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From the Director's Desk Guest Director - Torie Jarvis

NWCCOG knows water

Happy new year, NWCCOG members and friends! This first newsletter of 2019 is all about water and NWCCOG's Water Quality/ Quantity Committee, or "QQ." We know many NWCCOG folks may not be familiar with all of our work-and many will be very familiar. We invite you to learn more and join us at a QQ meeting or contact me to receive QQ emails. All are welcome!

2018 marked QQ's 40th anniversary, starting in 1978 the Water Quality/ Quantity Trust Fund in 1978 to raise money to defend against efforts to drain the Upper Colorado River. In its early years, QQ members worked together to defend local government authority to regulate the construction of new transmountain diversion projects and to institute strengthened water quality protections. In April of 2018, QQ members gathered for a retreat that focused in part in celebrating these early accomplishments, compiled for the first time in this [timeline](#).



QQ continues as a subcommittee of NWCCOG with slightly different membership, adding water and sanitation districts in the NWCCOG region, Gunnison County, Crested Butte, the Colorado River Water Conservation District, and the Gunnison River Water Conservation District to the NWCCOG region of Eagle, Grand, Summit, and Pitkin Counties, Steamboat Springs, and Carbondale.

QQ works with a team of consultants, led by yours truly, to participate in statewide policy creation through the General Assembly (through legislative monitoring and lobbying), the Water Quality Control Commission, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, and various other state agencies working on water quality issues. QQ participates in myriad adaptive management efforts in the region and provides technical and legal assistance on water quality issues, transmountain diversion oversight, and intergovernmental cooperation.

QQ's work is shaped by regional commonalities related to water. Rivers in the QQ region have reduced flows from transmountain diversion projects that siphon water from our rivers to the Front Range to serve municipal growth. Reduced flows, in turn, can degrade water quality and aquatic life, reduce available flows for local water demands, and increase local water treatment costs. At the same time, QQ's recreation tourism economy relies on clean water for skiing, fishing, rafting, kayaking, hiking, and bird watching. QQ documented these challenges and economic reliance on water in its 2012 [Water & Its Relationship to the Economies of Headwaters Counties](#) report. QQ members are dedicated to strong local regulations to protect water quality, river corridors, and other environmentally sensitive areas. And QQ works to educate members and populous Front Range areas on the importance of caring for QQ rivers and recreational opportunities.

QQ successes come from members' commitment to working together, through consensus, on water quality protection in the headwaters. During its quarterly meetings, anyone present is considered a board member. Decisions are always consensus-based, with votes rarely taken. The group has always favored unity rather than taking contentious or divisive actions-contributing to the

long-term success of the group.

Our next meeting is Friday, March 1st in Edwards, from 10 AM to 3 PM, with educational presentations and updates on our work. Please join us! More information is available at www.nwccog-qq.org. And email me at qqwater@nwccog.org for more info or to be added to our email list.

QQ welcomes its new leadership team!

At its November 16th meeting, QQ elected a new slate of leadership and sent a fond farewell to long-time Chair Rachel Richards, Pitkin County Commissioner who was term limited this year. Rachel's leadership was invaluable to QQ over the past 5 years, and she will be missed.



Kathy Chandler-Henry

And we welcome new faces to the team! Eagle County Commissioner Kathy Chandler-Henry is QQ's new Chair, Grand County Commissioner Kris Manguso is Vice-Chair, and April Long, the City of Aspen's Stormwater Manager (and Director of the Ruedi Water and Power Authority), is QQ's new Secretary.

Of her new role with QQ, Kathy says, "QQ has been a long-time leader in the water community, and represented our headwaters interests so well through its 40 years. I am looking forward to working with the leadership team and QQ contract staff to tackle the big water issues of our time: availability of and demand for Colorado River water, increased water conservation and water quality protection as our region and the state continues to grow, and advocating for headwaters interests in state water policy."

The Blue River in Summit joins the list of headwaters rivers being assessed through stream management planning

Stream Management Planning (SMP) is a relatively new concept, but one being embraced in the NWCCOG region. Generally, SMP is an assessment of the environmental and recreational water needs of a specific stream segment. These plans use scientific approaches to evaluate the ecological health of a particular stretch of water with a focus on stream flows. This information can then be used by communities to determine where and how their waterways are impaired so they can develop strategies to preserve or improve their environmental and recreational assets.

