

CURRICULUM DRAFT* AT 9-13-17

Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado

September 2017—May 2018

**This draft was developed prior to the first session. It will be constantly revised as the year's program progresses. It is provided here as an indication of what's to come, but significant changes may be made, including the dates certain topics are presented.*

Objective:

Convene current and emerging leaders from the region's communities to convey an understanding of basic water information and issues critical to future decisions that will have deep influence over their communities' long term economic and environmental sustainability.

- Introduce participants to key regional and statewide players in water
- Impart information about key regional water institutions, policies and issues from multiple angles
- Provide opportunity for dialogue that delves deep into the region's water challenges and opportunities
- Showcase and examine examples of water leadership as a means of encouraging such leadership in participants

September 14—Introductions/Overview/Water Administration/Leadership Stories

- 8:00—8:15 **Why Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado?**
Objectives, Expectations, Desired Outcomes
Reagan Waskom, Colorado Water Institute
Ray Caraway, Community Foundation of Northern Colorado
- 8:15—9:00 **Who is Here? Where Do You Live/Work?**
What Do You Hope to Gain/Contribute?
Mapping Our Journey: Participatory Mapping Starts NOW!
(Thanks to Scott Bartling, Northern Water, GIS specialist)
MaryLou Smith, Colorado Water Institute
- 9:00—9:45 **River Administration in the Two Watersheds**
Presentation
- Where does our water come from? Where does it go?
 - Who keeps track?

- What laws must be adhered to?
David Nettles, Division Engineer, Division 1
Jean Lever, Thompson River Commissioner
Mark Simpson, Poudre River Commissioner

9:45—10:15 **River Administration in the Two Watersheds**
Questions/Dialogue—Challenges on the Horizon?

10:15—10:30 **Break**

10:30—11:30 **Leadership Challenge—Stories from the Field**
Seven selected water leaders will each share a story of water leadership pertinent to our region

- Sean Cronin, St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District
- John Stulp, Chair of Colorado’s Interbasin Compact Committee, Governor’s Advisor for Water Policy
- Sean Conway, Weld County Commissioner, Chair South Platte Basin Roundtable
- Heather Knight, Center for Collaborative Conservation, formerly The Nature Conservancy
- Robert Ward, Poudre Heritage Alliance
- David Jessup, Big Thompson Watershed Coalition
- Dick Wolfe, retired Colorado State Engineer

11:30—11:45 **Lunch Served, Brought Back to Tables**

11:45—12:45 **Leadership Challenge—Class Digging into the Stories**
An interactive dialogue with our story tellers about what we can learn from these stories to inform and inspire the leadership needed now as we face regional water issues
Reagan Waskom to facilitate

12:45—1:00 **Closing, Post-Session Homework**

Post-Session Homework

Send an email to MaryLou within one week of each session answering the following questions:

- What did you learn today that encouraged you?
- What did you learn today that discouraged you?
- What did you learn today that surprised you?
- What did you learn today that you want to know more about?
- Was there anything today that captured your attention to the extent that you could see yourself engaging in it further—to study it further, to play a leadership role in bringing it to the attention of others?

October 12—Domestic Water Providers/Water Law Basics/Leadership Stories

Presentations and Resource Links from Domestic Water Providers—Municipalities and Special Districts/Q&A

- City of Greeley—Burt Knight
- City of Loveland—Joe Bernosky, Water and Power Director
- City of Fort Collins—Carol Webb
- Little Thompson Water District—Mike Cook
- Fort Collins/Loveland Water District—Chris Matkins
- East Larimer County Water District—Mike Scheid
- North Weld Water District—Eric Recentine
- Covering these topics:
 - Customer base/coverage area
 - Water sources
 - Future Water supply plans
 - Water treatment
 - Wastewater treatment
 - Storm water management
 - Water rates and tap fees
 - Infrastructure
 - Water conservation programs
 - Floodplain management
 - Watershed protection
 - What is an Enterprise Fund (for municipalities)
 - What is a Special District? How is it different from a municipality? (for special districts)
 - What entities, organizations of peers, state and federal agency connections pertain to this subject?

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Colorado Water Law for Non-Lawyers—Reading Selections and Presentations from Domestic Water Providers—Municipalities and Special Districts

Andy Jones, Lawrence, Jones, Custer Grasmick Law Firm and co-author of the book Colorado Water Law for Non-Lawyers will give a high-level tour through Colorado Water Law Basics and answer questions you have always wanted to ask.

