



Colorado Ag Water Alliance

"Committed to the preservation of agriculture through the wise use of Colorado's water resources"

2023 Colorado Ag Water Summit November 29-30 Larimer County Fairgrounds

Colorado Master Irrigator Workshop
Pre-Conference Event!
November 29th
8:30AM – 1PM



Since 2020, hundreds of farmers and ranchers in the Republican and Rio Grande River Basins have participated in the Master Irrigator Program. This comprehensive education course aims to equip producers with the knowledge they need to evaluate the potential pros, cons, costs, and methods to help pay for/recoup costs of implementing different tools and strategies to improve water and energy use efficiency and conservation, soil health, and profitability on their operations. While the Master Irrigator Program is a 32-hour course, this workshop is intended to offer a half-day version of the program for irrigators in the South Platte. This workshop will discuss hydrology and include presentations from farmers who have been implementing improvements on their own operations, and discussion among participants. We will also discuss what it will take to implement a Master Irrigator Program in your basin and opportunities to implement improvements on your farm or ranch.

Space is limited and this event is only available to irrigators

Wednesday November 29

4PM – 9PM

The Colorado River: Building a Statewide Ag Response - Discussion on the Colorado River Drought Task Force and how can agricultural producers from the West and East Slopes work together so that the agricultural community can prepare and respond to future drought and administrative changes on the Colorado River.

Mike Camblin – Moffat County Rancher

Matt Heimerich – Crowley County Farmer

Gerald Koppenhafer – Montezuma County Farmer

Robert Sakata – Adams County Farmer

Is WOTUS Dead? – There are new changes after the recent Supreme Court Ruling on Sackett v. EPA. What are possible changes at the state level? The Colorado Water Plans calls for a more effective and efficient federal permitting process. Is a better permitting process on the horizon or even possible?

Sean Cronin – Executive Director for the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District

John Kolaniz – Attorney for Otis & Bedingfield, LLC

Drought Resilience Projects Around the State

In 2023, CAWA has been involved in the Drought Resilience Program, funding 30 projects around the states by farmers and ranchers to experiment with ideas and implement projects that will help them be resilient and profitable during drought. We will discuss the program, future opportunities, and showcase some of the projects taking place this year.

Thursday November 30

8AM – 1PM

Taking Advantage of Federal Funding and Investing in Irrigation Infrastructure for The Future – Districts, ditch companies, and other organizations are working throughout the state to obtain federal funds to implement significant and large-scale irrigation infrastructure projects.

Daniel Boyes – Executive Director of the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project

Callie Hendrickson – Executive Director of the White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts

Other Speakers TBD

Colorado State University TAPS (Testing Ag Performance Solutions): Lessons from Year One – TAPS is a farming contest where teams select a corn hybrid, seeding rate and crop insurance, and make irrigation and nitrogen management and marketing decisions through the growing season. Discussion about the program and with growers who participated in the competition in 2023

Tim Martin – Executive Director of the Irrigation Innovation Consortium

Irrigators from the South Plate and Republican River Basins (details coming soon!)

Understanding Recent and Future Challenges to the Prior Appropriation System – In the past few years, proposed legislation has made many of us in the agricultural community ask: “Is this the beginning of the end of the Prior Appropriation System or are these challenges the same as others in the past?” Should we expect future challenges to come from the legislature? The courts? Ballot initiatives? What can farmers and ranchers do to

Lee Miller – General Counsel of the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

Drought Resilience Projects Around the State

Continue highlighting specific drought resilience projects throughout the state.