

2012 Colorado Congreso de Acequias
Centennial School, San Luis, Colorado
 hosted by the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association



Saturday, October 20th

8:15AM	Registration and coffee: Centennial school auxiliary gymnasium
9:00AM	Welcome and Legislative Update Colorado Representative Edward Vigil
9:30AM	<p>Recognizing Regional Challenges: The Colorado Acequia Story Acequia farmers from each county will discuss their local challenges and moderator Juan Marinez will lead a discussion of shared issues and obstacles, such as abandonment and climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conejos County: Lawrence D. Gallegos • Costilla County: Joseph C. Gallegos • Las Animas County: Jack Chavez • Huerfano County: Kent and Amos Mace
11:00AM	Break
11:15AM	<p>Legal Water Challenges and the Colorado Acequia Recognition Law Water law professor Larry MacDonnell will discuss the legal challenges faced by acequias, using a real Costilla County case as an example. Devon Peña and Greg Hicks will give background for and speak about the 2009 Colorado Acequia Recognition law, including: what the law means to an individual ditch and irrigator and actions that acequias must take in order to be recognized under the new law. Water attorney John McClure will speak about the legal differences between unincorporated ditches, mutual ditch companies, and Acequia Ditch Corporations (created by the 2009 law). Q&A with all</p>
12:30PM	<p>Lunch: Women and Youth in Acequias Shirley Otero Romero will moderate a discussion about how to better incorporate women and youth into acequia leadership. SdCAA Board Member, Junita Martinez, will discuss her experience; Sandra Santa Cruz of Sembrando Semillas will discuss how her program engages youth with agriculture, Bernadette Lucero and Eugene Jacquez of the Rio Culebra Agricultural Cooperative will talk about the role of creating economic opportunity to retain young farmers, and NRCS State Conservationist, Phyllis Phillips will give a larger perspective on women and youth in agriculture. Special recognition of Rose Medina, who was awarded 2011 Small Acreage Landowner of the Year by the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts.</p>
2:00PM	<p>Lessons from our Southern Neighbors Paula Garcia and Janice Varela of the New Mexico Acequia Association, and New Mexico Legal Aid attorney David Benavides will discuss their work with New Mexico acequias, including: their experience organizing at a statewide level, current programs and funding successes, and lessons in water rights protection. Q&A</p>
3:20PM	Stretch Break
3:30PM	<p>Colorado Acequia Governance Handbook Water attorneys Peter Nichols and Ryan Golten will present the work they have been doing with University of Colorado law students to create a handbook that includes water rights basics, sample bylaws, and other important information for acequias.</p>
4:00PM	<p>Resource Roundtable – Centennial library Juan Marinez, of Michigan State University Agricultural Extension will moderate this session which will give participants the opportunity to circulate around to hear about programs and ask questions of different government agencies and non-governmental organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division of Water Resources (Q&A with your water commissioner) • Natural Resources Conservation Service (Acequia EQIP program) • Colorado Open Lands (conservation easements) • National Park Service/National Heritage Area • Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association (legal assistance, conflict resolution, watershed planning) • Farm Service Agency
5:00PM	Wrap Up (dinner on your own)

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Sunday, October 21st

8:00AM	Acequia Tour (pre-registration only) – meet at Centennial School parking lot
10:00AM	<p>The Future of Colorado Acequias: Where do we go from here?</p> <p>Participants will choose one of three break-out sessions to discuss in depth as part of a smaller group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water Rights Protection and Governance – Ryan Golten, facilitator• Acequia Infrastructure –Jenny Stricker, facilitator• Youth Engagement and Young Farmers –Katherine Faz, facilitator <p>* Please note, the facilitators are volunteers and they do not represent their own organizations or the SdCAA.</p>
11:45AM	Break
12:00PM	<p>Break-out sessions report and next steps</p> <p>Session facilitators will give a summary of the ideas from each session and Sarah Parmar, of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association, will lead the group in a discussion of to move forward with ideas from the Congreso.</p>
1:00PM	<p>Lunch: Award Presentations</p> <p>Winners of the youth essay contest and poster contest will be presented with awards and first prize essay winner, Faleen Lobato, will read her essay; Acequia Advocate Awards will be presented to Colorado legislators Edward Vigil and Gail Schwartz.</p>
2:00PM	Congreso Wrap up and Adjourn

Please complete both a feedback form (anonymous) and a follow-up form!