Additional Session Content

- Each session will begin with questions remaining from last session—to be answered or set aside to seek answers before next session.
- Each session will feature 2-3 of our participants leading the group in a 10 minute reading selection discussion based on his/her chosen reading.
- Each session will include **Leadership Challenge: Stories from the Field/Dialogue** in which selected presenters will each share a pertinent story of water leadership and engage with class members in an interactive dialogue about what we can learn from these stories to inform and inspire the leadership needed now as we face regional water issues

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November 9—Agricultural Water Use/Leadership Stories

Presentations and Resource Links from Agricultural Ditch Companies

- Greeley Loveland
- North Poudre
- Home Supply
- Water Supply and Storage
- Larimer Weld
- New Cache
- Covering these topics:
 - Ditch company coverage area and organizational structure
 - River flow rights, C-BT rights, storage rights
 - Storage and conveyance infrastructure
 - Major crops produced under their system
 - Primary irrigation methods used, infrastructure improvements made or being considered
 - Ditch wide change cases (how this impacts future changes/and or value of ditch shares)
 - Catlin laws – can shares be transferred out of ditches to other locations, can they be sold to municipalities or does it require ditch board approval?
 - Challenges with buy/dry (i.e. keeping head in the ditch).
 - What entities, organizations of peers, state and federal agency requirements/programs pertain to this subject?

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December 14—C-BT and Windy Gap Water/ Leadership Stories

Presentations and Resource Links from Northern Water covering these topics:

- History
- Source of water and legal justification for such
- Laws under which the water is administered
- Use of water, transition over time from agricultural to municipal, rules that govern use
- Infrastructure, past, present and future
- Special programs such as surplus carryover
- Challenges and opportunities

Input from Domestic Water Providers and Agricultural Irrigators Who Depend on C-BT and Windy Gap Water What are the issues you see regarding C-BT and Windy Gap water? What improvements do you think would be helpful?

Question and Answer Session in which participants ask presenters questions, in an effort to better understand the role of C-BT water in the full scheme of water in the region's communities

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January 11—Environmental Concerns/Leadership Stories

- Watershed health—the effects of floods and fires
- River health—all the aspects (bugs, riparian, fish, sediment, etc.)
- Water quality

What do we know from research?

- Upper Poudre Study—Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed
- Lower Poudre Study—Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed and City of Greeley
- State of the Poudre River Report Card—City of Fort Collins Natural Areas
- CSU scientists, state and federal agency scientists
- Watershed coalition groups research following 2013 floods

What is being undertaken to improve environmental conditions:

- City of Fort Collins natural areas work
- City of Loveland
 - Big Thompson Study
- City of Greeley
- The Nature Conservancy
- Thompson watershed coalition groups and their restoration projects
- PRTI Flows Initiative
- Others

February 8—Recreation and Business/Leadership Stories

- Breweries
- Rafting, boating
- Bike trails
- Fishing
- Water front properties, developments, businesses
- Dude ranching
- Sporting goods stores
- Outfitters
- Planning and Zoning—Larimer and Weld Counties as well as municipalities?

March 8—Economic Growth and Water

- Regional growth projections
- Means of increasing water supply
 - How you get a project built?
 - Overview of Proposed Projects
 - Water Conservation Strategies
 - Limitation of growth
- Economic competition between the region's cities and towns and how water enters that picture
- Regional cooperation? Emergency interconnects?

Resource people could include:

- Northern Water
- Army Corps of Engineers
- EPA
- City of Greeley—Seaman Expansion
- City of Fort Collins—Halligan Expansion
- City of Loveland – Windy Gap/Gravel Pits
- Save the Poudre
- Weld and Larimer County Commissioners
- Chambers of Commerce from all three major cities
- Developers
- League of Women Voters
- Other Activist Groups
- State water leaders such as John Stulp
- Land use planning experts working on this topic

- Western Resource Advocates
- Real estate groups
- City managers
- City council members
- Water board members, utility commissions

April 12—Ag/Urban Historical Changes and Future Outlook

- Ag to urban transition over time
- Municipal and special district ownership of ditch company stock
- The rental market that is a part of “purchase leaseback” arrangements
 - Effects of high C-BT prices
 - Effects of farmers selling C-BT in the 80s and 90s and risks in farming almost entirely on the C-BT rental market.
- Domestic water entities actively seeking agricultural water—their plans, policies, ideas for mitigation harm to agricultural tradition
- Water court change of use process
- The specific case of Thornton/WSSC—Mark Koleber, Dennis Harmon
- Projected composition of ag/urban uses 20, 30, 50 years from now
- Ag/urban/environmental water sharing ideas
 - The premise
 - Enabling legislation
 - What’s been tried in this region?
 - Larimer County purchase of Berthoud farm, City of Broomfield deal
 - Poudre Water Sharing Working Group experience—George Wallace and Eric Recentine
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Resource people for this session could include Colorado Open Lands, Brett Bovee, Larimer and Weld County Planning and Zoning.

May 10—Proposed storage projects

NISP

Halligan Expansion

Seaman Expansion