



COLORADO

Colorado Water
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources



COLORADO

Department of Local Affairs

Division of Local Government

Colorado Water and Land Use Planning Alliance

Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, January 8th, 2020 1:00-4:00 PM

University of Colorado Denver

1250 14th Street, Room 2005

Denver, CO 80202

Welcome

- The previous meeting was on September 10th, 2019.
- New Members Welcome
 - Mary Ann Dickinson – **Alliance for Water Efficiency**
 - [Net Blue](#) is a water neutral development program that includes template codes and model ordinances. Net Blue is currently being piloted in Bozeman, MT.
 - Mary Ann chairs the American Planning Association (APA) [Water and Planning Network](#), which is trying to get more water content into sessions for the [2020 National Planning Conference](#) in Houston, TX.
 - Jessica Thrasher – **Headwaters Institute**
 - Headwaters Institute has launched water conservation programs focusing on rainwater harvesting. There are several rain barrel and rain garden [workshops](#) coming up in 2020.
 - Cindy Lair – **CO Department of Agriculture**
 - The state has made progress on its Colorado Soil Health Program initiative, which has a lot of climate implications. They are also in the process of creating the state's greenhouse gas roadmap.
 - Cindy is active with US Climate Alliance's [Natural and Working Lands](#) group.

Alliance Member Updates

- Torie Jarvis – **Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) Water Quality/Quantity (QQ) Committee**
 - QQ is assessing NWCCOG members' land use codes and developing a resource guide focusing on 'low hanging fruit' conservation and efficiency measures for the headwaters region. The resource guide should be done within the month. Torie will send it out to Alliance members when it's completed.
 - QQ is working with WRA to look at adequate water supply regulations and how their members can go above and beyond state statute requirements. They're also researching commercial water efficiency measures local governments can enact.
 - In March, NWCCOG will host a workshop for planners in the QQ region, but they're happy to open that workshop to other folks who are interested. Torie is working on getting CE credits for the workshop.

- Karen Hancock – **City of Aurora**
 - Karen is working with Aurora Water to look at undeveloped land and estimate water demand based on zoning districts.
- Heather Stauffer – **Colorado Municipal League (CML)**
 - CML recently hosted a webinar with Water Education Colorado, Denver Water, CWCB, Getches-Wilkinson Center, and others around water efficiency and land use planning.
- Erin Rugland – **Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy**
 - Babbitt Center will release a guidance manual on integrating water into comprehensive plans in March (it's undergoing peer review right now). Contact Erin if you would like to help review the manual.
- Gretel Follingstad – **University of Colorado, Denver, College of Architecture and Planning**
 - Gretel's PhD dissertation is about water demand on prairie lands in the context of varying housing typologies.
 - Gretel has facilitated for Growing Water Smart [workshops](#) in the past. She is also working on the guidance document Torie Jarvis mentioned on a consultant basis.
- Rocky Piro – **University of Colorado, Denver, College of Architecture and Planning**
 - Rocky is Executive Director of the [Colorado Center for Sustainable Urbanism](#). He is currently working on fine-tuning a water survey that will be distributed to local governments across the state.
 - Rocky summarized his experience with a visiting professorship in Germany. During his time in Germany, he learned about climate change and acid rain impacts on the Black Forest as well as water quality improvements in urban areas.
 - Rocky handed out copies of the Creating Healthy Places [Guidebook](#) and explained the university's [Health + Design Initiative](#).
- Austin Troy – **University of Colorado, Denver, College of Architecture and Planning**
 - Austin is principal investigator on the project that Gretel mentioned. They are working with Babbitt Center to forecast likely residential irrigation water demand into the future, starting with City of Aurora data. The goal is to integrate various scenarios (including climate change impacts) and use a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods.
 - Austin is interested in ways CU can integrate more water literacy into curriculum. CU is the only accredited planning school in Colorado; the school can do more to educate planning students about water issues and potentially talk to other western planning schools to somewhat standardize water planning curriculum.
- John Berggren – **Western Resource Advocates (WRA)**
 - Amelia Nuding is leaving WRA to join Tampa Bay's water utility.
 - [WaterNow Alliance](#) is conducting interviews with 10-15 Front Range communities about challenges, what resources they need, what gaps in information they have, etc. The interviews will then inform a guidance document.
 - WRA is helping Susan Wood of APA CO work on legislation that would authorize local jurisdictions to specifically include water in their comprehensive plans.
 - WRA and Babbitt Center are hosting a workshop in Salt Lake City, UT in March about water and land use planning. If any Alliance members have contacts in Utah, let John know.

