

From your perspective as a community leader in Northern Colorado, what is your key takeaway from today's session?

- Collaboration can be successful, even when crossing political boundaries, on a local level or when there is a perceived "enemy", such as with the upper basin Colorado River states vs the lower basin states. This makes me reconsider when and how collaborative problem solving is worth the effort and puts a clearer perspective on problem solving.
- I was very intrigued by the link between recreation and irrigation flows. There are so many beneficiaries to having a little control over the time of the runoff.
- I WISH BILL RITTER WAS STILL GOVERNOR OR EVEN PRESIDENT!! I was extremely impressed with the governor on his knowledge of water and how serious he is taking the issues that face Colorado, but also the other basin states. It was also interesting how much the oil & gas industry funds water conservation. I believe the figure was \$100's of millions, but not sure the time period.
- Having most of my experience in municipal water management and understanding the interactions around water between municipalities and development, this month's topics were new to me. It was interesting to hear about some of the "win-win-win" projects that Ducks Unlimited has worked on. It feels less often we hear about those kinds of projects or agreements in the municipal space. I'm curious if it is the nature of the water use or the nature of the entities that cause this. How can we work towards more of these "win-win-win" projects in the municipal/development/ag space?
- I really liked hearing from water professionals in the recreation/animal habitat and mineral industries. Water is a multi-use resource, that is limited and needs to be treated and shared with deep respect, honor, and care.
- I think the talk by Bill Ritter was over the top as far as timely, informed, and practical. We are in good hands as the future of Colorado water. The insights he shared with us were so needed, to us and our peers. What a treat. Note: it was also off-the cuff, top-of-the head, but well delivered and spot on, with no notes or powerpoint.
- I wasn't aware that Colorado had been unsuccessful in all previous litigation for not meeting obligations. Obviously that is concerning when thinking about current conversations regarding the Colorado River compact and even Nebraska's proposed pipeline.
- The rivers and lakes in Colorado have a lot of different uses besides just drinking water and agriculture. Recreation is a huge industry in this state. Not only local citizens but the rafting industry serves travelers from all over the world. It was very interesting how the rafting company had to keep very close tabs on the river with water officials and the forest service.

2022-2023 Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado
Homework Assignment for **February 2023 – Redacted**

- There is quite a bit more coordination between northern communities when it comes to trails, nature, etc.
- The collaborative efforts that we have seen in other areas of water management carry over into recreational planning and use. I appreciate that the people who are responsible for recreational use of the river take a comprehensive view of the river and are concerned about things like water health, resiliency and working with nature instead of against it.
- What a hard-working river the Poudre River is. It is incredible to think of the centuries of benefit it has given the people it has served well.
- The key takeaways from this session were: how important the Cache La Poudre River NHA is to public and private water recreation and conservation organizations: Ducks Unlimited, Mountain Whitewater and local municipalities as an economic driver and a Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI) value.

We still have work to do regarding clean water equity.

- I was impressed with just how early work began on the Poudre River Trail and the vision Windsor and Greeley had around that. I didn't realize that segments are already 25 years old and I appreciated how much creativity and coordination it takes to pull that off.
- I think it was very helpful to hear from other industries that are impacted by water in Colorado. Water impacts a lot of different factors and it helps lend understanding to why water issues are so difficult to solve.
- My key takeaway today was an admiration for the knowledge of water, water law, etc. that former governor Ritter carried into and expanded upon in his service as governor and now beyond in his work as Director of the Center for the New Energy Economy. I was impressed with his wisdom and his thought process re: all things water in CO.
- 1) It was very interesting to hear about the challenges associated with planning a river trail. I appreciate the work that Wade and Justin are putting into balancing conservation, recreation and JEDI objectives. I was also surprised to learn the cost is about \$1M/mile. 2) I had not thought about the impact that summer rains have on the front range, reducing the need to release irrigation water from reservoirs, and ultimately determining whether rafting companies will have sufficient flows to take customers rafting. 3) I was surprised to learn the relatively low percentage of water used by oil and natural gas companies. It wasn't enough to change my opinion about fracking operations along the front range, however!
- Recreation, Open Space and Trails stakeholders have as much interest in the health of the river as any other groups.
- My key takeaway is that waterfowl, beaver and potholes can do a lot to restore wetlands and river health. And that CO could have a big problem if a)

2022-2023 Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado
Homework Assignment for **February 2023 – Redacted**

western Kansas runs dry streams due to not receiving enough water from CO and b) that if CA persists in not signing the DCP, Then CO could be in big trouble as BOR may force CO to give upper basin water to CA under a separate compact.

- The nexus of water and energy....the sizeable gap of knowledge and understanding that is leveraged and taken advantage of in driving a magnitude of agendas is often misrepresenting the truth and misrepresenting or not at all presenting a 360 impact view.

What did you learn today that encouraged you, discouraged you, or captured your attention to the extent that you could see yourself engaging in it further?

- A couple of points captured my attention this class:

Having someone from the Cattlemen's Association or the like speak during the "Water for Agriculture" topic would be very interesting and helpful in pointing out the false choices / unintended consequences we are often blind to when creating our assumptions about water use.

