

2015 Water Course: **Water for Agriculture**

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

February 18, Session 2: Water Use and Economics

Dr. Perry Cabot

Water Resource Specialist, Colorado Water Institute, Colorado State University

Dr. Cabot is an Extension Specialist and Faculty Affiliate of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Colorado State University. He received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Engineering and Land Resources from the University of Wisconsin at Madison, his M.S. in Environmental Engineering from the University of Illinois, and his B.S. in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University. He has authored several academic papers on subjects related to agricultural practices and their environmental impacts. He is also licensed professional engineer, and a member of Chi Epsilon and Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Societies. He has conducted international work pertaining to water supply and purification project in Rwanda through Engineers Without Borders. Dr. Cabot is also a Fulbright Scholar (2009) in collaboration with the University of Zambia on research related to soil sustainability, irrigation practices, and bioenergy cropping.

Kevin Conrad

Operations Manager, Grand Valley Water User's Association

Kevin Conrad is the Operations Manager of the Grand Valley Water User's Association. The Grand Valley Water User's operates the Grand River Diversion Dam, commonly known as the Roller Dam, on the Colorado River in Debeque Canyon, the Government Highline Canal System that delivers water to the Grand Valley Water Users' Association, Palisade Irrigation District, Mesa County Irrigation District, and to Orchard Mesa Irrigation District, with whom the Association is a partner in the operations of the Grand Valley Power Plant in Palisade.

Kevin is a western Colorado native of 53 years. He began his career with Grand Valley Water Users' Association in 1985 starting as an operations and maintenance crew member up to 1994. He then served as Field Supervisor until 2013 when he became Operations Manager for the Association. He has been very involved with the Salinity and Recovery Program improvements. Kevin has greatly enjoyed the diverse types of work and people that he has worked with and looks forward to continuing to service the Grand Valley for years to come.

David Harold

Farmer, Olathe, CO

David and his family farm onion, pinto bean, sweet corn, grain corn, small grain, hay, summer squash, both Organic and Conventional, about 700 acres total. He also has cattle. They have approximately 150 acres in subsurface drip and is expanding that acreage. They have been doing sub-surface drip for about 10 years. They have a center pivot system on about 55 acres. David is a member of the Gunnison Basin Roundtable and is a participant in No Chico Brush, a farmer-led group that is leading initiatives to firm the supply of agricultural water to producers while simultaneously contributing to conservation values such as endangered species, critical habitat protection and improving stream flows.

Jesse Russell

Western Region Agriculture and Business Management Economist, CSU Extension

Jesse received a bachelors in Animal Science, and a minor in Ag Business from Utah State University. During his undergraduate career he also participated in three separate internships on various cattle operations. Between his undergraduate and graduate degree he was employed by Agreserves Inc. in western Nebraska on a large cow-calf and yearling operation and then in southeast Montana on another cow-calf operation owned by Agreserves. Jesse has recently completed a graduate degree in Applied Economics at Utah State University. Jesse enjoys hiking, fishing, hunting, and spending time with his wife and two boys.

Carlyle Currier

Rancher, Molina, CO

Carlyle Currier is a fourth generation rancher in the Plateau Valley. His great-grandfather purchased his first farm in the Grand Valley in 1891, and part of Carlyle's ranch is official designated as a Colorado Centennial Farm, being owned and operated by the Currier family for more than a century. Carlyle is a graduate of CSU, and has been very involved in several industry organizations. He is currently Vice President of the Colorado Farm Bureau and a member of the board of the US Meat Export Federation. He represented Colorado beef producers on the Cattlemen's Beef Board for six years. He is also very involved in water issues, and currently serves as President of the Cottonwood Lakes Reservoir Company and Secretary of the Collbran Water Conservancy District. He serves on the Colorado Basin Roundtable and represents it on the Colorado Inter Basin Compact Committee. He is also Vice Chairman of the Colorado Agriculture Water Alliance, which is made up of representatives from 22 statewide agricultural organizations.

Bruce Talbott

Talbott Farms, Palisade, CO

Bruce Talbott has roots in the local fruit industry going back to 1906. Talbotts Mountain Gold is currently producing about 300 acres of peaches, 150 acres of wine grapes, 10 acres of pears and produces apple and pear juice, all in Palisade. In the past his family was heavily committed to apple production, but economic factors have caused them to shift to other crops. Recent national interest in hard cider may provide an opportunity to go back into apple production with varieties specifically selected for that purpose. Bruce is responsible for all orchard and vineyard production with his brothers Nathan being responsible for packing and processing and Charlie being responsible for marketing, banking, business structure, etc. Peaches are their most important crop economically. They use water out of four different canals and pump directly from the river. Irrigation systems include furrow, microspray and drip. Bruce is also President of the Board of the East Orchard Mesa Irrigation District

Joe Bernal

Managing Partner, Bernal Farms, Loma, CO

Joe Bernal is the Managing Partner of Bernal Farms in Loma Co. and has been a Farmer since Graduating from Fruita Monument H.S. in 1981. Joe is President of the Grand Valley Water Users Association, and has served on its board for the past 10 years. He has also served on the Western Colorado Vegetable Growers Association board, Fruita Co-op Member Relations Board, and other Agriculture planning and advisory committees. Joe has also gained experience working in construction of some nearby water projects, such as Mcfee project in Cortez, CO and the Salinity Control projects here in the Grand Valley in the Early 1980's. He has also installed over 8 miles of underground and gated pipe systems on his own family farm. Joe is a 4th generation Farmer in Loma, and farms with his son Bryan and his parents Jim and Helen Bernal.