

Four States Irrigation Council 67th Annual Meeting



**January
8, 9 & 10
2020**

The Hilton Fort Collins

A forum for irrigators in Colorado,
Kansas, Nebraska and Wyoming



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, Jan. 8

- 9 a.m.** **Exhibitor and Sponsor Set-Up Begins**
- 11:30 a.m.** **Registration Begins**
- 11:30 a.m.** **FSIC Board Meeting** (*Members please meet in the CSU President's Room*)
- 1 p.m.** **Welcome and Announcements**
- Rob Posten, Four States Irrigation Council president
- 1:15 p.m.** **Construction Project Updates**
- Moderator: Pete Gile, Kansas director for Four States Irrigation Council
 - Leroux Siphon, presented by Steve Fletcher, Fire Mountain Canal and Reservoir Company
 - North Poudre Irrigation Company projects, presented by Tad Moen, NPIC
 - Windy Gap FIRMing Project, presented by Kevin Lock, Northern Water
- 2:30 p.m.** **Cultivating Kindness in the Workplace**
- Introduction: Len Chamberlain, Wyoming Director for Four States Irrigation Council
 - Bridget Morris, Employers Council
- 3:30 p.m.** **Break**
- 4 p.m.** **Creating Water Leaders**
- Tom Knutson and Lee Orton, Water Leaders Academy
 - Stephanie Scott, Water Education Colorado
- 5:30 p.m.** **Exhibitor Reception and Networking Event**

Thursday, Jan. 9

- 7 a.m.** **Breakfast**
- 7:15 a.m.** **Registration**
- 8 a.m.** **Colorado River Compact Updates**
- Dave Kanzer, Colorado River District
 - Kyle Whitaker, Northern Water
- 9 a.m.** **State of the States**
- Wyoming – Jeff Cowley, North Platte coordinator for the Wyoming State Engineer's Office and Jodee Pring, river basin planning supervisor for the Wyoming Water Development Office
 - Nebraska – Jeff Fassett, director at the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
 - Kansas – David Barfield, chief engineer at the Kansas Division of Water Resources
 - Colorado – Kevin Rein, state engineer at the Colorado Division of Water Resources
- 10 a.m.** **Break**
- 10:30 a.m.** **Family Farm Alliance Update**
- Dan Keppen, Family Farm Alliance executive director

- 11 a.m. Bureau of Reclamation Area Manager Updates**
- Wyoming Area Office – Carlie Ronca
 - Nebraska-Kansas Area Office – Aaron Thompson
 - Eastern Colorado Area Office – Jeff Rieker
- 12 p.m. Lunch Presentation**
- “What Makes the Weather and Climate of the High Plains So Variable?” Presented by Colorado State Climatologist Russ Schumacher
- 1:30 p.m. Canal Maintenance**
- Brett Skinner, Mirage Flats Irrigation District
 - Tad Moen, North Poudre Irrigation Company
 - Rob Posten and Patrick Zimmer, Goshen Irrigation District
 - Amos Lange, North Loup River Public Power and Irrigation District
- 2:30 p.m. Water Policy Updates**
- Dan Keppen, Family Farm Alliance
 - Julie McKenna, Brandeberry-McKenna Public Affairs
 - Ron Wolf, Project Power Users
- 3:30 p.m. USDA Survey of Irrigation Organizations**
- Marcel Aillery, USDA Economic Research Service
- 5 p.m. Networking Reception and Silent Auction**
- 6 p.m. Awards Banquet Dinner**
- Awards ceremony, scholarship recognition, presentation of Headgate awards and other honors, silent auction winner announcements, and entertainment by Carin Mari. Pete Gile, Kansas director for Four States Irrigation Council, will serve as the emcee.

