

SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# Annual Water Seminar

**75 Years:**

**Using the Lessons Learned**



Friday, April 1, 2016

DoubleTree Hotel

Durango, CO

## **NOTES**

- 8:00**            **Registration & Breakfast**
- 8:30**            **The District's Mission: Adaptive and Resilient**  
Bruce Whitehead, Executive Director
- 8:50**            **Generations of Water Resources Stewardship**  
Moderator: Christine Arbogast  
Manuel Heart, Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Chairman  
Clement Frost, Southern Ute Indian Tribal Chairman
- 9:25**            **A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret: Irrigation Supply**  
Wally Patcheck, La Plata Cherry Creek Ditch  
Travis Custer, High Desert Conservation District
- A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret: Watershed Health**  
Deanna Drew, San Miguel Watershed Coalition  
Aaron Kimple, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
- 10:10**           **Networking Break**
- 10:35**           **Telling the Story of SWCD Leadership**  
John Porter, SWCD Board President  
Mike Preston, Dolores Water Conservancy District  
Doug Kemper, Colorado Water Congress
- 11:35**           **Fred Kroeger: Community and Collaboration**  
Steve Harris, Harris Water Engineering  
Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek & Associates
- 12:00**           **Lunch**
- 1:30**            **A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret: Domestic Supply**  
Joanne M. Spina, La Plata County Palo Verde Public Improvement District #3  
Ron Gabbett, Norwood Water Commission
- 1:50**            **1941 to 2016: The Era of Conservation Districts**  
Greg Hobbs, Former Colorado Supreme Court Justice  
Bill McDonald, McDonald Water Policy Consulting
- 3:15**            **Cupcake Break**
- 3:35**            **Film Preview: River of Sorrow**  
Cody Perry, Rig to Flip
- 3:50**            **A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret: Collaborative Processes**  
Chris Jones, Dolores River Restoration Partnership  
Peter Butler, Animas River Stakeholders Group
- 4:10**            **Closing Remarks**  
John Porter, SWCD Board President

### **8:30-8:50am**

#### **The District's Mission: Adaptive and Resilient**

*Bruce Whitehead, Executive Director*

Bruce Whitehead is a native of Colorado born in Fort Collins. He has an extensive background in Colorado water issues, having worked 25 years with the Colorado Division of Water Resources. The latter part of his career with the State of Colorado was in the capacity of Division Engineer for the San Juan and Dolores Rivers. Bruce is an Engineer Advisor for Colorado on Upper Colorado River Commission, and is a past Director on the Colorado Water Conservation Board. The Southwestern Basin Roundtable appointed him as one of their representatives on the Inter-Basin Compact Committee (IBCC). He also served in the Colorado State Senate, and was in a leadership position on the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee with duties that included the IBCC, and the Colorado Foundation for Water Education. He was named the 2010 Pinnacle Award recipient for the State Senate by the Colorado Farm Bureau. Bruce obtained a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University, and is a licensed Professional Engineer. Bruce and his wife Becca enjoy the arts and the outdoors, and live south of Hesperus near Breen. They are raising two daughters, Isabel and Risa.

### **8:50-9:25am**

#### **Generations of Water Resources Stewardship**

*Moderator: Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek & Associates*

Christine Arbogast is a native Coloradan, born in Pueblo. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism and political science from CSU Pueblo. After working as a journalist in Canon City and at the Durango Herald, Christine served as press secretary for Congressman Ray Kogovsek starting in 1979. In 1985, Christine returned to work for Ray Kogovsek, who had chosen not to run for re-election. For more than 30 years, their small lobbying firm has worked primarily on Western resource issues and for mostly Colorado clients, including the Southwestern Water Conservation District, the Animas-La Plata and Dolores Water Conservancy Districts and others throughout the state, local governments and Colorado's two Ute Indian Tribes. Christine is on the board of the Colorado Water Congress and serves as its federal liaison. She is chair of the National Water Resources Association's federal affairs committee and a board member, and has received NWRA's President's Award for the last two years.