Planning out 300 years for new development water use - this makes me chuckle as we can't even get 20 year planning to be adoptable and if reliance on grass roots planning at the basin roundtable level is the driver I would expect an historical review to question how often that planning has lasted hundreds of years.

Adjusting our growth planning to integrate JEDI principles may be an effective approach ... if there will be any water left when these principles become implemented.

- Encouraged about all the talk of new trails in the area especially along the river. Discouraged by Oxy's discussion about how much petroleum we "have yet to extract". While they gave some lip service to heading toward zero – burning all those fossil fuels only accelerate global climate change.
- The thing that still encourages me is the number of very intelligent and hard working people that Colorado has on its side. Governor Ritter further strengthens that statement and it is wonderful he is leading the charge!
- It was also encouraging to see how both Windsor and Greeley are collaborating on making their trail and park systems so much better.

Probably the biggest discouragement is that Colorado has never won an appeal tied to the Colorado River Compact and doesn't sound like winning one in the future is going to take place. So many laws are archaic and don't make sense these days and is unfortunate that the compact will be so difficult to amend.

- I was really excited to hear about how the highest priority recreation item to Windsor and Greeley residents is river access. That is a high interest item in Evans as well. I hope that residential interest in access to water based amenities opens them up to learning more about Colorado water issues, water conservation, and land preservation. It would be interesting to make those issues a focal point of water-based recreation, which is something I could carry out in my own community.

2022-2023 Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado
Homework Assignment for **February 2023 – Redacted**

- I was encouraged that the other sectors who rely on water (recreation, hunting, mineral extraction, etc.) are very aware of the fragile balance we have of use and repurposing of water.

As a river recreator, I learned a lot about the rafting season/water rights/water availability. I don't hunt or like fracking, but both speakers were intelligent and had great data on their water impact and conservation. It was encouraging!

- Encouraged: Erik from Occidental. Who would have thought a network of water recovery, all non-pot, has emerged in our backyard without any explicit government guidance or (apparent) funding?
- I work with Wade and knew that recreation associated with the Poudre Trail and Windsor's new Poudre River Experience have a positive economic impact, but I was encouraged to hear about efforts to improve river health. I used to attend Poudre Trail meetings in the late 1990s when the focus was simply to get the trail connected from one end to the other. It's good to see the focus now shift to include what nature needs as well.
- I was encouraged by former Governor Ritter on how he thinks the negotiations will proceed on the Colorado River Compact issues. I think he was being very realistic about how the State should approach the problem. Basically, saying that the water coming out of Colorado was over estimated by in the 1920's. I think everyone should understand that the science of measuring water supplies has advanced tremendously in the last 100 years. It is admitting that there is a problem so let's work together and solve it.
- The amount of coordination and resource sharing between northern communities when it comes to trails, nature areas, etc. There was the impression of a lot less "competitiveness" than what you see when it comes to businesses, residential growth.
- I think that the current state of the reservoirs, the complexities of the compacts and the increasing natural stressors (wildfires, etc.) are extremely troubling. I find the outcome of the recent Colorado River discussions between the states to be frustrating.
- I absolutely love the National Heritage Area's emphasis on equity access for everyone to the Poudre River for education, recreation, and general enjoyment.
- Some key highlights from the session for me were: Flushing water facets before drinking water; the challenges to the whitewater recreation business regarding permits and days allocated for capacity loads; exciting plans for Windsor and Greeley regarding JEDi; how water use and reuse works in oil

2022-2023 Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado
Homework Assignment for **February 2023 – Redacted**

and gas extraction; the value of hunters and anglers regarding conservation programs and funding

- Greg Kernohan's presentation was great, but I am concerned about what happens if DU continues to see a decline in membership. They have done a lot of amazing work. My kids and I recently watched an IMAX film called Wings Over Water about the prairie pothole wetland system. My kids loved it, for one, but it was a great gateway into understanding DU's role in preservation. I could see learning more about that and how species migrate through Colorado.
- I really enjoyed Carol's presentation on "What the Eye's Don't See". I think clean drinking water is often taken for granted and a lot of trust involved in the process.
- I was discouraged, maybe disheartened is the more appropriate term, to learn more about the Flint, MI water crisis and how we should all be flushing out water systems each morning.

I was encouraged to hear about the importance of water recreation and to know that is appreciated and actively cared for in our state. As someone who grew up in Greeley, CO I was hopeful to hear about the intersection – sweet spot – of conservation, recreation and JEDI the City is focused on. I hope to see more and more municipalities, etc. take a multi-pronged and multi-beneficiary approach to their work.

- 1) I was encouraged to learn of the trend to impose the 300-year rule for groundwater in new developments around the state. 2) My attention was definitely held by the talk on water for private recreation. Brad and Greg have such different interests, making for a really interesting presentation. 3) As usual, I enjoyed the book reports and learned several things from those.
- Hearing from energy developers the role and scale of water usage really helped in framing the public perception vs reality of fracking.
- It is very concerning that within two years Co could have this big water problem from Kansas or CA. It is very concerning that red and blue national politics could get in the way of the 7 states in the CO compact agreeing upon a DCP. It seems like a 100 year old compact that made material technical mistakes in estimating and allocating water cannot be re negotiated with better science and required conservation methods. It is a form of historic vested rights and reliance that stands in the way of such a re negotiation. How if at all could the DCP be integrated with a revised Co river compact?
- I was excited to see the research and prioritization of developing plans in Greeley that work to find the sweet spot between conservation and recreation.