Friday, Jan. 10

- 7 a.m. Breakfast**
- 8 a.m. Four States Caucus**
- Introduction: Rob Posten, Goshen Irrigation District
- 8:30 a.m. Vendor Activity**
- 9 a.m. Reclamation Funding Opportunity – WaterSMART**
- Robin Graber and Katie Schultz, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation’s Office of Policy and Administration
- 9:30 a.m. History Presentations**
- “The South Platte River Through the Lens of Time,” presented by Brian Werner, Northern Water
 - “From Floods to Floats: A History of the Bostwick Division,” presented by Catherine Griffin, U. S. Bureau of Reclamation’s Nebraska-Kansas Area Office
- 10:30 a.m. Technology Updates**
- A. J. Wiese, Axiom Instrumentation Services
 - Ansley Brown, Irrigation Innovation Consortium at Colorado State University
- 11:30 a.m. Closing Announcements**

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ABOUT FOUR STATES IRRIGATION COUNCIL



Four States Irrigation Council, established in 1952, serves as a forum for irrigators, irrigation and water districts and ditch companies to exchange ideas and information, discuss specific water-delivery and irrigation-related issues, and learn from others. Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Wyoming are the member states.

Four States was created to provide an opportunity for its members to study challenges pertaining to the operation and maintenance of irrigation and conveyance systems, and to develop solutions. Four States promotes the wise use of the nation's water resources and encourages effective and diverse use of this limited resource. Improving agricultural conservation, promoting more efficient use of water, and balancing these needs with aquatic and wildlife concerns are all priorities of Four States.

Who Belongs to Four States?

Four States members include farmers, ditch and irrigation company and water district employees and board members, engineers, university professors, extension agents, government officials and others with an interest in irrigation. Four States currently has approximately 300 members. Membership is open to any person interested in irrigation system operations or irrigated agriculture. There are no annual dues or fees. To become a member, simply attend the annual meeting or request to be added to the Four States mailing list.

Annual Meetings

The Four States annual meeting is held each January at a site selected by the board of directors with input from the membership. Costs to attend are held to a minimum to encourage as much participation as possible. Program speakers include federal and state officials, irrigation company officials, individual farmers and educators. Additionally, Headgate and Ditchrider awards are presented at the annual meeting banquet. Fifty-two people attended the first meeting, while nearly 200 now attend.

Summer Tours

Four States hosts a summer tour every other year on a rotating schedule to each of the four states. The tour offers members an opportunity to view irrigation projects and facilities at different locations throughout the Four States area, and serves as a great networking opportunity.

Scholarship Opportunities

Four States makes available \$2,000 in scholarships annually to qualified undergraduate or graduate students who, among other requirements, are currently enrolled at an accredited university or college in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska or Wyoming, and are pursuing a degree in an agricultural-water or irrigation-related field.

ANNUAL MEETING

SPEAKER BIOS

Wednesday, Jan. 8, Speakers

1:15 p.m. – Construction Project Updates

Steve Fletcher, Fire Mountain Canal and Reservoir Company

Fletcher was employed at Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association in Delta and Montrose counties for 34 years. He started as a ditchrider, was a crew foreman for several years, served nine years as water master, and five years as the general manager. During this time, he was directly involved in or in charge of securing funding for and piping or lining for over 140 miles of canal and laterals within the project. During his five years as manager, he helped develop and implement five hydroelectric facilities within the project. He is currently manager of the Fire Mountain Canal and Reservoir Company in Delta County and dam tender at Paonia Reservoir. He is vice president for the Four States Irrigation Council's board of directors, council member for the Colorado Mesa University Water Center Advisory Council, and serves on the Gunnison Basin Round Table.

Tad Moen, North Poudre Irrigation Company

Moen represents the fifth generation on his family's ranch in Virginia Dale, Colo. Two weeks after graduating from Poudre High School, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps. Then, after several tours overseas, he traveled along the Pacific Coast, where he eventually enrolled at California State University, Chico, to study mechanical engineering. After he returned to Colorado, he applied for a ditchrider position with North Poudre Irrigation Company in 2014 and was hired. The next year, he was promoted to operations manager, and the following year he was named interim manager, before being named general manager at the beginning of 2017.

Kevin Lock, Northern Water

Kevin is a project engineer at Northern Water, a Berthoud-Colo., based entity that among other efforts, is overseeing development of the Windy Gap Firming Project. This project is a collaboration between nine municipalities, two water districts and a power provider, working together to build Chimney Hollow Reservoir. That reservoir will be located just west of the existing Carter Lake, near Loveland, and will store 90,000 acre-feet of water when built, providing a firm yield of 30,000 acre-feet annually to the rapidly growing communities participating in the project. Kevin earned his bachelors degree in geological engineering from Colorado School of Mines. He went on to work as a consultant in the mining sector with a focus on design, engineering and construction. Working at various sites throughout North America, his experience includes geotechnical investigations, as well as construction management and oversight for various earthwork, pipeline, and vertical construction projects.

