

GRAD592

Interdisciplinary Water Resources Seminar

Fall 2009 Theme: **Environmental Protection and Water Management: Are They Compatible?**
Mondays at 4:00 PM, Clark A 206

Holistic Management of the Colorado River System

Speaker

Taylor Hawes,
The Nature Conservancy

Location and Time

Clark A 206
October 19th, 2009 at 4 PM

Taylor Hawes



Taylor Hawes is the director of the Colorado River Program for The Nature Conservancy's Rocky Mountain Conservation Region. She is a lawyer specializing in water and environmental issues, Hawes is based in the Conservancy's offices in Boulder, Colorado.

Taylor has been involved in a wide range of Colorado River issues including land use planning, water project assessment and planning, endangered species conservation, water-related legislation and education about water issues.

Taylor grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, and spent weekends on the family farm in Elberton near the Savannah River. "My grandfather, who was a member of the Georgia General Assembly and state Supreme Court justice, instilled a stewardship ethic in me at an early age," Taylor recalled. "We used to take walks in the woods to check on the cows. He believed that society had an innate responsibility to take care of the land and its creatures. As I grew up, spending time in the woods was my way of regaining balance."

In 1989, about three months after the Exxon Oil spill, Taylor went on a month-long sea kayak trip in Prince William Sound. She was shocked by the devastation and the loss of wildlife. "At that point," she said, "I became increasingly interested in water and how our laws worked (or didn't work) to protect our rivers, lakes and oceans."

In 1991 she headed to Sun Valley, ID. "I was drawn to The Nature Conservancy even then; volunteering at the Ketchum offices and spending hours at a time at the Silver Creek Preserve in Picabo, Idaho. I appreciated the Conservancy's approach of

working with landowners while protecting the environment in a way that also allowed the public to enjoy those places."

Taylor earned her bachelor's degree in political science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1991 and her Juris Doctorate degree from the Vermont Law School in 1997.

Taylor served as Co-Director of Northwest Colorado Council of Governments' Water Quality and Quantity Committee from 1997-2004, advocating for six Colorado headwater counties on water matters. She also managed the Upper Colorado River Project, a six-year study and solutions-oriented project in Summit and Grand counties to address impacts associated with water diversions to the Front Range from the Western Slope. She served as a consultant to various towns and counties on land use and water-related issues from 1998 to 2004, and as town attorney for Montezuma in Summit County, Colorado.

Since 2005, Taylor has served as associate counsel to the Colorado River Water Conservation District in Glenwood Springs. Her responsibilities included working on water quality issues, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Processes in the Colorado and Yampa Rivers, environmental permitting, and water rights litigation.

Taylor also serves on the Boards of the Colorado Foundation for Water Education, the Colorado Water Trust and the Colorado Institute for Leadership Training.

"Everyone keeps telling me what a big job the Colorado River Program will be, however, there is a lot of great, collaborative work being done already to address the multitude of issues in the basin," Taylor said. "I am looking forward to influencing the discussions in a positive way and helping to change the way we manage water in the West."

"I would say that in some places in the country and the world, it may be too late to make any appreciable difference. But in the West, the drought of 2002 woke everyone up to the finite nature of our water supply and the immediacy of climate change is increasing our awareness of the fact that we don't have forever to make those changes."

All interested faculty, students, and off-campus water professionals are encouraged to attend.

For more information, contact Reagan Waskom at reagan.waskom@colostate.edu or visit the CWI web site.