- KC: Members, as you're giving your update, if you have a question you want group feedback on, let the group know so we can be conversational.
- Jeremy Stapleton – **Sonoran Institute**
 - Sonoran Institute is hosting the first Arizona Growing Water Smart [workshop](#) in February with seven communities from the Phoenix metro area. There was a lot of demand for this workshop, especially from elected officials. If you have any Arizona contacts who may be interested, let Jeremy know.
- Waverly Klaw – **Sonoran Institute**
 - The next Colorado Growing Water Smart [workshop](#) is in Breckenridge on May 6-8. The deadline to apply is February 14; please share workshop details with your networks. Waverly is also looking for Alliance members who can help facilitate during the workshop.
 - In partnership with ULI CO and Babbitt Center, Sonoran Institute is speaking with Colorado developers about their greatest barriers to growing water smart and how we can generate solutions to those barriers.
 - Update on the metrics project: The project team held the third workshop this morning. They hope the metrics document will be a guide for communities throughout Colorado to see how they can change for to better; the guide can also help the state roll up data.
 - Sonoran Institute is working with WRA to host an event in Greeley on February 20. Sonoran Institute is also partnering with APA CO to plan a north central region event.
- Scott Williamson – **Water Education Colorado (WEco)**
 - WEco held multiple workshops and webinars about incorporating land use planning into water efficiency plans; they will hand final report to CWCB soon. A big takeaway is that demonstrating water efficiency on publicly-owned land is a good first step for many communities.
 - WEco's [Water Fluency Program](#) is targeted to folks who aren't water professionals but need a better understanding of water issues in Colorado. The program will be in southwest Colorado this year.
 - Applications for WEco's [Water Leaders Program](#) are due Friday, January 10.
 - WEco's [Headwaters](#) magazine is focusing on environmental justice issues. Contact Jayla Poppleton if you would like to include something in the magazine.
 - The Statewide Education and Action Plan (SWEAP) is now finished. It presents a five-year vision for raising awareness, behavior change, and systems change. The executive summary should be done by end of January.
- Mallory Hiss – **Colorado Watershed Assembly (CWA)**
 - CWA has four main [programs](#): annual Sustaining Colorado Watersheds Conference, Inflow Network Newsletter, Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund, and Colorado Data Sharing Network. CWA also holds data literacy and water quality workshops within conservation districts.
- John Shepard – **Sonoran Institute**
 - Sonoran Institute is advocating for use of treated wastewater as instream flows in southern Colorado and Arizona. Tuscon, AZ is expanding this practice.
- Sarah Martin – **Brendle Group**