2:30 p.m. – Cultivating Kindness in the Workplace

Bridget Morris, Employers Council

Morris has been a part of the Organizational Development and Learning Group at Employers Council for more than 10 years. Employers Council is an association organized to facilitate effective employer-employee relationships within the business community. She holds a masters degree in education from American University in Washington, D.C., and a bachelors degree from Purdue University in communications and English. She is a facilitator and consultant, working with leaders of organizations about their training and development needs in such areas as effective communication, conflict prevention and resolution, navigating change, the development of presentation and training skills, and interpersonal and group dynamics. Morris is certified in conflict and mediation training, 360 Profilor assessment, radical collaboration and has her Executive Coach Certification from the New Ventures West program in San Francisco.

4 p.m. – Creating Water Leaders

Lee Orton, Water Leaders Academy

Orton's full-time job is serving as principle of Orton Management Associates, where he is actively involved with natural resources and environmental issues. He works with the Nebraska Well Drillers Association, the Nebraska State Irrigation Association, the Nebraska Onsite Waste Water Association, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, irrigation and public power districts, and with the Nebraska Water Balance Alliance, as well as other environmental programs and issues. Among other efforts, he has authored a study and report on funding alternatives for resources project development, written a paper on underground water storage and recovery, and published numerous other water-related papers. He has served as a member of the Rural Water District Subcommittee and the Government Affairs Committee (federal legislative issues involving the water well industry) for the National Ground Water Association. He is currently a member of the NGWA Affiliate States and the Public Affairs committees. Prior to his private-practice work, Orton served as chief counsel for the Natural Resources Commission, and executive director of the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts.

Tom Knutson, Water Leaders Academy

Knutson spent nearly 30 years of irrigation district management as general manager of the Farwell and Sargent irrigation districts in Nebraska. He has been a consultant for the last six years, specializing in water issues and title transfer matters. He has served on the National Water Resources Association Board for 20 years, representing the Irrigation Caucus, and represents surface-water interests on the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission. He started his career in South Dakota 45 years ago and served as executive director of the South Dakota Water Development Task Force under an appointment by Governor Bill Janklow.

Stephanie Scott, Water Education Colorado

Scott has been working in the natural resource conservation field for more than 12 years designing, implementing, and evaluating programs of all different types. She has most recently been focused on developing leadership programs, and has a passion for designing programs that support people in fulfilling their true potential. She is currently the leadership programs manager at Water Education Colorado, where she facilitates the well-known Colorado Water Leaders and Water Fluency programs. Scott is a certified group facilitator and is currently seeking a certification as a Master Positive Psychology (the science of what makes people happy) Coach. Scott is a proud fourth-generation Colorado native who lives in Thornton, Colo.

Thursday, Jan. 9, Speakers

8 a.m. – Colorado River Compact Updates

Dave Kanzer, Colorado River District

As deputy chief engineer at the Colorado River District, Kanzer has been working on the complex web of water quality and quantity issues facing the Colorado River Basin for 25 years. Since 1995, he has focused on both large, regional long-term Colorado River Basin water supply planning issues, as well as on smaller, local implementation programs to address water supply and demand imbalances, exacerbated by growth and climate change. In addition to developing and implementing water use efficiency projects, Kanzer has been active in drought contingency planning efforts. This cooperative seven basin states initiative includes analyzing the potential feasibility to control water use through demand-management techniques and increasing water supplies to guard against the potential for water supply availability shortages for multiple beneficiaries, including agricultural, municipal, environmental and recreational interests. He earned his bachelors and masters degrees in geological engineering from the Colorado School of Mines.

Kyle Whitaker, Northern Water

Whitaker is the Water Rights Department Manager at Northern Water. Northern Water and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation operate the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, which collects water from the Colorado River basin and delivers it to about 980,000 residents and 640,000 irrigated acres in Northeastern Colorado. Northern Water, headquartered in Berthoud, and its Municipal Subdistrict are also currently developing the Windy Gap Firming Project and Northern Integrated Supply Project. Whitaker is responsible for overseeing Colorado River and Platte River programs that Northern Water is involved in and managing and protecting the water right assets owned by Northern Water and its enterprises in cooperation with Northern Water's legal counsel. Whitaker has more than 25 years of engineering experience, having previously worked for 18 years for the Colorado Division of Water Resources in the Colorado River basin prior to joining Northern Water.