In the headwaters region, stream management plans (or Integrated Water Management Plans (IWMP)) are in place or underway in the Crystal, Roaring Fork, Gunnison, Yampa, Eagle, Middle Colorado, and most recently the Blue River basins. Efforts in the Blue River were initiated by Colorado Parks and Wildlife after the Wildlife Commission removed portions of this segment's Gold Medal Fishery status. It is an attempt to understand why the aquatic life between Dillon and Green Mountain Reservoirs is so meager. This initiative has garnered lots of local support, most recently in the form of an IWMP grant application to the CWCB by Trout Unlimited and the Blue River Watershed Group.



QQ Group

These more recent Plans all rely on what Lane Wyatt calls the "Grand Daddy" of SMPs, the exemplary 2010 Grand County Stream Management Plan. Read more about QQ's work on stream management planning in [this update](#) by Lane Wyatt.

Free water loss trainings for NWCCOG/ QQ communities

The Colorado Water Conservation Board is kicking off the Colorado Water Loss Initiative (CWLI).

There are spaces still available for NWCCOG and QQ communities and water providers to participate. The CWLI is a 4-stage program to train water suppliers on the cutting-edge practices for water loss and revenue recovery. This technical assistance program is being offered at no cost to your utility. The program includes 4 work sessions spread out approximately over a 2-year period, beginning Spring of 2019. Stage 1 begins with a brief webcast in March followed by a 1-day in-person classroom style work session that covers the foundations of AWWA M36 water auditing and data validation.

For more information and to register, visit www.coloradowaterloss.org.

QQ well represented in state natural resource policy for 2019

QQ will be well represented in the state legislature and administration in 2019! QQ elected officials are tremendous leaders in protecting our natural resources, and 2019 marks increased representation all around.

As you've heard, Summit County Commissioner Dan Gibbs has been appointed the new Director of the Department of Natural Resources, which includes the Colorado Water Conservation Board and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Eagle County Commissioner Jill Hunsaker Ryan has been appointed the new Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment, which includes the Water Quality Control Commission.

In the Legislature, Representative KC Becker (D- Boulder and Grand County) is the new Speaker of the House. Senator Kerry Donovan (D- Eagle County) is Chair of the Senate Ag Committee and Representative Dylan Roberts (D-Eagle County) is Chair of the newly-named House Rural Affairs Committee (which will host water legislation). Representative Julie McCluskie (D- Summit County) and Representative Barbara McLaughlin (D- La Plata and Gunnison County) are both on the Rural Affairs Committee as well. Representative Rankin will remain on the Joint Budget Committee as he transitions to Senator (R-Garfield, Grand, and Summit County).

Other 2018 QQ Accomplishments:

Click on these links to learn more about QQ's work in 2018 and 2019:

- QQ issues a study in 2018, [Climate Change in the Headwaters: Snow and Water Impacts](#), by the Rocky Mountain Climate Organization, summarizing existing information on how climate change may affect the headwaters counties' rivers and economies.
- QQ completed new [Model Water Quality Protection Standards](#) for the headwaters region to provide municipal and county governments with model standards and requirements for land use development designed to protect water quality and quantity from nonpoint source pollution. Examples of WQPS are erosion and sediment control, stormwater control, hazardous materials management, snow storage and removal standards, and post-construction inspection and maintenance requirements.
- QQ kicked off its land use and water assessment project in 2018 and will complete the effort in 2019. QQ was awarded grants through the Colorado Basin Roundtable and the Water Plan implementation to assess our local governments' integration of land use and water in land use codes. The project includes an assessment of water savings and water quality measures in member land use codes, the development of a model code for water savings measures specific to the headwaters region, and technical assistance to update selected member land use codes. Del Corazon Consulting, led by long-time planner and facilitator Marjo Curgus, is the consultant on the project. We are also partnering with the Sonoran Institute on a three-day training in April, and follow up technical assistance, as part of this project. We are looking forward to sharing results with our members through 2019! See more about linking land use planning and water planning on our [website](#).
- QQ created a new member resources page with general information about water quality, water law, our recommendations for water news, and annual conferences in Colorado.

Torie Jarvis

Director and Staff Attorney

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Lack of transportation leads to reduced

Independence

By Erin Fisher - Director Alpine Area Agency on Aging

By 2025, one in four drivers will be 65, and will be one incident away from losing the ability to drive. In rural Colorado, public transit options are limited, so the loss of the ability to drive is not only a frustrating and isolating change, it is often the first step leading towards moving into a relative's home or into long term care.

