

GRAD592

Interdisciplinary Water Resources Seminar

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

Public Participation in Water Management - Case Study: Bear Creek Watershed

Speaker

Russell N. Clayshulte,
Environmental & Water
Resource Consultant

Location and Time

Clark A 206
October 26th, 2009 at 4 PM

Russell Clayshulte

Russell has a Master of Science degree in Biology, University of Guam, where he spent 12 years as a marine biologist and water resources specialist. After his Island adventures, Russell was the Environmental Resource Manager/Director with the Denver Regional Council of Governments for over 16 years. Russell now owns and operates a small water and environmental resource consulting business (RNC Consulting LLC). In addition to watershed management, he provides water quality consultation in a wide variety of disciplines including wastewater facility planning, water quality assessment & modeling, nonpoint source urban & construction management, soil & erosion control, environmental impact & assessment statement analyses, risk assessment, monitoring & sampling design, implementation & interpretation, and regulatory review. Russell has over 23-years of Colorado experience in the environmental and water resources fields. He has a broad range of research and professional expertise as an ecosystem ecologist, marine and freshwater biologist, lake & reservoir limnologist, and extensive work in the fields of geology, paleontology, water chemistry, hydrology, and species systematics. Russell testified before the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission in over 73 rulemaking and informational hearings, assisted in proposing changes to 47 regulations and was a key author of eight new regulations. Russell is the Community Advisory Group Co-Chair for the Buckley Air Force Base Aurora Colorado.

Abstract

The Bear Creek Watershed Association is one of the oldest watershed groups in Colorado. The Association has been in continuous operation for about 28-years (formally established 1981). The Association is the local management agency responsible for implementation of monitoring and tracking water



quality in the Bear Creek Watershed. The watershed extends from the Mount Evans Wilderness to the Town of Morrison and ends at Bear Creek Reservoir. The two major tributaries are Bear Creek and Turkey Creek. Protection of water quality in the Bear Creek Watershed requires implementation of the Bear Creek Watershed Control Regulation (Regulation #74, 5 CCR 1002-74, adopted July 1992). The Control Regulation makes the Association accountable for water quality management. The Association membership includes three counties, local general-purpose governments (Lakewood and Morrison), special districts (wastewater dischargers), associate agencies, and local citizen groups. The Association membership monitors point sources and characterizes nonpoint source practices, programs and loadings within the watershed. The Association is entirely self-funded. The watershed has 16 permitted wastewater treatment facilities. Several of the treatment works are minor systems that serve specific uses (e.g., restaurants, lodges, outdoor schools). These minor participants often do not understand the advantages to being active players. Eight major treatment works have active participation and endured the most criticism. Keeping Jefferson and Clear Creek county involvement has also proven challenging. Park County remains a paper member. Adding local special interest citizen groups into the association and giving them a voice was an exercise in trust and not always successful. Encouraging outside public participation has not always been in the best interest of dischargers. Over the decades, the Association has made numerous organizational and management adjustments along with constant changes in membership. The process has been controversial, complicated, frustrating, confusing and often the rewards were difficult to measure. Keeping the Association board and associated membership engaged for 28-years is the result of a handful of dedicated members. I have been directly involved with the Association for the last 22-years. The Association process provides an excellent testimonial on the value of a local watershed public process. So what makes the membership keep coming back to the table, month after month? How has the membership justified continuous funding from supporting boards and county commissions? The lecture will provide some interesting insights into these and other questions related to the public process of watershed groups, such as the Bear Creek Watershed Association.

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.