*Manuel Heart, Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Chairman*

Manuel Heart is the current Chairman of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. He has served as a council member since 1995, and is a board member of numerous committees on tribal, state and national levels such as Weeminuche Construction Company, Four Corners Monument, Brunot Commission, Colorado Commission Indian Affairs and National Congress of American Indians. When serving as Chief Executive Officer for the Weeminuche Construction Company, Manuel Heart was responsible for managing over \$500 million in construction projects and he was part of a leadership team that worked with the United States Department of Agriculture to establish the Blue Mountain Hospital in Blanding, Utah. In his most recent administration, Chairman Heart has been a champion for children, youth and families and played a key role in designing nearly 20 new programs that have generated \$15 million in new grants in just two

years. Last year, Chairman Heart inspired the first ever Native National Partnership Retreat where the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe designed collaborative solutions with 20 national partners to present to over 40 federal government agencies. The Huffington Post has featured at least three articles that have highlighted Heart's leadership. In addition to his tribal role Manuel Heart is a cattle rancher, husband to Marie Lansing Heart, and an adoring grandfather.

#### *Clement Frost, Southern Ute Indian Tribal Chairman*

Clement J. Frost was born and raised on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. In his early childhood he attended the Ute Vocational School and later went on to graduate from Bayfield High School. In high school, Frost received a full-ride scholarship to play basketball at Scottsbluff College in Scottsbluff, Neb., where he studied physical education and liberal arts. He later transferred to Adams State University, and finally to Otero Junior College playing basketball for each school he attended. After college, Frost joined the military becoming a military officer for the U.S. Army. His experience in the military helped Frost land a job with the Southern Ute Police Department as a dispatcher and special deputy. He then went on to work for many departments within the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. He has established various athletic tournaments including the most popular, Los Pinos Spring Softball Classic. Frost also established the grease pole climb and horseshoe and volleyball tournaments that take place during the Southern Ute Tribal Fair. He was elected to council for the first time in 1979. From 1979 until his retirement in 2008, he served on council as a council member, vice chairman and chairman. Frost was reelected to Tribal Council in 2014 and currently serves as Chairman of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. Frost has one son.

#### **9:25-10:10am**

#### **A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret: Irrigation Supply**

##### *Wally Patcheck, La Plata Cherry Creek Ditch*

Wally Patcheck is a native of southwest Colorado. He was born at Hesperus, moved to Thompson Park when he was only seven months old, and has lived there ever since. Wally has served as President of La Plata Cherry Creek Ditch Company for 16 years. He has been a Water Commissioner for the Division of Water Resources since 1999, 10 years for the La Plata and Animas drainages and then six years for the Mancos drainages. This year he is back working on the La Plata and Animas drainages again. Wally is a lifelong cattle rancher, and with the help of his two sons, continues to ranch in southwest Colorado.

##### *Travis Custer, High Desert Conservation District*

Travis has been involved in agricultural work for about 8 years growing vegetables, gourmet mushrooms, teaching, and raising animals. He has a passion for community organizing and developing resilient agricultural systems. Travis has experience practicing and teaching permaculture, seed saving, and soil health management here in the Southwest and in Central America. He currently lives in Mancos, and is the proud father of a 4 year old boy who loves to get dirty! Travis is currently on the board of the Mancos Conservation District, is an Agricultural Consultant for the High Desert Conservation District and is president of the San Juan Basin Watershed Association. He looks forward to spending his time working closely with producers to strengthen soil health and water conservation practices, such as cover cropping, irrigation management, and reduced tillage.

## **A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret: Watershed Health**

*Deanna Drew, San Miguel Watershed Coalition*

Deanna Drew is a coal miner's granddaughter who has been working and volunteering on various conservation projects in southwestern Colorado for nearly 30 years. Her experience includes: facilitating 50 acres of court-ordered wetland restoration; administering the scientific study and protection of high alpine fens during ski area development; performing water quality testing and reporting at historic mine sites; public education regarding endangered species reintroduction; implementation of voluntary community incentive programs for water conservation, noxious weed control, wildlife habitat, forest health and wildfire mitigation, and renewable energy. She was trained in environmental journalism by *High Country News*, once published her own newspaper and now writes nature stories for news and media publications, as well as writing grants for regional conservation projects and programs. Deanna prefers to focus on education and collaboration to achieve desired results from stakeholders in a cooperative manner, and is truly honored to represent the San Miguel Watershed Coalition at this seminar.

