

# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan





# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan

Basin's Water Plan will address these issues and will define goals that address five key areas:

- Agriculture
- Water Administration
- Environmental and Recreational
- Municipal and Industrial
- Outreach and Education



**How we developed the RG Basin Plan**





# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Agricultural Subcommittee Members

## Volunteers from Steering Committee

- Judy Lopez
- Ralph Curtis
- Jim Ehrlich
- Nathan Coombs
- Ron Brink
- Eugene Jacquez
- Lawrence Gallegos

## Others

- Keith Holland
- Ed Neilson
- Karla Shiver
- Peter Clark





# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Water Administration Subcommittee Members

## Volunteers from Steering Committee

- Steve Vandiver
- Travis Smith
- Nathan Coombs

## Others

- Craig Cotten
- Greg Higel
- Tony Aloia
- Craig Godbout
- Rick Basagoitia





# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Environmental and Recreational Subcommittee Members

## Volunteers from Steering Committee

- Rick Basagoitia - CPW
- Kevin Terry - TU
- Heather Dutton- RGHRP
- Rio de la Vista (Working with DiNatale Water Consultants)

## Others

- Paul Tigan, Jill Lucero - BLM
- Dan Dallas, Joseph Old Elk - USFS
- Peter Clark
- Wetlands Committee - Ruth Lewis & others
- Wetland Dynamics - Cary Aloia & Jenny Nehring
- SLV Great Outdoors - Karla Shriver & members
- Christine Canaly - SLV EC
- Christina Gallegos - SdCNHA
- Ben Doon - Costilla County





# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Municipal and Industrial Subcommittee Members

## Volunteers from Steering Committee

- Charlie Spielman
- Mike Gibson
- Nathan Coombs

## Others

- Allen Davey
- Gene Farish
- Marty Asplin
- Bob Kirkham
- Jason Lorenz
- Forrest Neuerburg
- Dale Weisecamp





# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Outreach and Education Subcommittee Members

## Volunteers from Steering Committee

- Judy Lopez
- Rick Basagoitia
- Ron Brink
- Heather Dutton
- Cindy Medina
- Emma Regier
- Kevin Terry
- Eugene Jacquez
- Travis Smith



## Others

- Christina Gallegos
- Joe Gallegos



# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Outreach and Education

Community Input Sessions	7
County Commissioner Sessions	7
Interested Group Sessions	9
RGBRT Meetings	6
Subcommittee Meeting	21
Newspaper Articles	27
Radio Programs	17
Website	
Water 101	11,000+



# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan

The RG Basin Roundtable followed statewide mission to ensure:

- ✓ A productive economy that supports vibrant and sustainable cities, viable and productive agriculture, and a robust and diverse recreation and tourism industry
- ✓ Efficient and effective water infrastructure promoting smart land use
- ✓ A strong environment that includes healthy watersheds, rivers and streams, and wildlife





# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Goals

## R I O G R A N D E B A S I N G O A L S

1. Protect, preserve, and/or restore the sustainability of the Rio Grande Basin watersheds by focusing on watershed health and ecosystem function.

Ag M&I Env&Rec WAdm

2. Protect and preserve the doctrine of prior appropriation and vested water rights, and fully utilize Colorado's compact entitlements as specified under the Rio Grande and Costilla Creek compacts.

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3. Sustain the confined and unconfined aquifers in accordance with Senate Bill 04-222 and operate within the State Engineer's new Rules and Regulations for the San Luis Valley.

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4. Operate, maintain, rehabilitate, and create necessary infrastructure to meet the Basin's long-term water needs, including storage.

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5. Manage water use to sustain optimal agricultural economy throughout the Basin's communities.

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6. Support the development of projects and methods that have multiple benefits for agricultural, municipal and industrial, and environmental and recreational water needs.

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7. Meet new demands for water to the extent practicable, without impacting existing water rights and compact obligations.

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8. Establish a long-term education and outreach effort for water use and needs in the San Luis Valley/Rio Grande Basin.

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9. Make progress toward meeting applicable water quality standards throughout the Basin.

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10. Promote water management and administrative practices that are adaptive, flexible, and responsive to optimize multiple benefits.

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11. Protect, preserve, and enhance terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitats throughout the Basin.

Env&Rec

12. Conserve, restore, and maintain wetlands and riparian areas for the benefit of a healthy watershed.

Ag M&I Env&Rec

13. Work to sustain active river flows throughout the year in cooperation with water users and administrators to restore and sustain ecological function of the rivers and floodplain habitats within the context of existing water rights and compact obligations.

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14. Maintain and enhance water-dependent recreational activities.

M&I Env&Rec WAdm

Heart Lake,  
Photo: Heather Dutton



# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan

## Projects and Methods that meet the Basin's Goals: Our Action Plan

- ❖ Groundwater Subdistrict's
- ❖ Co-operative Projects with Basin Reservoirs
- ❖ Improved Streamflow Forecasting
- ❖ Watershed Health
- ❖ Improvement of Wetlands and Riparian Areas
- ❖ Conservation Easements
- ❖ Crop and Irrigation Improvements
- ❖ Soil Health
- ❖ Ongoing Education and Outreach

These include infrastructure improvements, studies, education/outreach, restoration and preservation.





# Colorado Water Plan



- Since the inception of the IBCC and the Basin Roundtables the State has witnessed:
  - The impact of continued drought on water supply
  - An increase in the rate of transfer of water rights from agriculture
  
- These processes have helped the state build consensus on some key issues:
  - The “buy and dry” of agricultural ground as the only water supply option is unacceptable
  - The quality of water supplies is critical
  - Colorado’s interstate compact water concerns will grow if we do not intervene
  - The Gap between water supply and demand is growing
  - A water shortfall that exceeds 500,000 acre feet annually



# Colorado Water Plan

## Critical Action Plan

- ✓ Develop Multi-purpose Funding Plan
- ✓ Promote Multipurpose Initiatives
- ✓ Promote Vibrant and Sustainable Cities
- ✓ Address Agriculture Viability and Efficiency
- ✓ Support Strong Environmental and a Robust Recreations Industry
- ✓ Prepare for an Uncertain Future
- ✓ Advance Education and Outreach



# Colorado Water Plan Rio Grande Basin Plan Alignment

- Develop cooperative relationships among stakeholders
- Evaluate future water needs against future water supplies
- Develop an Implementation Plan including actions, projects and methods to meet goals
- Secure public/private partnerships to secure project viability



# Rio Grande Basin Roundtable



- The Rio Grande Basin Roundtable meets the second Tuesday of each month.
  - Our primary meeting place is at the San Luis Valley Water Conservancy Office, 623 Fourth Street, Alamosa, Colorado 81101.
- Meetings are from 2:00-5:00 pm
- The public is always welcome to attend!
- Come Join us!



# Rio Grande Basin Water Plan Get Involved!

Attend the Rio Grande Basin  
Roundtable monthly and outreach meetings



Submit comments on Basin Plan

- Online: [www.riograndewaterplan.com](http://www.riograndewaterplan.com)
- Mail : Basin Water Plan,  
623 4th Street, Alamosa, CO 81101

Submit comments on State Water Plan

Online: [www.coloradowaterplan.com](http://www.coloradowaterplan.com)