



**SWCD's 42ND Southwest Water Seminar:
One Watershed, Many Voices
Friday, March 27, 2026**

8:00 **Registration & Breakfast**

8:30 **Welcome and Opening Remarks: Your District at Work**

- **Steve Wolff** - General Manager, Southwestern Water Conservation District
 - **Chairman Baker** - Southern Ute Tribal Nation, Tribal Blessing & Welcome
 - **Charlie Smith** - Board President, Southwestern Water Conservation District
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8:45 **From Scarcity to Strategy: The Future of Water Quantity and Quality in the Basin**

Drought, wildfire, and development are tightening the connection between water quantity and water quality, making it clear these challenges can no longer be managed separately. Municipal providers, watershed managers, and agencies must respond to changing hydrology, post-fire impacts, and increasing demand while ensuring safe, reliable water for communities and ecosystems. This panel brings together regional experts to discuss how these pressures are affecting water systems across the San Juan and Dolores basins, and how science, operations, and collaboration are helping build more resilient and sustainable water futures.

Moderator – Peter Butler

- **Patrick Cummins** - Director of Environmental Health and Protection - CDPHE
 - **Scott Roberts** - Aquatic Ecologist / Water Programs Director - Mountain Studies Institute
 - **Laura Rieck** – Assistant Public Works Director, Utilities - City of Durango
 - **Jeff Derry** – Executive Director - Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies
 - **Katrina Grantz** – Deputy Regional Director, Upper Colorado Region- Bureau of Reclamation
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10:00 **Keynote Session #1 – Heather Hansman** –Journalist & Author
(Downriver: Into the Future of Water in the West)

A compelling storyteller who humanizes complex water issues through travel, interviews, and lived experience across the Colorado Basin.

10:45 **Coffee Break/Networking**

11:15 **Recreation, Rivers, and the Local Economy**

Outdoor recreation is a cornerstone of the Southwest Colorado economy, tightly intertwined with the health, timing, and reliability of our rivers. From boating and fishing to tourism and quality of life for local communities, rivers are both ecological lifelines and economic engines. This panel explores how water management decisions, flow regimes, and river health directly impact recreation-based businesses, public access, wildlife, and rural economies.

Moderator – Shannon Mullane – Western Water Reporter – The Colorado Sun

- **Rica Fulton** - Advocacy & Stewardship Director- Dolores River Boating Advocates
- **Ryan Unterreiner** - Water Resources Specialist – Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- **David Moler** - Owner - Durango Rivertrippers & Adventure Tours
- **Blake Mamich** – Programs Director - Colorado Water Trust

12:30

Announcements/Lunch

Meet SWCD partners, and regional water educators. Visit display tables and poster exhibits highlighting local success stories, innovations and funding.

1:45

Water Information Program – Elaine Chick – Water Information Program Manager- Quick update and Debut of Education Video – **Lifelines of the Land: The CCC Ditch Story**

2:00

Keynote #2 - Water in the West – The Path Forward

- **Becky Mitchell** – Colorado River Commissioner, Upper Colorado River Commission
- **Jason Ullman** – Colorado State Engineer

A forward-looking perspective on post-2026 Colorado River operations, Colorado’s leadership role, and how local watershed decisions ripple through the greater Basin.

3:00

Coffee Break/Networking

3:15

Diagnosis to Action: How Decisions Get Made

Water decisions affecting Southwest Colorado are shaped across multiple levels - from tribal governments and local boards to basin roundtables, state agencies, and federal funding processes. Understanding how these systems interact is essential to turning local priorities into lasting outcomes. The goal of this panel would be to move from diagnosis to action: how local stakeholders, agencies, and tribes can influence water policy, resource allocation, and public engagement in the coming decade.

Moderator - Celine Hawkins – Colorado River Program Director - The Nature Conservancy

- **Christine Arbogast** – President, Kogovsek and Associates/Colorado Water Congress
 - **Lorelei Cloud** – Chair, CWCB Board – Representing San Miguel, Dolores, Animas & San Juan Rivers
 - **Marsha Porter Norton** - La Plata County Commissioner
 - **Peter Butler** – SW Basins Roundtable Chair
 - **Scott Clow** - Director Environmental Programs - Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
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4:20

Closing Remarks

Steve Wolff or other Director? Southwestern Water Conservation District

4:30

Happy Hour – Ballroom Hallway - TBD

- *Sponsored by Colorado Trust and SGM*
- *The first 100 people who visit the Colorado Trust table and collect a ticket will receive a free drink!*