*Aaron Kimple, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership*

As Program Director for Forest Health and Program Coordinator for the San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, Aaron Kimple manages programs and organizes community involvement in mountain science. Mr. Kimple has more than 10 years of experience in project management, 20 years of experience with landscape ecology and environmental monitoring, and 5+ years of experience in public facilitation and community outreach. He facilitates partnership development and promotes community involvement. Aaron manages watershed level projects, forest health initiatives, and facilitates community stakeholder groups. Mr. Kimple works with the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, regional tribal entities, and the local governments of Archuleta, San Juan, La Plata, and San Miguel Counties.

**10:10-10:30**

**Networking Break**

**10:35-11:35am**

**Telling the Story of SWCD Leadership**

*John Porter, SWCD Board President*

John Porter has served as the Montezuma County representative for the Southwestern Water Conservation District since 1990, and is the current President. He was born in Lewis, Colorado (a community named after his maternal grandfather), and graduated from Colorado A&M College. John has been in the water business since childhood, as his father's helper/irrigator, and later as the farm corporation manager. He served on the boards for the Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company, Colorado Water Resources & Power Development Authority, Colorado Water Congress, Colorado Foundation for Water Education, Colorado Water Trust, the 7-State Colorado Water Users Association, Southwest Basin Roundtable, Colorado Interbasin Compact Committee, Empire Electric Association, and the Colorado Rural Electric Association. He was General Manager of the Dolores Water Conservancy District for 22 years.

*Mike Preston, Dolores Water Conservancy District*

Michael Preston received a B.A. from the University of California at Santa Barbara, and an M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Colorado at Denver. Preston has served as the General Manager of the Dolores Water Conservancy District since October of 2007, and as Chairman of the Southwest Basins Roundtable since early 2008. During 25 years with Fort Lewis College, Preston served on the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe negotiating team in the Colorado Ute Indian Water Rights Settlement, and as Project Development Coordinator for 7,600 acre Ute Mountain Farm and Ranch Enterprise. In 2004, he facilitated the Dolores River Dialogue until becoming a participant in 2007 representing DWCD.

*Doug Kemper, Colorado Water Congress*

Doug Kemper was selected as the Executive Director of the Colorado Water Congress in 2005. He has served on the Board of Directors in various leadership capacities since 1989. He holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Civil/Water Resources Engineering from Colorado University and Vanderbilt University, and is a registered Professional Engineer. Prior to joining the CWC, Doug spent 20 years as the Water Resources Manager with Aurora Water and 4 years as a project engineer with Rocky Mountain Consultants.

**11:35am-12:00pm**

**Fred Kroeger: Community and Collaboration**

*Fred Kroeger: 1918-2015*

Fred Kroeger attended his first Southwestern Water Conservation District meeting in 1948. He served as a board member for 55 years and as president for 33 years. During his tenure on the board, three major water projects were approved: the Florida Project (Lemon Dam), the Dolores Project (McPhee Dam), and the ALP Project (Ridges Basin Dam). Over the years, Fred was also a board member for the Animas – La Plata Water Conservancy District, the Colorado Water Congress and the Colorado Water Conservation Board. He was locally involved with the City of Durango Water Commission, the La Plata County Water Advisory Board, Club 20 and the La Plata West Water Authority. Fred also served as Mayor of Durango, a City Council member, First National Bank board member, and President of the Ft. Lewis Foundation. He was an active member of Kiwanis and the Chamber of Commerce. Fred received the prestigious Wayne N. Aspinall Water Leader of the Year award from the Colorado Water Congress, the Bureau of Reclamation Citizen Award, and the Citizen of the Year Award (from the Durango Chamber Resort Association). Fred's grandfather and family moved to the Mancos Valley in 1885 and later lived and ranched in the Animas Valley. His father owned land in the Breen/Red Mesa area on the La Plata River.