9 a.m. – State of the States

Wyoming – Jeff Cowley, North Platte coordinator for the Wyoming State Engineer’s Office

Cowley has worked for the Wyoming State Engineer’s Office for 16 years, with the first 13 in the Surface Water Division and the last three in the Interstate Streams Division. Cowley graduated from the University of Wyoming with a bachelors degree in secondary education with a focus on biological sciences.

Wyoming – Jodee Pring, river basin planning supervisor for the Wyoming Water Development Office

Pring started her state career in 1988 with the Wyoming State Engineer’s Office. She has been involved in water and river basin planning for the State of Wyoming for over 30 years, and is a certified mediator. She is also involved in many professional organizations, serving on the board of directors for the Interstate Council on Water Policy, and as the vice president of the Wyoming Water Association (WWA).

Nebraska – Jeff Fassett, director at the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

Fassett was appointed by Gov. Pete Ricketts to lead the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources in 2015. His responsibilities include leveraging his more than 40 years of experience in water policy, water resources engineering, and water rights, to provide advice, engineering, and strategic planning to benefit Nebraska. Fassett previously worked for HDR Engineering Inc. and operated Fassett Consulting LLC, an engineering consulting firm that specialized in water rights, water resources engineering, and water policy matters. Prior to arriving in Nebraska, he served as Wyoming’s deputy state engineer from 1987 to 2000, and then was appointed state engineer. He represented Wyoming’s interests in Interstate Compacts and USSC Decrees, and for water resource policy matters. In 2002, Fassett was appointed by President Bush to be the federal representative and chairman of the Red River Compact Commission involving the shared Red River water resources among Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. He began his career in water rights in Colorado working for Denver Water and Leonard Rice Engineers, where he began his work on the Big Horn General Adjudication. Fassett is active in many organizations, including the Western States Water Council, National Water Resources Association, and Interstate Council for Water Policy, and has received awards from the Upper Missouri Water Users Association, Four States Irrigation Council and other water resources organizations.

Kansas – David Barfield, chief engineer at the Kansas Division of Water Resources

Barfield is a water resources engineer, trained at the University of Kansas, earning a bachelors degree in civil engineering in 1978 and a masters degree in water resources engineering in 1991. Upon graduation, Barfield worked for three years in consulting in Minnesota and three years in a developing nation in southern Africa. He has worked for Kansas Department of Agriculture’s Division of Water Resources since 1984. In 2007, he was appointed chief engineer. In this capacity, Barfield directs the staff of the division in fulfilling their broad responsibilities over the state’s water resources, including administration of four interstate water compacts, more than 30,000 active water rights, and the safety of thousands of dams and other water structures.

Colorado – Kevin Rein, state engineer at the Colorado Division of Water Resources

Rein is the state engineer and director of the Colorado Division of Water Resources, also known as the State Engineer’s Office. Rein directs the division’s responsibilities, which include administration of water rights in Colorado, issuing well permits, performing administrative approvals for water use, administering programs that ensure the safety of dams and the safe construction of water wells, managing compliance with interstate compacts, and providing information and education resources to the public. He has worked at the Division of Water Resources for 22 years.

10:30 a.m. – Family Farm Alliance Update

Dan Keppen, Family Farm Alliance executive director

Keppen is executive director for the Family Farm Alliance, a non-profit association that advocates for family farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts and allied industries in 17 Western States. He has 26 years of experience in water resources engineering and policy matters. Keppen currently is the president of the Klamath County, Ore., Chamber of Commerce board of directors. He serves on the agricultural water conservation work group as part of the Bureau of Reclamation’s “Next Steps” phase of the Colorado River Basin Study process. Keppen received his masters degree in civil engineering from Oregon State University, and his bachelors degree in petroleum engineering from the University of Wyoming.

