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Press Release – For Immediate Release

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Learn about the present, past and future of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers in Mesa County on May 15, 6-8pm at Grand Junction City Hall

The Colorado River District and the Water Center at CMU will co-sponsor the annual “State of the Rivers – Mesa County” meeting on Thursday, May 15 from 6-8pm in the Grand Junction City Hall Auditorium at 250 N 5th St.

This year’s meeting will provide an opportunity to learn about and discuss the present, past and future state of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers in Mesa County. Mesa County Commissioner Steve Acquafresca will emcee the meeting. Light refreshments will be provided.

What’s the outlook for water users this year?

This winter, the headwaters of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers enjoyed above-average snowfall for the first time since 2011. The meeting will open with a presentation by Erik Knight of the US Bureau of Reclamation on what this year’s snowpack will mean for reservoir operations and flows in the rivers.

A Look Back: The Development of the Grand Valley Project & Government Highline Canal

Grand Valley Water Users Association Manager Mark Harris will present a slide show of historical photographs depicting the building of the Grand Valley Project, including the roller dam in DeBeque Canyon and the Government Highline Canal. This project, which began supplying irrigation water in 1915, greatly increased the amount of land under cultivation in the Grand Valley.

The Future: Colorado and Gunnison Basin Water Planning Updates

Colorado’s population is projected to double by 2050, raising the specter of a significant gap between water needs and developed supplies. Governor Hickenlooper has ordered a plan to meet that gap to be drafted by the end of this year. Water managers and stakeholders in “Basin Roundtables” throughout Colorado are developing river basin plans that will contribute to the statewide plan. Mark Hermundstad, a water attorney with Williams, Turner & Holmes, PC and a member of the Colorado Basin Roundtable, and Frank Kugel, Manager of the Upper Gunnison Water Conservancy District and a member of the Gunnison Basin Roundtable, will provide updates on water plans being developed for the Colorado and Gunnison River Basins and take comments from the public.

For more information, visit: <http://www.coloradomesa.edu/watercenter>