**12:00-1:30pm**

**Lunch**

**1:30-1:50pm**

**A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret (Continued)**

**Domestic Supply**

*Joanne M. Spina, La Plata County Palo Verde Public Improvement District #3*

Joanne M. Spina is the Assistant County Manager for La Plata County and has been employed by La Plata County for 27 years. She graduated from Castle Junior College in Windham, NH

with Associate Degree in Business and earned a certificate in Public Policy and Administration from the University of Colorado as well as a certificate in mediation from the University of Texas, School of Law, Center for Public Policy Dispute Resolution. Ms. Spina is a graduate of the Rocky Mountain Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government and the 1989-1990 class of Leadership La Plata. Since 1985, she has served on a number of local non-profit boards, including the Mercy Regional Medical Center Board of Directors, on which she has served for nearly 16 years. In 1995 she and her husband founded the Journey of Hope Fund which provides free mammograms to women in southwestern Colorado who otherwise cannot afford them. Joanne received the 2006 Morley Ballantine Award, which recognizes women for their service and leadership in La Plata County. In 2007 was named "One of Five Most Influential Women of the Current Era in La Plata County" by the Women's Resource Center and recently received the 2016 Extraordinary Woman Award from the Women's Resource Center. She is a former president and board member of the Association of Colorado County Administrators and is a current member of the Colorado City and County Managers Association and the International City and County Managers Association. Her career in the public sector spans more than 35 years.

#### *Ron Gabbett, Norwood Water Commission*

Ron Gabbett moved to Norwood in 1984, and started RNG Contracting in 1986, which he continues to operate today. He has been interested in water matters long before he was appointed to the Norwood Water Commission in 2010. He is currently Chairman of the Commission, and a shareholder of the Lone Cone Reservoir and Ditch Company. Ron was contracted by US Forest Service to gather water samples from 2002-2003, and by Norwood Water Commission in 2009-2010 to serve as inspector for an ARRA-funded project. You could say water is in his blood, as Ron's grandfather was president and founder of the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District.

#### **1:50-3:15pm**

#### **1941 to 2016: The Era of Conservation Districts**

##### *Former Colorado Supreme Court Justice Greg Hobbs*

Justice Greg Hobbs practiced environmental, land use, transportation and water law for 23 years before becoming a member of the Colorado Supreme Court on May 1, 1996. Recently retired, he continues to serve as Vice-President for the Colorado Foundation for Water Education and a Co-Convener of the Water Judges' Educational Project, Dividing the Waters (National Judicial College). He is the author of *In Praise of Fair Colorado, The Practice of Poetry, History and Judging* (Bradford Publishing Co. 2004); *Colorado Mother of Rivers, Water Poems* (Colorado Foundation for Water Education 2005), *The Public's Water Resource, Articles on Water Law, History, and Culture* (Continuing Legal Education in Colorado, Inc. 2007), *Living the Four Corners, Colorado Centennial State at the Headwaters* (Continuing Legal Education in Colorado, Inc. 2010); and *Into the Grand* (Continuing Legal Education in Colorado, Inc. 2012). His J.D. is from the University of California at Berkeley 1971; his B.A. in History from the University of Notre Dame 1966. He was an Assistant Attorney General for the Natural Resources Section of the Colorado Attorney General's Office from 1975-1979. From 1979-1996, when in private law practice with Davis, Graham & Stubbs followed by Hobbs, Trout & Raley, he served for seventeen years as counsel to the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District.



*Bill McDonald, McDonald Water Policy Consulting*

A fifth generation Coloradoan, Bill had a 36-year government career in western water resources management. He now has his own part time consulting business assisting a range of clients with water resources management challenges throughout the West. From 1979-90, Bill was Director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board. During his tenure, he also represented Colorado on several interstate organizations and compact commissions, and was a lead negotiator for the state on the Colorado Ute Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement and implementing legislation. In 1990, Bill joined the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Over the next 20 years he served as the Regional Director for the Pacific Northwest Region, an Assistant Commissioner, and a Deputy Commissioner. During the 2001 and 2009 Presidential transitions he was the Acting Commissioner. Bill has degrees in chemistry, natural resources management, and law, and is admitted to the Colorado Bar. He and his wife have eight children, six of whom are adopted and of various national and racial heritages.

**3:15-3:30pm**

**Cupcake Break**

**3:35-3:50pm**

**Film Preview: River of Sorrow**

*Cody Perry, Rig to Flip*

Cody M. Perry is a filmmaker that specializes in telling stories about the Colorado River Basin's land, water and people. Cody has worked with non-profits, federal land agencies, outdoor brands and many voices from our diverse western communities to create films and images that inspire awareness and engagement in the future health of our land, water and people. Cody comes from a ranching family in southern Arizona. He's worked as an outdoor educator, a ski patroller and writer. His passion is telling stories about the West.

