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And the Survey Says... Insight from Northern Water

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Aubrey Markson

2012 ANNUAL WATERWISE WATER CONSERVATION SUMMIT

Denver, Colorado

October 19, 2012

At the 2012 Colorado Conservation Summit, numerous speakers from Colorado's water community presented on a diverse range of topics. Their presentations covered issues like the current state of Colorado's water supplies; recent water conservation policy and legislation; new water fixture technology; drought planning; and the political impact of revenue loss on water conservation programs.

Colorado WaterWise, a non-profit organization that strives to promote and facilitate the efficient use of water in the state, sponsored the event. Colorado WaterWise has been the face of water conservation since its conception in 2000 and promotes conservation practices among homeowners, businesses, and water providers. WaterWise provides support to water professionals and communities across the state and empowers them to offer more responsive and effective conservation programs to their customers, clients, and citizens.

AND THE SURVEY SAYS . . . INSIGHT FROM NORTHERN WATER

First to present was Eric Wilkinson, the General Manager of the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District ("Northern Water"). Wilkinson summarized the results of a 2010 survey of Northern Water's municipal users. The twenty-seven participating municipalities answered questions regarding water use, conservation, and Northern Water's role in supporting conservation efforts. Survey results revealed: thirteen of the twenty-seven municipalities have Colorado Water Conservation Board approved conservation plans in place; approximately sixty percent of municipalities indicated that water conservation is an element incorporated into their water supply planning; and nineteen of the municipalities claimed to have water conservation programs in place. The various municipalities cited a variety of different reasons for participating in conservation efforts, including the belief that water conservation is "the right thing to do," to create a drought reserve, and to offset a portion of the increased demand of future growth.

According to Wilkinson, the survey results provided Northern Water with a greater understanding of current conservation programs and an idea of how Northern Water will move forward with effective alternative conservation methods. When discussing whether effective water conservation is a seemingly "insolvable problem," Wilkinson ended with some light-hearted words of encouragement by joking: "you've got to eat the elephant one bite at a time."

Christine Romo