- Brendle is developing the metrics guidebook (mentioned by Waverly earlier). The guidebook is expected to be finalized in April 2020. As part of the third metrics workshop, Sarah collected a “wish list” that participants would like the state of Colorado to do relating to water.
- **Shelby Sommer – Brendle Group**
 - Brendle Group is doing climate change work in Bozeman, MT. They should connect with Mary Ann about the Net Blue pilot. Shelby has Utah contacts that John Berggren may be interested in.
 - Brendle Group is working with DOLA to update the [Colorado State Resiliency Framework](#).
 - Brendle Group is launching a new program for the National Ski Areas Association to develop a badge based system for various sustainability achievements (including water efficiency).
- **KC McFerson – CO Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)**
 - Kevin Reidy is very sick and is not able to join the meeting.
 - Kevin and KC are working on a roundtable discussion with utility leaders; report-out will be a session for the land and water track at the [RMLUI](#) conference.
 - KC presented at the APA CO training/celebration [event](#) for Rep. Jeni Arndt on December 12. APA CO is always working to increase representation from local planners at their events.
- **Lindsay Rogers – WaterNow Alliance**
 - WaterNow Alliance is a network of local water decision makers.
 - WaterNow Alliance is working with WRA on supporting communities to integrate water and land use planning; they will be kicking off the interviews John Berggren mentioned.
 - [Project Accelerator](#) provides up to 250 hours of direct technical assistance; they received eleven applications from Colorado communities in the last round.
 - There is a strong connection between alternative transfer methods (ATMs) and integrating water and land use planning. WaterNow Alliance published a [guide](#) for decision makers about the benefits of those types of solutions. Starting in March, WaterNow Alliance will hold a series of workshops and webcasts about the ATM guide.
- **Faith Sternlieb – Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy**
 - 2020 [RMLUI](#) conference is coming very soon in March. Conference organizers are excited about the seven land and water track sessions that Alliance members helped put together. Please register for the conference if you haven’t already. Speakers and moderators need to send bios and head shots to Lisa Loranger.
 - Planning has begun for American Water Resources Association (AWRA) June 2021 Land and Water Specialty conference in Denver. Babbitt Center will draw upon Alliance members’ expertise to contribute to this conference.
 - Faith wants to get quick hotel survey; there’s a choice between Hyatt Regency Aurora Denver or Hyatt Regency Denver Tech Center.
 - 2021 AWRA specialty conference is really a follow up to the 2018 Water Connect [conference](#) in Kansas City.
 - Susan: Access to transit is important.

- Planning for about 300 attendees right now but will probably be more than that; already have 600 people in [APA Water and Planning Network](#).
 - Alliance members gave input on hotel options.
 - Faith is looking for volunteers to help with multiple conference committees.
 - Babbitt Center is working on a CO River Basin-wide indicators research project. A Babbitt Center intern is developing a story map that will be presented at the March Alliance meeting.
 - Jim Holway is in Paris for meetings.
- Christy Wiseman – **CO Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)**
 - Christy is the new Land Use and Water Planner (funded in partnership with Babbitt Center) as KC McFerson was promoted to the Senior Planner position within DOLA’s Division of Local Government, Community Development Office. Christy was previously a long range land use planner for Boulder County, CO.
 - Christy is also the Deputy Recorder for the [South Platte Basin Roundtable](#), one of the state’s nine basin roundtables.
 - Christy will be managing and facilitating the Alliance going forward.
- Jeff Tejral – **Denver Water**
 - Denver Water is working on implementing grey water systems in Denver this year; pilot programs should start in June.
 - Denver Water staff moved into new high efficiency building.
 - Denver is updating their city codes to incentivize new developments to use more efficient plumbing fixtures and low-water landscaping. If successful, provisions may become requirements. As part of this, Denver Water is altering their system development credit charge.
 - City of Denver is kicking off a One Water Plan and analyzing how to integrate all city water systems.
- Susan Wood – **American Planning Association Colorado (APA CO) Legislative Committee**
 - APA CO’s Legislative Committee is working on legislation to help link master plans to the state Water Plan (this is the third iteration of the bill). Rep. Jeni Arndt is sponsoring the bill. It will be introduced early in the session. APA CO hopes to have Alliance members’ support for the legislation. Susan will keep the Alliance apprised of key dates and would appreciate volunteers willing to testify.

Alliance Strategic Visioning Session

- What we have already as the Alliance
 - Charter
 - Tools spreadsheet
 - Offline interaction on project specific basis
 - Thoughts about who our audience is
- Need to go beyond information sharing to have a collective impact
- “This is our process together”
- What does a successful Colorado look like?
 - Success is having a way to measure our progress; having a set of metrics is key.