According to the 2018 Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults report, [66% of people 60+ in the Region 12](#) mountain region intend to age-in-place throughout their retirement. Most communities are not ready for this. Limited and poorly funded senior transportation services are not usually sufficient to meet this dispersed and growing demand. Seniors are taking note. In fact, transportation, in-home services, and housing were the top concerns voiced by the senior community in 2018 when the Alpine Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) performed a listening tour across the five-county region.

Erin Fisher, Director of AAAA notes, "Seniors are beginning to grapple with the realities of aging in their communities of choice. As transportation is limited and there are few senior housing and long term care facilities in our region, the implication is that without some change, this will lead to many seniors leaving communities against their will." According to a [newly released National Aging and Disability Transportation Center \(NADTC\) transportation needs report](#), most seniors said it would be "extremely difficult" to find alternative forms of transportation when they no longer drive. The NADTC report suggests that across age and disability, most anticipate a time when they will no longer be able to drive. When that happens, those seniors will face a new dependency. Many feel trapped by the lack of transportation services which they assumed would eventually be available when needed.

According to Virginia Dize, co-director of NADTC, most communities lack transportation alternatives. She notes, "the NADTC survey found that options for people in rural communities were less plentiful, with 49 percent of older people who have given up driving in small towns saying they had "good" or "excellent" alternatives, compared to 62 percent of non-drivers in more populated places."



NWCCOG addresses the problem with regard to those who have Medicaid qualifying transportation needs by scheduling transportation and reimbursements for self-transport through the [Mountain Ride Transportation Resource Center](#).

That program coordinates and assists Veterans, Seniors, Disabled Persons and Persons with low income to get where they need to go safely and efficiently. Additionally, the Alpine Area Agency on Aging contracts with and supports various senior transportation organizations in each county throughout the region to help seniors with their transportation needs. Visit the website for additional information: [Alpine Area Agency on Aging](#)

Seniors and aging service providers alike will be closely monitoring to see if policymakers and local officials can forge effective and meaningful solutions to transportation issues both in urban and rural communities.

Workforce Housing Report - Final Edition



*Aspen Skiing Company experiments with tiny house project for seasonal workers
(Aspen Times, 8/30/17)*

The availability of housing that is affordable to the local workforce is a similar problem in all of the communities in the Northwest Colorado Council of Government's five county region, as well as the other ski/mountain/resort towns in other parts of the country including those in the Colorado Association of Ski Towns (CAST) membership.

The lack of adequate supply of affordable housing for the workforce has major negative effects on our communities, our traffic, our air quality, our employers and most importantly on our citizens and families. Many of our residents spend a disproportionate share of their income on housing. Secondly, many of the housing options that they must settle for are not in reasonable proximity to their place of work or their business. This results in long daily commutes, taking time that could be better spent with their families, their friends, volunteering in their communities,

schools or local governments. It frequently affects the ability to serve their employer to the best of their ability. Further, employers in both the NWCCOG and CAST member communities have a very difficult time fully staffing their businesses, especially during the busy seasonal times such as ski season, because without enough affordable places to live, they have difficulty recruiting employees.

This report serves to highlight the efforts among NWCCOG and CAST member jurisdictions actively working on workforce housing projects, programs, and initiatives. It is not intended to be all-inclusive, but intends to highlight these efforts as a way of information sharing, and sharing of best practices.

There is more information on the NWCCOG EDD [website here](#). This report is intended to be a resource for all our communities to learn more about best practices and innovative programs, as a way to bring more of these solutions to communities throughout the NWCCOG and CAST regions.

SAVE THE DATE!



2019 REGIONAL ECONOMIC SUMMIT

SAVE THE DATE!

NWCCOG 2019 Regional Economic Summit

Thursday, May 2, 2019

At the Silverthorne Pavilion - Silverthorne, Colorado

Keynote Speaker: Betsy Markey, Executive Director, Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade

Opening Presentation: Elizabeth Garner, State Demographer - demographic and economic trends for the NWCCOG Region

...and much, much more!

Agenda and registration information coming soon!

