

Tuesday, May 1

## Session B1: Partnerships for Western Water Concerns

Room A105  
1:30 – 3:00 pm

0070  
B1-1

### Federal and State Coordination on Water Policy, Water Resources, and Water Quality via the Western States Water Council and WestFAST

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The West faces unique water management challenges due to the limited availability of water. To help coordinate among the states, the Western States Water Council (WSWC) was formed in 1965 and has representatives appointed by the governors of 18 of the western states. The purposes of the Council are to: 1) promote cooperation among western states in the conservation, development and management of water resources; 2) maintain vital state prerogatives, while identifying ways to accommodate legitimate federal interests; 3) provide a forum for exchange of views, perspectives, and experiences among member states; and 4) provide analysis of federal and state developments in order to assist member states in evaluating impacts of federal laws and programs and the effectiveness of state laws and policies. In 2008, in response to the 2006 WSWC “Next Steps Report”, nine federal agencies joined together to form the Western Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST). Since that time, three additional agencies have joined the WestFAST team. The purpose of WestFAST is to promote federal and state collaboration on water issues, and to facilitate communication between federal and state partners.

The WSWC and WestFAST promote collaboration and cross-agency coordination on a number of key areas, including: 1) drought and climate change initiatives; 2) data exchange and information coordination particularly in regards to stream gaging, remote sensing, water quality monitoring, and water appropriations and consumption; 3) bridging the gap between water resources and water quality; 4) exploring the nexus between energy and water; 5) western water infrastructure needs; and 6) other state and federal initiatives.

0123  
B1-2

### Creating a Baseline Water Quality Library Using Citizen-Based Monitoring Data in Southcentral Alaska

Rachel Lord

*Cook Inletkeeper, Homer, Alas., USA*

With nearly a million miles of streams and rivers in Alaska, the lack of baseline water quality information—especially in populated regions such as Southcentral Alaska, home to the vast majority of Alaskans—may result in an inability to provide adequate oversight on future development. In response to this gap in knowledge, Cook Inletkeeper’s volunteer water quality monitoring began in 1996 with the formation of the Citizens’ Environmental Monitoring Program, known to many by its acronym-CEMP. This program, the first of its kind in Alaska, is designed to meet the need for baseline water quality data for local watersheds around Southcentral Alaska. Baseline data collection by trained citizen volunteers is the primary aim of the CEMP model.

Inletkeeper staff recently developed a set of guidelines to define a baseline water quality dataset at each priority site. These guidelines were developed through analysis of existing volunteer-collected data and review of our monitoring programs. As we complete baseline data collection for a given waterbody, we create a comprehensive report that compiles watershed-specific information. The baseline water quality library is then composed of all final baseline reports, each of which includes suggestions for future monitoring and a summary of all water quality findings to-date. It is our intention that this comprehensive baseline water quality library will provide landowners, city councils, developers, and communities with valuable information for responsible decision-making in a

changing environment.

**0274**

**B1-3**

**The Umatilla Basin Project: Cooperative Exchange of Columbia River Water for Instream Flows in the Umatilla Basin, Oregon**

Rich Marvin<sup>1</sup>, Tony Justus<sup>2</sup>, Mike Ladd<sup>2</sup> and Paul Hendricks<sup>2</sup>

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The Umatilla Basin Project is part of a comprehensive fishery restoration program in the Umatilla Basin. The State of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), and regional hydroelectric ratepayers are helping to plan and finance the multi-faceted restoration program that ranges in scope from massive water exchanges to simple diversion improvements.

At the request of CTUIR, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and others, the US Congress directed the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to plan and construct a project that would help solve the potential conflict between fishery and irrigation water needs in the Umatilla Basin. Planning efforts began in 1981 and the end result has become The Umatilla Basin Project.

The project is a fish restoration effort that pumps water from the Columbia River to three irrigation districts in lieu of them diverting their normal supply of water from the Umatilla River and McKay Reservoir. When target flows for the fishery are not met, pumps on the Columbia River begin drawing water to supply the irrigation districts. Using this Columbia River water, the district(s) can forego diversion of “live flow” from the Umatilla River, thus leaving water in the Umatilla River for fishery enhancement. Implementation of the project is one of the great success stories for improving flow in a river that almost ran dry most years.

In addition to covering the history of the project, this presentation will highlight the cooperative efforts of the various entities that brought it to fruition and will also discuss the surface-water monitoring network operated by BOR and the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) that is critical for management of the project.

**0401**

**B1-4**

**Building Partnerships to Effectively Monitor Water Quality and Landscape Health in the Lake Fork of the Gunnison Watershed in Southwest Colorado**

Camille Richard

*Lake Fork Valley Conservancy, Lake City, Colo., USA*

The Lake Fork of the Gunnison Watershed is located in Hinsdale and Gunnison Counties in southwestern Colorado. It is 432 square miles and ranges in elevation from 7500 ft to over 14,000 ft. Primary water quality impact comes from historic mining, but increasingly, development along the river is also affecting watershed health. Its diverse ecosystems and impacts lend to the challenge of effectively monitoring water quality attributes across the landscape. The Lake Fork Valley Conservancy (LFVC), formed in 2002, has been coordinating monitoring efforts for a decade, and recently compiled and analyzed over 30 years of water quality data, collected by a variety of agencies. Lessons learned from this exercise were that data collection has been driven mainly by regulatory needs, often being ad hoc, and that data was difficult to compare between years due to differences in sampling and analytical methods employed. As follow-up, the LFVC coordinated a multi-partner planning initiative to identify data gaps, define monitoring objectives and develop a comprehensive monitoring plan and standard operating procedures that could be followed by all agencies involved in the watershed, a process that is replicable and applicable for other watershed groups. The complexity of watershed attributes and management scenarios requires this multi-stakeholder approach, to promote comprehensive landscape coverage and cost-effective monitoring for all entities involved. This process also lends itself to policy advocacy so that funding entities such as EPA and Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment can revise their granting guidelines to support more strategic, long-term and multi-purpose monitoring approaches.