

# 2015 Water Course: Water for Agriculture

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

### February 11, Session 1: Hydrologic and Legal Context

#### **Hannah Holm, Colorado Mesa University**

Hannah Holm is the coordinator and co-founder of the Water Center at Colorado Mesa University, which promotes research, education and dialogue to address the water challenges facing the Upper Colorado River Basin. Hannah previously advocated for stronger drinking water protections with the citizen action group Western Colorado Congress and served on her local watershed group board in Pennsylvania. In the late 1990's, Hannah worked for the North Carolina General Assembly, where she helped staff committees on the Environment, Natural Resources, Sustainable Agriculture and Smart Growth. Hannah has a joint Master's degree in Community & Regional Planning and Latin American Studies from the University of Texas at Austin and a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology from Macalester College in St. Paul, MN.

#### **Dr. Gigi Richard, Colorado Mesa University**

Gigi Richard is currently a Professor of Geology at Colorado Mesa University (CMU) in Grand Junction, CO in the Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences and the Faculty Director of the Water Center at CMU. She holds an M.S. and Ph.D. from Colorado State University in hydraulic engineering and a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Gigi created the Watershed Science program at CMU and teaches water science and environmental geology classes. Her research on human impacts on river systems includes the study of downstream impacts of dams and levees on rivers in Colorado, New Mexico and New Zealand. Recent work has focused on better understanding the hydrology and morphology of intermittent streams in western Colorado and on the need for peak flows to maintain the channel form of the Yampa and Dolores Rivers in western Colorado. A resident of Colorado since 1989, Gigi has experience in private engineering consulting and served on water quality and land use planning commissions in Summit County, Colorado from 1990 to 1996.

#### **Kirsten M. Kurath, Williams, Turner & Holmes, PC**

Kirsten M. Kurath is a shareholder of the Grand Junction law firm, Williams, Turner & Holmes, PC. Kirsten obtained her undergraduate degree in cellular and developmental biology from the University of Arizona and her law degree from the University of North Carolina. Kirsten practices water law and represents clients on a wide variety of water related issues including water court applications to adjudicate and protect water rights. She has worked with energy companies, gravel pit operators, irrigation districts, water user associations, special districts, domestic water providers, farmers, ranchers, subdivision developers and individuals on their water law related issues. Kirsten also maintains a general civil practice and represents clients on a wide variety of issues. Kirsten is licensed to practice law in Colorado and Utah.