

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES ON WATER TRANSFERS



The Western Governors have released a report titled *Water Transfers in the West*, which provides an overview on how the region can help meet growing demands for water while also mitigating potential negative impacts to agriculture or the environment. The report is a product of a year-long project in partnership with the Western States Water Council (WSWC), a group of top water administrators in the western states.

The Western Governors' Association and WSWC convened three stakeholder workshops with more than 100 participants from July to December of 2011. The meetings drew state administrators, environmental organizations, farmers, academics, and water resource professionals from across the West, providing diverse perspectives on water transfers. A sampling of these stakeholders' perspectives is provided here.

“All of the western states face challenges from growth, and we can't be certain of how much are we going to grow and how much water we will need. The WSWC and WGA's project on water transfers will help the states learn from each other's experiences and share expertise.”

PHILLIP C. WARD

Director, Oregon Water Resources Department
Chairman, Western States Water Council

SALEM, OR

“In the 21st Century, western states depend on a reliable water management system to sustain not only irrigated agriculture and growing cities, but also the economically vibrant recreational, fishing and rural sectors that depend on healthy rivers. Voluntary water transfers, properly structured, provide an innovative and fair way to meet a variety of water needs, especially in the face of more climate-induced variability in water supply, and this report will help states make those transfers work well.”

JENNIFER PITT

Director, Colorado River Project, Environmental Defense Fund
BOULDER, CO

Western water managers can use **WATER TRANSFERS** as one element in a balanced approach to meet new and changing demands for growing communities, energy development, and environmental needs.

A water transfer is a voluntary agreement that results in a change in the type, time or place of use of a water right. Water transfers can take the form of a sale, lease or donation and they can move water among agricultural, municipal, industrial energy and environmental uses.

WE LIVE IN A DESERT. Water is worth more in the Front Range. The question is: how can we farm as long as we can under this reality? Leasing protects us farmers when new demands come knocking at our door.

DALE MAUCH

Farmer

LAMAR, CO





When it comes to water transfers, developing long-term partnerships with the agricultural community is of utmost importance to the Metropolitan Water District. Although it takes time to develop, **BUILDING A LEVEL OF TRUST IS CRITICAL** to allow us to work together to meet Southern California's water needs while protecting the interests of rural areas.

BILL HASENCAMP

Manager of Colorado River Resources,
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
LOS ANGELES, CA



“Water is central to everything we care about in the West. But as water demands increase, groups like the Clark Fork Coalition are being challenged to conserve the flows in our streams and rivers. We use a variety of water transfers to make sure people, fish and wildlife all have the water they need. The Coalition believes it's critical to integrate water transfers into a big-picture, well-informed approach to allocating water supplies. This report will help each state do just that.”

BRIANNA RANDALL

Water Policy Director,
Clark Fork Coalition
MISSOULA, MT

“We are more sophisticated now than we were 30 years ago when I began studying water transfers; there are various options for transferring water rather than just following acreage. We have also seen progress in other respects; 30 years ago, there were few third party considerations and instream flow protections.”

BONNIE COLBY

Professor, University of Arizona, Departments of
Resource Economics, Geography, and Hydrology
and Water Resources
TUCSON, AZ

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WGA and WSWC's full report, titled *Water Transfers in the West: Projects, Trends, and Leading Practices in Voluntary Water Trading*, is available for download online at westgov.org/water.