- Success is when planners have the resources they need.
- Colorado's approach is to encourage, to incentivize, etc. Is that going to be enough? 2017 metro area survey work shows that many places are already doing something to integrate water and land use planning; what info did we have to set that 70% Water Plan target?
- Don't know if success means "you shall" (i.e., state mandate) but that question is front and center.
- "You shall" is coming; but do we have the tools out there and tested to show people how exactly to implement these processes (cost, equity, etc.); we don't want knee jerk reactions to new mandates. We need to be able to say "If you do this process, here's what to expect. We have examples and case studies."
- Success is having varied audiences reach consensus on this issue.
- California and New Mexico tie evaluation work to hydrology and hydrologic surveys; when you're looking for political will you can point to that hard evidence on the ground.
 - It doesn't feel like there's as much involvement from the state engineer/groundwater piece of the puzzle in Colorado as compared to those other states.
- The missing element is standardization; there is no real consistent language or set of processes.
 - There's way more standardization in climate and energy worlds (e.g., accounting for greenhouse gases).
- What's high leverage opportunity; if we could mandate a "you shall," what would it be?
 - What can we say about effectiveness to prove it should be a "you shall?"
 - Comprehensive plans are advisory in Colorado.
 - However, water savings from codes are measurable.
- Maybe pilot communities doing implementation can help close gap between "you shall" and where we are now.
- Success is when we're addressing all facets of water: source, domestic use, reuse, conservation, reentry for groundwater and surface water and all the array of issues that interface with it.
- We want Colorado communities to develop in a way where water is an integral component of their development and that water is integrated throughout the planning and implementation process; we want intentionality.
- Success is a holistic system; Alliance members are at all levels of government up to state level. The Alliance can bring different scales of government together to develop relationships.
- We need proof of concept projects; what do we need to validate when doing pilot projects (e.g., grant program with funding and technical assistance to help communities develop comprehensive plans that meet these specific standards).
- How long does this group exist; on what timeline can we work on?
 - We need to make a 1-year plan, a 5-year plan, etc.
 - It depends on what the state does; the Alliance could be here in perpetuity.

- In 2026 all Colorado River Basin states have to have their act together to come to the table and update the Drought Contingency Plan; the Alliance has a couple years to help the state inform that.
- Even if the state creates “you shalls,” those actions need to be informed by multiple stakeholders via groups such as the Alliance.
- How do we get there?
 - Focusing on comprehensive plans is good because it helps get programs and projects funded by elected officials.
 - What are successful places where comprehensive plans have teeth? We could bolster teeth of comprehensive plans by enacting legislation.
 - That can lead to a downside of just checking boxes without real impact (i.e., phoning it in). We’d rather have communities choose to do planning processes because they see value.
 - You need community buy-in to have a good job.
 - Can DOLA funding be linked to some metric integrating water and land use planning (required, recommended, and bonus points)?
- How can we leverage each other’s work?
 - In this group, we don’t have a shared pool of resources to pull from.
 - We don’t get together before doing our respective yearly planning efforts.
- How can the Alliance contribute? What are our key focus areas?
 - Is the pivot point to look externally and have a public facing profile?
 - There is value in showing a collective voice in external communications.
 - We can contribute to a clearinghouse of resources.
 - The Alliance has been acting as a venue; individual members can then decide to go back and take individual action with their organizations.
 - Should this group make the case to jurisdictions who don’t think water is a problem?
 - Some jurisdictions talk the talk but also look for next water source for more growth at the same time.
 - Can have two different messaging strategies: one for communities with water utilities and one for communities who are served by a larger entity (e.g., Northern Water) that are separate.
 - Business practices of water districts isn’t necessarily changing or being scrutinized.
 - Is there a different way to include water districts; a different funding source?
 - The Alliance’s charter focuses on the gap; we’re on the side of reducing demand.
 - Have to hammer down on demand; not just looking for more supply.
 - We are primed to enhance the next version of the Colorado Water Plan when the state is ready to go to the negotiating table in 2026.
 - We can suggest adding more meat to water adequacy standards.
 - It all comes back to the water budget idea; you have to account for it both in comprehensive planning efforts and at site plan level.