ANNUAL MEETING SPEAKER BIOS

11 a.m. – Bureau of Reclamation Area Manager Updates

Wyoming Area Office – Carlie Ronca

Ronca provides leadership to roughly 120 talented professionals to provide services throughout the state of Wyoming east of the Continental Divide and into western Nebraska. Ronca is responsible for the management of the area's portion of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, the Shoshone Project in the Bighorn River Basin, and the North Platte and Kendrick Projects in the North Platte River Basin. The Wyoming Area Office annually provides approximately 2.8 million acre-feet of water releases. Water is supplied to 60 irrigation entities for irrigation of 680,000 acres of land and to 20 cities, municipalities, and companies for municipal and industrial purposes. An average of 800 gigawatt-hours of hydroelectric power generation is produced annually and supplies the needs of 73,000 households. The Wyoming Area Office manages over 500,000 acres of land for beneficial uses. Other benefits include flood control, fish and wildlife enhancement, and recreation. Ronca has served as the Wyoming Area Manager since 2014. Before that time she was in Reclamation's Eastern Colorado Area Office in Loveland, Colo. A graduate of the Reclamation Executive Leadership Program, Ronca joined Reclamation in 2006 as a natural resource specialist and project manager. After serving some years in the state public sector, she began her federal career in 1999 in the natural resources fields for the National Park Service. Ronca holds a masters degree in biology and bachelors degree in biology and general science.

Nebraska-Kansas Area Office – Aaron Thompson

In his position, Thompson represents the Great Plains regional director with various private, public and government stakeholders, pertaining to the management, development and protection of water and related issues. He carries out these responsibilities with a 45-person employee workforce managing Reclamation projects in Nebraska, Kansas, and a portion of eastern Colorado. Thompson entered federal service in 2001 as a mechanical engineer with the Bureau of Reclamation at Hoover Dam. He later held positions as facility manager at Davis Dam, southeast of Las Vegas and as deputy area manager for the Wyoming Area Office. Thompson accepted the position as Nebraska-Kansas area manager in 2007. NKAO projects provide water for approximately 264,000 acres of farmland as well as flood control; municipal and industrial water; recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits. The reservoirs provide approximately 56,000 acres of water surface at normal pool and 75,000 acres of adjacent land for public use. The reservoir areas are managed by a number of federal, state, and local entities for fish and wildlife, and recreational purposes. Thompson earned a bachelors degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and a masters degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix.

Eastern Colorado Area Office – Jeff Rieker

Rieker oversees Reclamation's two major water supply 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. Since that time, he has overseen a variety of water resource planning and management issues for Reclamation in Carson City and Sacramento, as well as Washington, D.C., where he served as the Mid-Pacific Region's liaison and representative in the Commissioner's Office. Most recently 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 bachelors degree in civil engineering from the Missouri University of Science and Technology, a masters 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.

12 p.m. – Lunch Presentation, “What Makes the Weather and Climate of the High Plains So Variable?”

Russ Schumacher, Colorado State Climatologist

Along with his faculty position in the Department of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University, Schumacher serves as the Colorado State Climatologist and director of the Colorado Climate Center. He received his masters in 2003 and Ph.D. in 2008 from Colorado State University. His research is aimed at improving understanding and prediction of extreme precipitation, including collecting data in the field and using numerical models of the atmosphere. His other research and teaching interests include weather systems, mesoscale meteorology, and the climatology of precipitation. He has been a member of the CSU faculty since August 2011. In his presentation at the Four States Irrigation Council’s annual meeting, Schumacher will take a look at some of the underlying factors: What are the meteorological drivers of these variations? How do recent events fit in relation to historical conditions? What changes have been observed over time? And how might these factors affect (and be affected by) irrigated agriculture?

1:30 p.m. – Canal Maintenance

Brett Skinner, Mirage Flats Irrigation District

Skinner is the manager of the Mirage Flats Irrigation District, which oversees operations of the Mirage Flats Project in northwestern Nebraska, located on the Niobrara River. It includes Box Butte Dam and Reservoir, Dunlap Diversion Dam, Mirage Flats Canal, and distribution and drainage systems. Water is diverted from the Niobrara River to irrigate approximately 11,670 acres of fertile land on the north bank of the Niobrara River about 12 miles south of Hay Springs. Among other capacities, Skinner also serves on the Nebraska State Irrigation Association’s board of directors, and as the Nebraska director for the Four States Irrigation Council.

