

2014 Water Course – Session 3 – February 17, 2014
Water Center at Colorado Mesa University

The Colorado Water Plan & the Gunnison Basin Plan: Process & Perspectives

Speaker Biographies

Mike King, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources

Mike King has led the Department of Natural Resources since 2010, navigating the agency through significant reorganization, regulatory accomplishments and landscape-scale protection under the direction of Governor John Hickenlooper.

As Executive Director of DNR, King guided the creation of Colorado Parks and Wildlife, a merger of two previously stand-alone divisions that serves as an important example of Governor Hickenlooper's efforts to shape a more efficient state government. King also shepherded the move of the Colorado Geological Survey from DNR to its new home at the Colorado School of Mines, where it can more cost-effectively serve Coloradans as a critical source of research and information.

King has also executed three major regulatory initiatives designed to strike the evolving balance between development of our oil and gas resources and protection of the environment and human communities. He guided a lengthy collaborative process with the U.S. Forest Service and the public to develop a Colorado Roadless Rule that dramatically increases safeguards and preservation of our spectacular forests. He has also overseen a period of record revenues for the Colorado State Land Board, which raises money for K-12 education in the state. In addition King has played an important role in resolving water allocation challenges between Colorado's Western Slope and Front Range. One of his priority missions is bringing more Colorado youth into the outdoors and into natural resource-focused careers.

King is a native West Slope Coloradan. He became the Assistant Director for Lands, Minerals and Energy Policy in January of 2006 and was appointed as Deputy Director of the Department of Natural Resources in September of 2006. Mike was appointed executive director of DNR in May 2010. He was reappointed to the position by Governor John Hickenlooper in January of 2011.

Prior to his employment in the Executive Director's Office, Mike worked in the Policy and Regulation Section at the Colorado Division of Wildlife in various capacities for six years and was an Assistant Attorney General from 1993-1999.

Mike received his Bachelors degree in journalism from CU-Boulder, law degree from the University of Denver and a Masters in Public Administration from CU-Denver's Graduate School of Public Affairs.

Mike currently lives in Parker with his wife Amy and their three children.

Email Mike at Mike.King@state.co.us

Greg Johnson, Project Manager, Wilson Water Group

Greg is a project manager at Wilson Water Group, a small water resources engineering firm specializing in basin-wide planning and surface water allocation modeling. He has over 10 years of experience in water resources planning and management.

Before joining Wilson Water Group, Greg served as a program manager with the Colorado Water Conservation Board, where he was responsible for technical assistance and stakeholder outreach on statewide planning and policy efforts. In addition, he managed a large and diverse grant program for water projects throughout the state. Greg combines his understanding of complex statewide issues with a background in municipal water supply to help clients meet their needs for strategic water planning, protection, and development.

Greg has an M.S. degree in Watershed Science from Colorado State University and a B.S. in Geology from Wheaton College. In 2012, Greg completed the Water Leaders Program of the Colorado Foundation for Water Education (CFWE). He is currently honored to serve on the CFWE Board and its Program Development Committee. In his spare time, Greg enjoys keeping up with his wife and three kids, along with activities that involve bikes, skis, and beautiful places.

Jim Pokrandt, Colorado Basin Roundtable

Jim Pokrandt is the Education and Communications Specialist for the Colorado River District, a position he has held since 2005. Prior to joining the Colorado River District, Jim worked in community-level newspapers at all levels for 30 years, the last 13 in various ski resort communities in Western Colorado. In addition to his duties at the River District, Jim is the chair of the Colorado Basin Roundtable, one of nine Roundtables created by the Colorado General Assembly under the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act.

Jim Yahn, South Platte Basin Roundtable

Jim Yahn is the manager of the North Sterling and Prewitt Reservoirs, a position that he has held for nearly 22 years. He is responsible for overseeing the diversion and distribution of water to over 350 farmers. Together the reservoirs are a source of irrigation water for approximately 70,000 acres.

Jim is a registered professional engineer, receiving B.S. in Agricultural Engineering from Colorado State University. Prior to his employment with the North Sterling and Prewitt he worked as a private consulting engineer in Fort Collins for 5 years. He is a native of Colorado growing up on a family ranch, which used water from the North Sterling Reservoir System.

Jim is the past Chairman of the South Platte Basin Roundtable and currently serves as the roundtable's representative to the Interbasin Compact Committee. In his spare time Jim farms and ranches with his wife Tracy and two children.

Larry Clever, Ute Water/ Grand Valley Water Providers

Larry Clever has been General Manager of Ute Water since May 1, 1995. Ute Water is the largest domestic water provider on Colorado's Western Slope. Larry is married and has three children and five grandchildren.

Richard Van Gytenbeek, Trout Unlimited

As Trout Unlimited's Colorado River Basin Outreach Coordinator, Richard is responsible for enlisting support for healthy river flows in the Colorado River Basin from local agricultural interests, sportsman groups and river-dependent businesses. Richard is educated as a Fisheries Biologist (BS-Humboldt State Univ.) and as a Landscape Architect (MLA-Univ. Colorado at Denver). He practiced as a licensed LA in Jackson, Wyoming for 27 years specializing in rural planning, stream restoration and wetland design. While in Jackson he was a long time planning commissioner for Teton County and spent six years as a board member for the Jackson Hole Land Trust. Originally from Colorado, Richard and his wife Jane located in Grand Junction to be close to the mountains and deserts of the Colorado Plateau.

Gary Barber, Arkansas Basin Roundtable

Gary Barber is the intermountain regional director of WestWater Research, with offices in Colorado Springs, CO. WestWater Research, based in Boise, Idaho, has been involved in water rights valuation and consulting in at least 20 Western states. Barber's professional career includes commercial real estate development, public/private partnerships and water rights consulting services to government entities on bond districts, stormwater and water resource development. Barber's resume includes 16 years of involvement with Colorado water rights. He has been employed by the El Paso County Water Authority, Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority, and the Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control and Greenway District. Gary is the current chairman of the Fountain Creek Watershed Greenway Fund. Barber is originally from Colorado Springs, graduating from the United States Air Force Academy in 1976.

Torie Jarvis, Northwest Council of Governments

Torie Jarvis co-directs the Water Quality/ Quantity Committee of the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments, which facilitates and augments ongoing efforts of committee member local governments and water providers in the headwaters of the Colorado River Basin to protect and enhance the region's water quality while encouraging its responsible use for the good of Colorado citizens and the environment. A former river guide, Ms. Jarvis also has worked for the US Department of Justice in the Indian Resources Section and the Western Hardrock Watershed Team.