This event is sponsored by:



Two local leaders from our region tapped by Governor Jared Polis to lead statewide agencies

This story created with excerpts from [Vail Daily article 1/9/19](#) by Pam Boyd and [Summit Daily article 1/9/19](#) by Deepan Dutta



Jill Ryan, newly appointed Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

Newly-elected Governor Jared Polis has tapped two elected officials from the NWCCOG region to lead state agencies. Jill Ryan, Eagle County Commissioner has been appointed to serve as Executive Director for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Dan Gibbs, Summit County Commissioner, has been named Executive Director of the Department of Natural Resources.

Ryan is a two-term Eagle County Commissioner and a public health professional with more than two decades of experience in the field. She was first elected Eagle County Commissioner in 2012 and re-elected in 2016. Ryan is the former director of both health planning and the Office of Health Disparities at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. She managed Eagle County's Public Health Agency from 2004-2009, before starting her own consulting firm.

In his inaugural speech Tuesday, Governor Polis declared that affordable health care is one of his top priorities. "We get to work building a health care system that ensures families don't have to choose between losing their homes and losing their health care," Polis said. Ryan said that her tenure as an Eagle County

Commissioner has given her an intimate understanding of the

health care challenges in rural parts of the state.

Summit County Commissioner Dan Gibbs has been named Executive Director of the Department of Natural Resources. Gibbs has been a Summit County commissioner since 2010. Prior to his tenure as a commissioner, Dan represented Summit County in the Colorado House of Representatives and in the State Senate. The Department of Natural Resources oversees the Colorado Avalanche Information Center; the Division of Forestry; the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety; the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission; Colorado Parks and Wildlife; the State Land Board; the Colorado Water Conservation Board; and the Division of Water Resources.



Dan Gibbs, newly appointed Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources

Gibbs said that he plans to implement the governor's vision for protecting and enhancing the state's natural resources. As a certified wild-land firefighter who has guided the county's effective fire mitigation efforts, Gibbs plans to make wildfire mitigation a priority at the state level, along with other duties vested in a position that oversees a huge chunk of the state's economy and cultural heritage.

Ryan and Gibbs, both democrats, upon confirmation will vacate their seats as commissioners and an interim successor will be chosen per a state-mandated process. NWCCOG would like to say CONGRATULATIONS to both Jill and Dan....we are thrilled to have two leaders from the NWCCOG region serve in statewide capacities!

NWCCOG knows wellness



Now that the holidays are over, many of us may be feeling the squeeze of too tight waist bands and numbers creeping up on our scales. We also might have noticed the ache of sore joints. Just a coincidence?

Maybe not. Experts at University of Colorado Anschutz Health and Wellness Center focusing on Culinary Medicine believe there is a strong link between

what you eat and how you feel. If you're eating high sugar and high fat foods not only are you more likely to gain weight - especially around the mid-section, but you're also likely to notice achy joints - especially in the knees.

Studies show the food you eat can either contribute to added inflammation or reduce inflammation. The Culinary Medicine program suggests eating in a way that reduces inflammation thus reducing the aches and pains associated with eating the "wrong kinds" of foods.

To learn more about the program and foods you can eat that contribute to healthy weight and healthy joints [click here](#).

2019 NWCCOG COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Thursday, March 28, 2019

Full Council Meeting

Location: Council Chambers, 50 Lundgren Blvd. Gypsum, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Approval of final 2018 financials; program updates.

Thursday, May 23, 2019

Full Council & EDD Board Meeting

Location: Breckenridge Grand Vacations Community Center Hopefull/Discovery Room

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Review/acceptance of the 2018 audit

Thursday, July 11, 2019

Full Council Meeting

Location: Colorado Mountain College, 1402 Blake Ave., Glenwood Springs, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Approval of 2020 dues; approval of 2019 budget revisions; discussion re: Annual

Planning Meeting Agenda

Thursday, August 22, 2019

Full Council & EDD Board Annual Planning Meeting

Location: Summit County Community & Senior Center Hoosier Room, Frisco, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Agenda Items: Strategic Planning for 2020

Thursday, October 24, 2019

Full Council Meeting

Location: Grand View Community Space, 395 E. Lionshead Circle, Vail, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: Review of draft 2020 budget

Thursday, December 5, 2019

Full Council, EDD Board & Foundation Board Meeting

Location: NWCCOG Office, Silverthorne, CO

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Primary Agenda Items: 2019 budget revisions; approve 2020 budget; adopt 2020 meeting schedule; annual

NWCCOG Foundation Board meeting.

Northwest Colorado Council of Governments

www.nwccog.org

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