- Economics part of the conversation is missing; communities are playing sales tax and jobs center game because water is still relatively cheap.
 - Lawns can act as a drought cushion.
 - There's a way to meet revenue needs while having efficient land use patterns.
 - As efficiency goes up, fixed costs of infrastructure become a higher part of the ratio; that pipe has to be serviced for 50 years.
 - Make this a messaging point to developers. What are you doing with all the infrastructure, it becomes a drag on you later on.
 - Wastewater is an even bigger expense.
 - How do we attach water to other ongoing messaging (e.g., energy efficiency)? Can we tie water to our progress in climate and energy?
- What are our strengths?
 - Resources/tools
 - Reiterate importance of translating data/jargon for non-experts and telling the story.
 - Policy/legislative and state framework
 - Communication
- Audiences
 - Utilities
 - Developers
 - Planners/designers
 - Officials
 - Public
 - Tourist economy
 - Agriculture
 - Build coalition among agricultural sector by connecting municipal metrics to threat of taking acres out of production.
 - Cindy: Phil Brink's survey about how agricultural operators react to discussion of instream flows; they feel most comfortable with in person meetings led by their conservation districts. We are trying to help farmers get more involved with stream management planning processes. It's been a challenge for participation because meetings take them away from their production tasks; everyone else is getting paid to be there.
- Are there other motivating messages aside from the population growth paradigm?
 - Torie: QQ has tourism and recreational economy; we've used more persuasive messaging about conserving water to help with instream flows (e.g., Aspen, stormwater impacts in Vail) for wildlife.
- Short, medium, and long term goals for the Alliance
 - Drought contingency plan update in 2026 could be good timeline to work toward.
 - We want to exceed Water Plan's land use goal, not just work toward or meet it.
- Do we as a group recommend policy or legislation?
 - We may vet or discuss.
 - Use the Alliance as a vehicle/venue to take action on issues important to those in the group who are interested.

- Not all issues will interest all members.
- The Alliance is not one unified voice; it's a collective of different expertise and experiences.
- Is our primary target for this work municipalities? Are all audience segments equally important?
 - Our niche is land use and water; lots of people are working on water across varying sectors.
 - Land use is local control so that's the focus.
 - Communities seems like the right level of scale.
 - Coordinate a multi-disciplinary, "multi-pronged approach."

Outcomes

- Update Work Plan
 - 2-year workplan might be helpful given 2022 date.
 - How does the workplan change when funding sources change (for a set of actions or the workplan, not necessarily a certain position)? Want to focus funding on our goals, not just funding someone to facilitate the Alliance.
- Start Drafting Updates to the Water Plan Goal
 - Discussion about the Water Plan update can be deep dive topic for the Alliance's March meeting.
 - Presentation from September 2019 C9 Summit about Water Plan update- would be helpful to ground the discussion and report feedback on roundtables' input at C9 Summit.
- To Do Before Next Meeting
 - Update story map
 - Create draft "course book" with resources/tools/support in progressive steps (101, 201, etc.)
 - Update Alliance charter and expand work plan
 - Prep for Water Plan goal planning session
 - Think about why the existing goal is not good enough.
 - List of wish list items can be future "you shall" items or go towards revising the Water Plan goal
 - Develop detailed set of actions
 - Develop resource needs list for each identified audience
 - Explore communications of tying water to a broader set of issues (climate, energy, etc.)
- Any volunteers from this group to help with these tasks?
 - Waverly: course book
 - John: metrics
 - Gretel: anything
 - Rocky: evaluation of the plan and general policy
 - Austin: CU student projects; GIS mapping

Wrap-up and Next Steps

- Announcements
- Next Meeting Date – March 4th, 2020