2022-2023 Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado
Homework Assignment for **February 2023 – Redacted**

My niece is a Ducks Unlimited supporter and hunter, passionate about conservation and game management. It was interesting to think of the DU strategy to bring up new generations of supporters, knowing firsthand my niece (age 15) is a small minority even in a rural area. Resourcing for the future is essential to long term planning and growth in any context.

What questions do you have based on what you heard from today's speakers and group discussion?

- I thought the point Governor Ritter made about where the severance taxes go (1/4 to the Water Conservation Board) was very interesting. I would like to know more about how money flows around water issues in this state.
- Question: why is it that we rely on conservation group funded by hunters to preserve wetlands critical to birds (waterfowl in particular)? While Ducks Unlimited has an incredible track record, it seems like their work is for the good of the "commons" and should be funded as such.
- I believe Erik Anglund mentioned they are working on a geo thermal well. Wasn't clear if they already have them operating or if it's a new technology? Interesting they will have 2 wells that intersect and one injects water and the other releases steam to be used, I presume, for energy??
- One question that I have for Brad Modesitt is if the Poudre River rafting companies work together regarding their permits with the USFS. I wonder if that could help create a more standardized agreement that would better withstand new employees, potentially provide a more unified group requesting higher rafting allowances, etc. I also found it interesting that Ducks Unlimited and other hunting organizations play such a large role in conservation. It makes me realize how valuable non-profits and other private groups can be to solving these complex issues.
- As we discuss Colorado River availability, transportation, rights, conservation, and compact updates, I wonder if Northern Colorado stopped, or reduced our Colorado River water transfer, and relied on flood waters from eastern states (from the Missouri River), if it would help Colorado River's downstream communities? It would require our area to invest heavily in water agreements and transportation systems from states like the Dakotas, but these are desperate times and I'm wondering if it would help??
- I have a question that comes out of the Colorado River discussions and my familiarity with the Northern Water quota system. I'm sure that there are many more in our group with better guidance on this, but the equal percent reduction for qualified players might (i.e., The Quota) help here. Complete disclosure, as a Northern New Mexico parciant in a valley acequia, when water flowed, we shared equally in its benefits, the more substantial water rights getting a bit more, but only if they needed it. When there was no aqua, well, you know the answer. X times zero is still zero.
- I'm curious to know more about the Arapahoe County requirements regarding a 300-year water plan for new developments.

2022-2023 Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado
Homework Assignment for **February 2023 – Redacted**

- One of the book reports was regarding the Flint, Michigan water debacle. I have heard a lot about what local officials did or did not do in this situation. The EPA also has a role, but I have not ever read about what the State of Michigan Health Department's role was. I would think that they should be at the forefront of the problems. They would certainly have permits and investigations. I will try to research what I can find online to dig deeper
- No additional questions at this time.
- Wade was talking about creating wetlands in Eastman Park in Windsor. What is the overall impact from a water perspective for projects like this?
- Encouraged the oil and gas energy industry has made significant progress in conserving the vast amount of water it needs for its production. Will the oil and gas industry really improve water quality to be able to discharge quality water back into the system?
- I'm curious about digging deeper on oil and gas water use and reuse cycle.
- I am not personally a hunter but I love to camp and create art in the wilderness. Are there any conservations groups that are pivoting to exclusive access/camping memberships in lieu of hunting?
- How impactful is aquifer recharging as presented by Duck's Unlimited?
- The key question I had at the end of the session is what's it going to take to get all states in the CO River Compact to work collaboratively to ensure water is available for our most critical needs; and what sacrifices are we willing to make or what sacrifices will we be forced to make.
- Given the shifting demographics of duck hunters, I wonder if Ducks Unlimited will start to shift its focus to wetlands conservation for a multitude of species, as opposed to just waterfowl. Historically, DU has competed for members and donations with organizations like the Audubon Society, Sierra Club and the Nature Conservancy. I wonder about the impact they could have by joining forces, irrespective of individual donors' motivations for preserving wetlands.
- B. Bill Ritter's talk made me wonder (again/still) what will happen with the Colorado River Compact.
- The give and take from Gov Ritter provided a great bit of recent history regarding the need for a headwater state to build strong alliances and coalitions prior to engaging the topic of revisions to the CRC. Question I still have is this: what role (if any) will the other 43 states have in determining a fair outcome of any such discussion?
- How does the Biden administration proposed wetlands rule strike a balance between no net loss from the Bush 41 era and the restrictive approach to wetlands taken by the Trump era rule? How and when will the Supreme Court decide the Sackett case, and how will it affect the Biden wetlands rule.?
- I wanted to receive more information on the Ducks Unlimited Carbon Offset program.