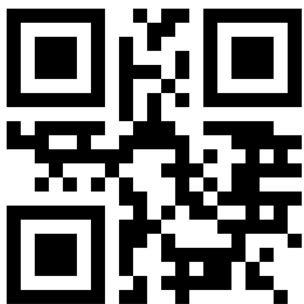
In the Summer of 2023, the Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD) proposed the development of a water conservation and infrastructure partnership to pursue and implement projects identified in SWCD strategic priorities, SW Basin Implementation Plans (BIP), and other community-engaged processes. SWCD and regional partners planned to request federal, state, and other funding to support the Water Conservation and Infrastructure Partnership (Partnership), which included developing a Priority Project Pipeline and creating a Community Navigator position. Additionally, as part of developing the federal funding application, SWCD and partners identified the additional capacity needed to implement such a program.

This ongoing program identifies, funds, and coordinates watershed-scale, multi-benefit infrastructure and water conservation projects requiring complex regional partner collaboration and larger monetary investments. Ultimately, the program seeks to leverage funding to increase SWCD's capacity to assist regional partners and stakeholders in developing and implementing local projects. These projects aim to address the goals and needs of multiple stakeholders in the San Juan and Dolores River basins within southwest Colorado. In January of 2025, SWCD was awarded 25.6 million dollars to support 17 projects across Southwest Colorado.

Stay Engaged

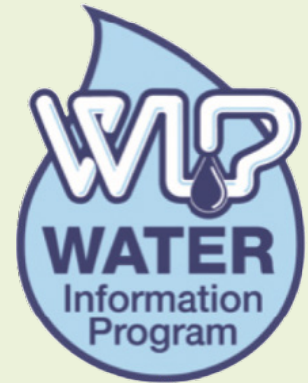
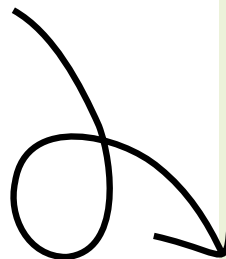
Volunteers Needed!

Be apart of SWCD's 27th Annual Children's Water Festival on May 14th, 2025! We need Presenters (teach groups of 5th graders throughout the day) and Guides (follow a class to all their presentations throughout the day & help guide them through the event). Contact Elaine Chick if Interested. Contact Info



Join our Mailing List!

Click 'join mailing list' to stay in touch with the District! The Nine Basin Bulletin is a quarterly newsletter with water news, legislation, jobs, and events.



The **Water Information Program** (WIP) is dedicated to offering information and educational resources covering a spectrum of topics such as current events, water issues, water law, and history, as well as educational workshops.

WIP is sponsored by the water districts, organizations and agencies in the San Juan and Dolores watersheds of Southwestern Colorado. The purpose of the WIP is to provide information to the public and community on water topics and water related issues.

WIP hosts a variety of workshops and events, including Water Law in a Nutshell Course, the Forest to Faucets Teacher Training Program, the annual Children's Water Festival, and produces the SWCD annual Water Seminar.

Stay Connected with WIP:

www.waterinfo.org
Contact: Elaine Chick
elaine@waterinfo.org

What's Next?

Southwestern Water Conservation District 2025 Calendar

January						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February						
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March						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

- Regular Board Meetings
- Special Board Meetings
- SWCD Seminar

- Holiday/SWCD Closed
- Jun 30 Audit Submission Deadline
- Oct 15 Budget Notice
- Dec 15 Mill Levy Certification



Adopted 12-12-2024

Your Feedback Matters!

This year, three of our panel topics came from last years evaluations! Please consider filling out our feedback form and letting us know how we can improve the seminar, and what you would like to learn about next year! We truly appreciate your thoughts and read each evaluation with care.

