

## **Jim Pokrandt**

Jim works for the Colorado River District as the community relations director. He has been with the River District since 2005. Prior to joining the Colorado River District, Jim worked in small-town newspapers for 30 years, the last 13 in various mountain communities in Western Colorado.

Jim is the immediate past chair of the Colorado Basin Roundtable, one of the nine Roundtables in Colorado created in 2005 by the General Assembly to discuss and help solve a projected water supply shortage in Colorado, while balancing the interests of the cities, agriculture, recreation and the environment.

In both capacities, his work on the Colorado River has been to educate citizens about water use in the arid West. In Colorado, as much as 500,000 acre feet of Colorado River water is moved from Western Colorado to Eastern Colorado's Front Range -- across the Continental Divide. This significant amount of "transmountain" water, about 20 to 25 percent of Colorado's depletions from the Colorado River system, is reusable to extinction. In other words, there are no return flows to western Colorado and on the Front Range, the water can be used over and over again until it's literally gone.

The Colorado River District was founded in 1937 to protect Western Colorado water in the face of transmountain diversions. That work is directed at protecting and balancing interests among the many stakeholders on the river from agriculture, municipal users, recreation and the environment.

The Roundtable system was created by the 2005 Colorado Water for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act. It was designed to drive down to the grassroots the discussion and search for solutions to Colorado's water challenges.