



Protecting Water for Western Irrigated Agriculture

2020 Annual Meeting & Conference

20/20 Vision: The State of Western Irrigated Agriculture

AGENDA

Wednesday
February 19, 2020

ELDORADO CONVENTION CENTER (LOWER LEVEL)

8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Board of Directors and Advisory Committee Internal Meetings

Thursday
February 20, 2020

ELDORADO CONVENTION CENTER (LOWER LEVEL)

7:00 a.m.

Registration Desk Open

8:00 a.m. to 8:15 a.m.

Welcome / Opening Comments - Alliance President Patrick O'Toole will summarize the busy year he and the Alliance had, engaging in a variety of national initiatives, developing new partnerships, and strengthening existing networks. He will set the stage for the 2019 general session, which will be forward-looking and focused on continuing to advance Alliance initiatives in the 116th Congress and with the Trump Administration.

8:15 to 8:45 a.m.

Keynote Address: Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman.

8:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Reclamation Roundtable – This panel discussion will feature all five regional directors from the Bureau of Reclamation, who will participate in an interactive discussion of key policy issues that span the West in this time-honored Alliance conference tradition. Dan Keppen (Alliance Executive Director) will moderate a panel that includes invited regional directors Mike Black (Missouri Basin and Arkansas-Rio Grande-Texas Gulf), Brent Esplin (Upper Colorado Basin) Lorri Gray (Columbia- Pacific Northwest); and deputy regional directors Richard Welsh (California-Great Basin) and Stacy Wade (Lower Colorado Basin). Introductions by Deputy Commissioner of Reclamation, Shelby Hagenauer.

10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

D.C. Efforts to Modernize the ESA: Where are we? - Jeff Eisenberg will moderate this diverse panel of Washington, D.C. environmental policy leaders who will share views and provide insight on efforts by Congress and the Trump Administration to modernize the federal Endangered Species Act. Panelists include Tanner Beymer (Associate Director at Public Lands Council & Associate Director of Government Affairs, National Cattlemen's Beef Association), Karen Budd-Falen (Deputy Solicitor for Parks and Wildlife, U.S. Department of the Interior); and Mark Rupp (Director, State-Federal Policy and Affairs, Ecosystems, Environmental Defense Fund).

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Thursday, February 20 (Continued)

- 11:15 a.m. to noon** ***Habitat Conservation Plans for ESA Take Coverage in Ongoing Water Projects: Real Protection or Fake News?*** - Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) under section 10 of the ESA provide for partnerships with non-federal parties to conserve the ecosystems upon which listed species depend, ultimately contributing to their recovery. Learn more about the challenges, risks and benefits of HCPs from two experts who are overseeing two Western HCPs. Moderated by Sacramento attorney Paul Simmons (Somach Simmons and Dunn, Sacramento, CA), panelists include David Filippi (Partner, Stoel Rives, LLP, Portland, OR) and Mauricio Guardado, Jr (General Manager, United Water Conservation District, Santa Paula, CA).
- Noon to 1:15 p.m.** ***Luncheon featuring Keynote Speaker: Russell George.*** Our political system appears to be broken, especially at the federal level. Why do we have that split? Russell George, the 2018 recipient of the prestigious Colorado Citizen's Medal, will share his thoughts on the importance of Americans' power to self-govern, and why the federal / state / local levels of government are so important to who we are as a country. Recognizing that, how do we bridge the current divides? Russell George's experience as a former state legislator and state government official for many years provides him with a unique perspective on this issue.
- 1:15 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** ***A Look at D.C. from the Hill*** - Mark Limbaugh moderates this panel of staff from key congressional water committees and conservation and water groups. Get the inside scoop on how the new Congress will tackle Western water and environmental challenges from Republican and Democrat staff directors on Capitol Hill. Panelists include Annick Miller (Republican Staff, House Water, Oceans and Wildlife Subcommittee), Lane Dickson (Republican Professional Staff, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee), Matt Muirragui (Democrat Staff, House Water, Oceans & Wildlife Subcommittee), and Melanie Thornton (Democrat Staff, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee).
- 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.** ***Western Litigation Update*** - Alliance general counsel Norm Semanko (Parsons Behle & Latimer - Boise/Coeur d'Alene, ID) will moderate a panel of attorneys involved with critical court cases involving Western water resources matters. Panelists include Ramsey Kropf (Somach, Simmons and Dunn, - Denver, CO) who will discuss the Klamath "takings" cases; Patrick Sigl (Salt River Project—Phoenix, AZ) who will summarize the Maui groundwater litigation; and Chip Wilkins (Remy, Moose, Manley—Sacramento, CA), who will provide an update on *Friends of the River v. NMFS*.
- 3:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.** ***Break***
- 3:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.** ***Introduction: Environmental Markets and Payment for Ecosystem Services: Jessica Fox (Electric Power Research Institute, Palo Alto, CA)***
- 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.** ***Soil to the Rescue!*** - Sheldon Jones of The Soil Health Institute will moderate this panel of experts to discuss how the role of soils can be expanded to not only produce nutritious food and feed, but to also improve water quality, increase carbon sequestration, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve human and animal health. The potential for a related full-service market with monetized outcomes exists and is gaining traction. Panelists include Dr. Hannah Birge (The Nature Conservancy), Dr. Haly Neely (Washington State University) and Dr. Adam Chambers (Natural Resources Conservation Service, West National Technology Support Center).

