

Colorado Cattlemen's Ag Water NetWORK 2020

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Colorado Cattlemen's Ag Water NetWORK wraps up 2019 with the completion of more than 20 presentations around the state, four (4) publications, two (2) workshops, one webinar, and an end-of-year capstone event which involved agricultural producers along with participants from conservation and conservancy districts, land trusts, county governments, and non-profits.

The Ag Water NetWORK also provided information and coordinative support for local conservation districts interested in exploring and advancing local watershed and stream management planning. Additionally, we conducted a statewide survey of agricultural producers to gain a better understanding of producer perspectives and priorities on the subject of watershed and stream management planning. The survey results are included in a full report and summarized in a highlights document and are available at <https://www.agwaternetwork.org>, along with a webinar which covers key survey findings.

The first watershed management planning workshop was held in Hayden in May and was sponsored by the local Community Agricultural Alliance. The second workshop was held in Meeker in September, and was co-coordinated by the Rio Blanco Stockgrowers Association. This workshop supported outreach to the agricultural community related to a local integrated water management planning initiative that is being coordinated by White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts.

Both workshops provided ag producers with information about watershed and stream management planning basics and agricultural water rights, as well as project examples that involved irrigation infrastructure assessment and improvement. The training also included short videos highlighting multi-benefit projects, and a review of funding sources available for projects, and group discussion.



Credit: Phil Brink

Presentations around the state have covered watershed and stream management planning basics, the status of population growth and water demands, elements of the Upper Colorado Basin Drought Contingency Plan, agricultural water leasing, and examples of irrigation improvement projects and funding sources.

In November, 2019 the Ag Water NetWORK was approved for another year of funding from Colorado Water Plan funds to continue outreach and coordinative assistance to the agricultural community on watershed and stream management planning. In 2020, we will be collaborating with local conservation districts and other agricultural organizations, basin round tables, state, local and federal agencies and local non-profits that have a nexus with agriculture and water. The goal of the Ag Water NetWORK is to help keep ag water connected with ag land by providing timely and contextual information to Colorado agricultural producers on water-related topics that can affect their livelihoods.