

2015 Water Course: Water for Agriculture

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

February 25, Session 3: Future of Irrigated Agriculture

Brent Newman

Program Manager, Water Supply Planning Section, Colorado Water Conservation Board

Brent Newman works in the Water Supply Planning Section of the Colorado Water Conservation Board. A native of East Tennessee, he attended the University of Mississippi for undergraduate and law school. For a ski season before law school, he worked at Taos Ski Valley in New Mexico as a lift operator, and fell for the Rockies. Though he'd never been to Colorado, he moved there a week after graduation, eventually gaining employment in the Interstate and Federal Section at the CWCB. Intrigued by the complexity of western water policy issues, he enrolled in night classes at the University of Denver to learn more, earning an LL.M. in Natural Resources and Environmental Law and Policy in 2012. Now he serves as the liaison to the Colorado, Gunnison, Arkansas, and South Platte basin roundtables, program support for the Interbasin Compact Committee, and was a lead author on the first draft of Colorado's Water Plan. In his free time, Brent enjoys snowskiing, running, hiking, and exploring Colorado's remarkable landscape. Occasionally he can be found in an undisclosed Denver karaoke location, attempting to mimic the vocal stylings of Elvis Presley or David Banner.

Dr. Ken Nowak

Hydrologic Engineer, Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region

Ken Nowak is a hydrologic engineer with the Boulder Canyon Operations Office of Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region. He is stationed in Boulder, Colorado as part of the planning and modeling team. Ken was heavily involved in Reclamation's Colorado River Basin Water Supply and Demand Study. He is a co-chair of the Agricultural Water Conservation, Productivity, and Transfers workgroup as part of the Basin Study Moving Forward Effort. In addition to planning and modeling activities, he is engaged in climate science research throughout the Colorado River Basin. Ken holds a B.S. in environmental engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is also a graduate of the University of Colorado where he earned a M.S. and Ph.D. in civil and water resources engineering. In his free time Ken enjoys hiking and fly fishing.

Steve Fletcher

Manager, Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association

Steve Fletcher has been Manager of the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association (UVWUA) for the past four years. He has been employed with UVWUA for the past 32 years, starting with 12 years as a Ditch rider, then 6 years as Crew Forman, and 10 years as Water Master. Steve was a heavy equipment and auto mechanic before joining UVWUA. He graduated from Delta High School in Delta, CO and attended North Eastern Junior College in Sterling, CO. Steve serves on the Gunnison Basin Roundtable, the Selenium Task Force and on the Colorado Mesa University Water Center Advisory Council. He is also involved in many other Local, State and Federal activities.

Daniel Fullmer

Western Water Project Coordinator, National Young Farmers Coalition

Daniel combines expertise from natural home construction, outdoor education, solar electric installations, greenhouse design, and vegetable farming. These insights allow for integrated solutions that can improve the function of farms and our connection to communities. Current work includes writing and research for the National Young Farmers Coalition and the owner of Tierra Vida Farm.

Dan Birch

Deputy General Manager, Colorado River Water Conservation District

Dan is Deputy General Manager for the Colorado River Water Conservation District. Previously he held management positions with water utilities in Steamboat Springs and Boulder, CO and has served as Water Referee for the Division 6 Water Court since 1992. Dan's board and committee service includes the Colorado Water Congress, the Interbasin Compact Committee, the Yampa/White Basin Roundtable, Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District, the Colorado River Water Conservation District, Yampa Valley Bank and the Steamboat Springs School District. Dan completed his bachelor's degree in geology and his master's degree in civil engineering from the University of Colorado. He is a registered professional engineer.

Kim Albertson

Secretary, Grand Valley Water Users Association

Kim Albertson grows alfalfa hay and corn for silage as part of a family ranching business in Fruita. He has three grown children and serves on the Grand Valley Water Users Association board of directors and the Colorado River Basin Roundtable.

Greg Trainor

Chair, Advisory Council, Water Center at Colorado Mesa University

Greg Trainor retired in 2014 from his position as Public Works, Utility and Planning Director for the City of Grand Junction. Greg Trainor has been closely associated with water for most of his career in Colorado municipal government. Greg has held positions with the City of Colorado Springs as the assistant to the Utility Director, Town Manager for the Town of Rangely in Northwest Colorado, Job Site Coordinator with Atlantic Richfield Company during the planning and construction of the Battlement Mesa New Town, and as Project Manager for the Colorado River Water Conservation District's Taylor Draw Dam near Rangely Colorado. Greg has served on the Colorado River Basin Roundtable, representing Mesa County municipalities, is the Past-president of United Way of Mesa County, and an officer in the Southwest Chapter of the River Management Society. He is currently the Chair of the Advisory Council for the Water Center at Colorado Mesa University. Greg graduated from Colorado State University in 1970 with a BA in Political Science and History. In 1972 he graduated from Brigham Young University with a Masters in Public Administration.