Tad Moen, North Poudre Irrigation Company

Moen represents the fifth generation on his family’s ranch in Virginia Dale, Colo. Two weeks after graduating from Poudre High School, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps. Then, after several tours overseas, he traveled along the Pacific Coast, where he eventually enrolled at California State University, Chico, to study mechanical engineering. After he returned to Colorado, he applied for a ditchrider position with North Poudre Irrigation Company in 2014 and was hired. The next year, he was promoted to operations manager, and the following year he was named interim manager, before being named general manager at the beginning of 2017.

Rob Posten and Patrick Zimmer, Goshen Irrigation District

The Goshen Irrigation District is located in Goshen County, Wyo., and began its operations in the 1920s. The district serves 52,484 acres of irrigated lands in Goshen County. Posten is the manager of the district, and among other capacities, serves as president of the Four States Irrigation Council’s board of directors. Zimmerer is the district’s attorney and legal counsel. The district faced the ultimate challenge in 2019 when a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation tunnel that services its entire district, as well as the Gering-Fort Laramie Irrigation District, collapsed in the height of their irrigation season.

Amos Lange, North Loup River Public Power & Irrigation District

Lange is an Ord, Neb. native, who was hired by the North Loup Public Power and Irrigation District in 2013. He was promoted to general manager in 2017. The North Loup Public Power and Irrigation District is spread out over five counties and supplies water to 28,000 acres in central Nebraska. His presentation at the Four States Irrigation Council’s annual meeting will include information regarding the flood of March 2019. Amos will be speaking about the flooding that happened in the North Loup Valley, which lasted 14 days and did nearly 1.5 million dollars worth of damage to the North Loup River Public Power and Irrigation District, and how his district was able to temporarily fix things to supply water for the 2019 irrigation season. Amos will also touch on the adversity of dealing with FEMA and NEMA.

ANNUAL MEETING

SPEAKER BIOS

2:30 p.m. – Water Policy Updates

Dan Keppen, Family Farm Alliance executive director

Keppen is executive director for the Family Farm Alliance, a non-profit association that advocates for family farmers, ranchers, irrigation districts and allied industries in 17 Western States. He has 26 years of experience in water resources engineering and policy matters. Keppen currently is the president of the Klamath County, Ore., Chamber of Commerce board of directors. He serves on the agricultural water conservation work group as part of the Bureau of Reclamation's "Next Steps" phase of the Colorado River Basin Study process. Keppen received his masters degree in civil engineering from Oregon State University, and his bachelors degree in petroleum engineering from the University of Wyoming.

Julie McKenna, Brandeberry-McKenna Public Affairs

McKenna is a third-generation Colorado native who began her public affairs career under former U.S. Sen. Hank Brown. From 1986-1992, she served in the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives as Brown's legislative assistant, providing analysis and recommendations on transportation, energy, environmental, and natural resource issues. In 1993, McKenna returned to Colorado where she began her lobbying practice. Her accomplishments include the passage of legislation to ensure the continued operation of water districts in compliance with TABOR, and the creation of the Native Species Conservation Trust Fund. In 2017, McKenna was awarded the community impact award from Invest in Kids for over 17 years of dedicated advocacy on behalf of the organization. She currently serves as a member of the St. Mary's Academy Alumni Board.

3:30 p.m. – USDA Survey of Irrigation Organizations

Marcel Aillery, USDA Economic Research Service

Aillery will utilize her expertise and experience to discuss with attendees of the Four States Irrigation Council's annual meeting the USDA's upcoming survey of organizations that manage water supplies for irrigated agriculture. USDA regularly surveys irrigated farms as a follow-on to the U.S. Agricultural Census every five years. However, this will be the first time since 1978 that the federal government has undertaken a comprehensive survey of U.S. irrigation water-supply entities. The questionnaire covers various topic areas, with a primary focus on drought response and resilience. The survey is intended to go out into the field in early 2020, based on the 2019 production year. Survey results will be available in aggregate form only, ensuring that no individual organization can be identified, as required by federal law.

