Addressing Water for Agriculture in the Colorado River Basin

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The Colorado Water Institute at Colorado State University spearheaded a USDA-NIFA funded regional planning grant focused on understanding agriculture water challenges in the Colorado River Basin (CRB). Carried out in partnership with the seven CRB land-grant universities (Colorado State University, University of Arizona, University of California, University of Nevada, New Mexico State University, Utah State University, and University of Wyoming), the Planning Grant Team studied:

- What farmers, ranchers, and water managers are thinking about the current and future status of their agricultural water, what pressures they are facing, and how they are dealing with these pressures.
- Farmers and ranchers’ beliefs towards the permanent and temporary transfer of water out of agriculture, the role of storage, and how to best work with other stakeholders to address the challenges associated with limited water supplies.
- Agricultural water users’ preferences for meeting future water demands, changes in water law and policy they think are needed, and how land-grant universities can best assist with the challenges they are facing, or will be facing with regard to their agricultural water.

This presentation will briefly report on results from our in-depth exploratory interviews, a survey of agricultural water users throughout the CRB, and the development of geospatial layers for multi-level, multi-purpose agricultural water governance.