Moving Forward on Agricultural Water Conservation in the Colorado River Basin


Colorado Water Institute - Colorado State University

WHERE and HOW is Agricultural Water Being Conserved?

We evaluated 75 case studies of how technology can be employed to conserve agricultural water. Four examples are illustrated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE CASE STUDIES</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Benefits Provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona Best Management Practices Program</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>Improves reliability of supplies for improved agricultural production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD/MWD Forbearance and Following Program</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Improves or retains economic return for agricultural producers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Valley Water Management Plan</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Improves water use efficiency for agricultural production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Savery Dam and Reservoir: Improving Agriculture and the Environment</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Improves water quality for use in urban areas</td>
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</tbody>
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WHAT are the BARRIERS and OPPORTUNITIES?

Sociological analysis of existing legal, economic and socio-cultural barriers as well as emerging opportunities of agricultural water conservation.

- Secondary literature review
- Interviews
- In-depth case studies

Barriers to Agricultural Water Conservation

Legal
- Legal and regulatory frameworks that limit water use to agriculture
- Lack of clear and enforceable water rights

Economic
- High cost of implementing water-saving technologies
- Financial risks associated with water conservation projects

Socio-Cultural
- Perceptions of water conservation as a social responsibility
- Community resistance to change in water use practices

Emerging Opportunities for Agricultural Water Conservation

- Improved crop yields and quality
- Increased market opportunities
- Reduced operational costs

ENGAGEMENT RESEARCH with Agricultural Stakeholders

Dialogue with Colorado River Lower Basin and Upper Basin groups of agricultural stakeholders to strategize practical actions to take advantage of opportunities

In the Upper Basin:
- No Chico Brush - a grassroots group of ag producers in the lower Gunnison Valley of Colorado, organized to demonstrate how irrigation efficiency measures secure water for agriculture
- Facilitated dialogue internally and with external groups
- Field site demonstrations

Outreach & Education

Promote actions needed for change in perceptions, adoption of conservation by agricultural producers

- Workshops
- Published Articles
- University Curricula
- Training of facilitators
- Extension Outreach
- Websites and web tools
- Facilitated dialogue with stakeholders
- Facilitated development of Action Support Matrix

Find us online to learn more about our project and activities.

www.crwater.colostate.edu

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