

ABOUT OUR PRESENTERS

Zach Thode manages a large cattle ranch in Livermore, having begun working on ranches in that Northern Colorado community as early as elementary school. He irrigates with water from the North Fork of the Poudre. His degree in agricultural engineering from CSU has led to a number of experiences, including work for Rubicon Water, a firm that designs large scale, gravity-fed irrigation systems. A wife and four young children keep Zach focused on the future.

Mike Shimmin, raised on an irrigated farm near Fort Morgan, worked as a full time water rights attorney with Vranesh & Raisch in Boulder for his entire 36-year career, representing cities, ditch companies, and groundwater management districts. He became familiar with the Poudre River while he was special water counsel for the City of Fort Collins for 28 years. Still a member of the South Platte Basin Roundtable, he served seven years as a founding member of the governor's Interbasin Compact Committee. Now retired, Mike says he stays busy doing "whatever he wants."

Roy Otto is the City Manager of Greeley—the "state capitol of agriculture." He is growing in his appreciation for the importance of water in achieving the economic, environmental and livability desires of Greeley and all of NoCo. He is growing in his belief that it is through collaboration that we will all reach and experience our potential. He also grieves when conflict and tension gets in the way of collaboration and he is trying to be courageous and vulnerable when he or the organization he leads is the source of that conflict.

Brett Bovee has 15 years of experience conducting a variety of engineering, economic, and water rights studies across the Western states. He leads the Colorado office of WestWater Research and serves on the City of Fort Collins Water Board. Brett often brings a unique perspective to projects, combining a background in water resources engineering with a developed knowledge of water rights and economics. He says he "loves working in the water sector because the subject is so multi-disciplinary and the people working on water issues are great."

Jennifer Gimbel has been a water policy decision maker for most of her career. She was the Director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board before taking a position in Washington, DC as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, overseeing the Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Geological Service. Now, Colorado State University is fortunate to have her on staff as a senior water policy scholar for the Colorado Water Center, where she is currently engaged in Colorado River issues and teaches the GRAD 592 Water Resources Seminar, which is open to the public.

LeRoy Poff, Professor, Department of Biology at Colorado State University, is a stream and river ecologist who wades deep into questions of river resilience in a world of change. He is recognized globally for incorporating hydro-ecology science into environmental flow guidelines to sustain rivers in the face of growing human demand for fresh water. Dr. Poff collaborates with and advises several NGOs, including The Nature Conservancy and Trout Unlimited, and he directs CSU's Graduate Degree Program in Ecology.

Emily Hunt, second generation Colorado native and the granddaughter of a ditch rider, is the Water Resources Division Manager at the City of Thornton. Her favorite part of her job is when she is creating solutions in partnership with optimistic people. Emily serves on the Boards of the Colorado Water Congress and the Colorado Water Trust, and is a member of the Metro Roundtable. Emily enjoys growing anything spicy, achieving mediocrity in various sports, and spending time with her dog, Huckleberry.

Ed Barbier is a Professor in the Department of Economics, Colorado State University and a Senior Scholar in the School of Global Environmental Sustainability. His main expertise is natural resources and economic development. He has consulted for a variety of national, international and non-governmental agencies, including many UN organizations, the World Bank and the OECD. Dr. Barbier has published widely, and is a highly cited scholar in international environmental policy. His latest book is *The Water Paradox: Overcoming the Global Crisis in Water Management*.

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Jerrae Swanson grew up on the North Shore of Lake Superior in Two Harbors, Minnesota. Her first introduction to water quality occurred as a child while watching her father, the superintendent at the water treatment plant, test samples in the lab. After law school and a judicial clerkship, she moved to Colorado for the mountains and sun and was quickly introduced to Colorado water law and water quality related issues. As Assistant City Attorney for the City of Greeley, she focuses on municipal contracts, real estate, water rights and environmental and regulatory law.

Patrick McMeekin is the Vice President of Land Development and a Partner at Hartford Homes. He oversees the acquisition of real estate, project entitlements, and horizontal development, and manages the corporation's water rights portfolio. He has worked on development projects in all the major northern Colorado municipalities. Patrick is keenly aware of the challenges that exist in the water market and as a current member of the Water Literate Leaders of Northern Colorado class, he is broadening his understanding that the Poudre serves a diverse set of stakeholders.

Jerry Gibbens got interested in water from spending time on his grandfather's irrigated farm as a kid. He has worked in water resources, engineering, and environmental permitting since his days as a Colorado State Ram. He is the Director of Operations for Northern Water, where he oversees operation and maintenance of Northern Water's water supply, water delivery and hydropower facilities. Jerry and his family enjoy everything that his native Colorado has to offer, from camping and hunting to enjoying a warm sunny day on a crisp clear lake.

Mark Simpson, Poudre River Water Commissioner, has the daily responsibility to distribute the water of the Poudre Basin, pursuant to court water decrees, and to compile records of water diversions and use. A keen and evolving understanding of "the tangled web of administering the Poudre" is paramount to his most critical priority: providing accurate and timely delivery of water to those in priority. Mark says that before he dies he hopes to catch a redfish on his fly rod.

Greg Kernohan, Manager of Ecosystem Services for Ducks Unlimited, grew up in Ontario, Canada where he learned to whitewater kayak, fish, and hunt. Greg has developed several multi-benefit projects using wetlands to recharge the South Platte alluvial aquifer and augment river flows for the benefit of agriculture, municipal, and industrial water needs. Greg recognizes the Poudre River's importance for meeting diverse water needs, but most enjoys the short-run of whitewater every year.

Kristie Melendez, Mayor of Windsor since 2016, has roots in Windsor going back four generations, as her great grandparents migrated there from Grimm, Russia, in 1912. Her full-service agency, Smart Marketing, LLC, gave her the opportunity to work with former Denver Mayor, Wellington E. Webb, on a series of projects from 2008-2010 that inspired her to act on her political dream. Her passion lies in nurturing and growing relationships while delivering cost effective, win-win solutions, whether for her business clients or for the citizens of Windsor.

Sean Cronin is Executive Director for the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District. He is considered a bright young star in the Colorado water community, having won emerging leader awards from both Water Education Colorado and the Colorado Water Congress. He serves on the governor's Interbasin Compact Committee as a representative from the South Platte Basin. When Sean isn't spending time with his wife and two young children, you can find him on a river trying to master the art of making a trout rise.