**3:50-4:10pm**

**A Not-So-Well-Kept Secret: Collaborative Processes**

*Chris Jones, Dolores River Restoration Partnership*

Chris Jones has lived and worked in Southwest Colorado for 22 years getting his first job at the age of seven working for a small ranch near Dolores, Colorado. After graduating from Dolores High School in 2008, Chris went on to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Biological Sciences from Western State College of Colorado in 2012. Currently Chris is serving as a Field Supervisor for Southwest Conservation Corps and Conservation Legacy where his primary focus is the Dolores River Restoration Partnership. Previously he worked for the Bureau of Land Management for six field seasons, Hayden-Wing Associates (a private biological consultant), and served as a Crew Leader for Southwest Conservation Corps. Chris has been involved with the Dolores River Restoration Partnership for two years, monitoring previously completed work and actively treating and removing invasive species, and is looking forward to another productive year on the Dolores River.

*Peter Butler, Animas River Stakeholders Group*

Peter Butler has been involved in Colorado water issues in various capacities for over thirty years. He has been working with the Animas River Stakeholders Group (ARSG) on abandoned

mine remediation and improving water quality since the group's inception in 1994 and is currently one of the group's co-coordinators. He served on the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission for a total of nine years, three years as chair. He has also been chair of the La Plata County Water Advisory Commission, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe/State of Colorado Environmental Commission, and president of the Lake Durango Water Authority. Peter has a bachelor's degree in physics, a master's degree in economics, and a Ph.D. in Natural Resource Policy which is a combination of economics, water law, hydrology, and water quality management. He resides in La Plata County.

#### **4:10-4:15pm**

#### **Closing Remarks**

*John Porter, SWCD Board President*

(See bio for previous presentation.)

#### **About SWCD**

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

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 every other month.

SWCD's charter 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 levels.

Funded by property taxes, SWCD currently funds a variety of essential work, including vital stream flow data collection by the US Geological Survey, water quality sampling through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, water supply augmentation through weather modification, endangered fish species recovery efforts in the San Juan Basin, and compact water bank programs on the Western Slope.

SWCD's substantial grant program supports local efforts across the District, among them water supply projects, recreational development, environmental improvements, collaborative community processes, and water quality studies.

For more than 20 years, the District has spearheaded regional water education by sponsoring an Annual Children's Water Festival for students across the basin and administering the Water Information Program with contributions from participating entities. This is the 34th year the District has invited prominent experts to share their expertise at the Annual Water Seminar.

# Annual Water Seminar

## 75 Years: Using the Lessons Learned

### EVALUATION FORM



<p><b>Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback.</b></p> <p><b>Please return completed forms to the registration table or email <a href="mailto:lauras@swwcd.org">lauras@swwcd.org</a> with your comments.</b></p>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
<p>1. How satisfied were you with the registration process? Comments:</p>				
<p>2. How satisfied were you with the conference facilities? Comments:</p>				
<p>3. How satisfied were you with the food service? Comments:</p>				
<p>4. How satisfied were you with the networking opportunities? Comments:</p>				
<p>5. How satisfied were you with the length of panel sessions? Comments:</p>				
<p>6. Overall, how useful was the seminar? Comments:</p>				
<p>7. What are your suggestions for improving future seminars? (Use the other side of this form if needed.)</p>				
<p>8. What are your suggestions for future seminar presentation topics?</p>				

# SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## **Board Members**

John Porter, President  
Steve Fearn, Vice-President  
Bob Wolff, Secretary-Treasurer  
J. R. Ford, Director  
David Guilliams, Director  
Rusty Hinger, Director  
Monte Naslund, Director  
Jenny Russell, Director  
Doug Stowe, Director  
John Taylor

Montezuma County  
San Juan County  
La Plata County  
Archuleta County  
Hinsdale County  
Mineral County  
Montrose County  
San Miguel County  
Dolores County  
Director Emeritus

## **Staff**

Bruce Whitehead  
Laura Spann

Executive Director  
Office Manager



75 Years Developing and Conserving  
the Waters of Southwestern Colorado

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