Friday, Jan. 10, Speakers

9 a.m. – Reclamation Funding Opportunity (WaterSMART)

Robin Graber, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Office of Policy and Administration

Graber is a program analyst in Reclamation's Office of Policy and Administration in Denver. Graber is the WaterSMART Grant Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects program coordinator and manages the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program. In this position she responds to congressional inquiries, develops and maintains multi-million-dollar annual budgets, develops agency policy and program funding opportunities, and coordinates and communicates with stakeholders and internal staff to support the planning and implementation of these programs. Graber joined Reclamation in 2016 after graduating from the University of Maryland with her masters degree in conservation biology and sustainability, where she focused on water resource management. She previously worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services in the Aquatic Invasive Species Branch, and as a laboratory technician at Florida State University. Graber received her bachelors degree in biology and environmental studies from Lake Forest College in Illinois.

Katie Schultz, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Office of Policy and Administration

Schultz is a program analyst in Reclamation's Office of Policy and Administration in Denver. Schultz assists with the management of several WaterSMART programs, including Water Marketing Strategy Grants, Reclamation's Drought Response Program, and Reclamation's West-Wide Climate Risk Assessments under the Basin Study Program. She oversees the coordination between Reclamation's WaterSMART Program and the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Additionally, Schultz assists in the management of the WaterSMART Data Visualization Tool and related databases. Katie joined Reclamation in 2017 as an AmeriCorps intern while attending the University of Denver, where she earned her graduate degree in GIS. She received her bachelors degree in geology from Adams State University in Alamosa, Colo.

The Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program provides financial assistance to entities in the Western United States for water management activities. This presentation will discuss various WaterSMART program funding opportunities, including Water and Energy Efficiency Grants, Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects, Water Marketing Strategy Grants, Drought Resiliency Project, the Cooperative Watershed Management Program, and others. This presentation will outline eligible applicants and project types, evaluation criteria, and funding available for each program. It will also provide an overview of the application review process and application tips.

9:30 a.m. – History Presentations

Brian Werner, Northern Water

Werner, a native Coloradoan and water historian, has spent 37 years actively communicating water information to the public. For decades, he has served as the public information officer and communications department manager for the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District in Berthoud, Colo. Werner was a member of the Four States Irrigation Council Board for 30 years and helped coordinate the conference for many years. He has attended every Four States annual conference since 1985. Werner was born and raised in Colorado Springs, where his father was a professor and chair of the Business and Economics Department at Colorado College for 38 years. Werner attended the University of Northern Colorado and Colorado State University, earning undergraduate and masters degrees in history. Brian will retire from his posts at Northern Water at the end of January 2020.

Catherine Griffin, U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, Nebraska-Kansas Area Office

As an archeologist for the Bureau of Reclamation, Griffin manages prehistoric, historic, and paleontological resources found on public lands in Nebraska, Kansas, and a small part of Colorado. Griffin also consults with non-federal stakeholders, such as irrigation districts, to make sure federal undertakings are in compliance with cultural resource laws and regulations. Prior to Reclamation, Griffin worked with the U.S. Forest Service in Fort Collins, Colo.

ANNUAL MEETING SPEAKER BIOS

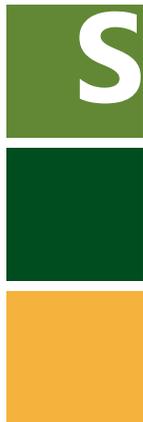
10:30 a.m. – Technology Updates

A.J. Wiese, Axiom Instrumentation Services

Wiese is the director of operations for Axiom Instrumentation Services based out of Mission, Kan., a suburb of Kansas City. Axiom is a full sales and service rep. firm focused on flow, level, pressure, gas detection and water quality measurements supporting the central United States. For the past 12 years, Wiese's extensive experience has primarily been focused on flow and level measurements working in conjunction with many industry leading instrumentation manufacturers across various markets.

Ansley "A.J." Brown, Irrigation Innovation Consortium, Colorado State University

Brown is the assistant director of the Irrigation Innovation Consortium (IIC), and also a Ph. D. candidate at Colorado State University, advised by Allan Andales and co-advised by Timothy Gates. He grew up in Rocky Ford where he worked under Michael Bartolo for five years before getting dual bachelors degrees in agricultural business and soil and crop science through Colorado State University. Today, his research interests are irrigation water, soil salinity management, crop growth, soil and crop model augmentation, and low-cost environmental sensor development. Upon graduation, he plans on using his Ph.D. to continue to pursue a career in irrigation technology through the IIC.



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