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Thursday

February 20, 2020

(Continued)

4:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Exhibitors' Presentations (5 minutes each)

5:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

2020 Annual Meeting

5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Evening Reception - Come unwind for drinks and food at the Eldorado Resort Casino's newest nightspot—Novi!

Friday

February 21, 2020

ELDORADO CONVENTION CENTER (LOWER LEVEL)

8:00 a.m.– 9:15 a.m.

Trump Administration "Water Subcabinet" - This panel discussion will feature representatives serving on President Trump's "Water Subcabinet," which consists of six water related agencies represented by officials at the assistant secretary level.

Hear directly from these invited officials, including Brenda Burman (Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation); Ryan Fisher (Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works); Bill Northey (Undersecretary for Farm Production and Conservation, Department of Agriculture); Tim Petty (Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, Department of the Interior); Jim Reilly (Director, U.S. Geological Survey); David Ross (Assistant Administrator, Office of Water, Environmental Protection Agency); and Daniel Simmons (Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy). Find out how these Administration leaders are coordinating and collaborating on cross-cutting issues that impact Western water use. Moderated by Aubrey Bettencourt, Department of Interior.

9:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Break

9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

Water Civics 101: Examples of Good Government in an Era of Government Dysfunction - Our system appears to be broken, especially at the federal level. Why are we seeing this split? Moderated by Dave Ceppos (Consensus and Collaboration Program, California State University, Sacramento) three policy experts will talk about their experiences with "good government" success stories in the West.

David Willms (National Wildlife Federation) will outline how he helped generate bipartisan support for a Western Governors Association initiative to modernize the Endangered Species Act. Dennis Nuxoll (Western Growers Association) will describe the dynamics behind the current bipartisan farm labor bill that is working its way through the House of Representatives. And Russell George will explain his role in developing the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act, which set up basin roundtables in each river basin of Colorado and an Interbasin Compact Committee.

All three endeavors, constitute examples of "good government", and should give hope to those who may be discouraged by the headlines they read today.

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Friday

February 21, 2020

(Continued)

10:45 a.m. to 11:55 a.m. ***Farming "Bushels of Nature" in the West: Maximizing Opportunities for Water Quality Trading in Agriculture***— Building on the proven elements of its last decade of applied innovation, The Freshwater Trust (TFT) seeks to integrate a data-driven, basin scale approach to address excess nutrients in waterways that leverage innovative finance to secure long-term health for local ecosystems and operator profitability. These tools enable new public/private funding strategies to create both environmental and economic gains through collaboration with agricultural operators and rural communities in a new way, employing targets and packaged technology, investable portfolio, and paying for success.

This panel will explore how all the pieces fit together and move toward a broader scale. Moderated by Dan Keppen (Family Farm Alliance Executive Director), panelists include Joe Whitworth (The Freshwater Trust —Portland, OR), Adam Riggsbee (Founder and President of RiverBank Conservation, LLC, Austin, TX), David Ross (Assistant Administrator, Office of Water, Environmental Protection Agency); and Woody Woolf (Rancher and President of Wallow County Farm Bureau, OR).

11:55 a.m.

Award Presentation and Closing Comments – Patrick O’Toole

Noon

Adjourn General Session

12:15 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. ***Buffet Lunch for Industrial Hemp Summit Session***

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. ***Industrial Hemp Summit Session***— Federal financial regulators recently issued new guidance intended to help hemp producers and processors gain access to the banking system. Despite the removal of hemp as a Schedule 1 drug following passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, many growers and processors are still unable to access financial services due to a lack of clarity from regulators. Co-hosted by the Irrigation Association, our two panels include experts on state and federal policies and regulations related to growing industrial hemp, technologies being used to manage hemp, market forecasts from academic and manufacturer’s perspectives. After one year of federally-legalized industrial hemp production, you’ll find out the lessons learned from hemp producers.

Our invited panelists include: Ron Dutra (Agronomic Relationship Manager, Netafim USA) Wondirad Gebu (Colorado Assistant Director of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industry); Dr. Allan Jenkins (Department of Accounting, Finance & Economics, University of Nebraska Kearney); Jake Oken-Berg (Business Liaison, Office of U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley); Paul Orme (Of counsel, Salmon, Lewis and Weldon, PLC, Phoenix, AZ); George Workman (Director of Product Portfolio and Sales, Kayagene, Salinas, CA).