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Website Reviews

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Website Reviews

WEBSITE REVIEWS

The Website Reviews section of the *Water Law Review* is intended to provide an overview of useful websites for attorneys, practitioners, students, jurists, and other professionals interested in water law and water-related issues. For clarity, each website review refers to links within the reviewed website as “inlinks,” or as providing the ability to “inlink.” Each review also refers to links outside the reviewed website as “outlinks,” or as providing the ability to “outlink.”

<http://www.waterknowledge.colostate.edu>; maintained by The Colorado Water Research Institute and Colorado State University.

The website <http://www.waterknowledge.colostate.edu> (“Waterknowledge” or “site”) is a useful site for both water lawyers and laypersons who want to increase their knowledge of Colorado’s waterways and water laws. Upon first accessing the site’s homepage, the user is given the option to select from several different links.

The first link is *Cool Water Facts* on Colorado water. This link contains more than fifty facts about Colorado water. The facts on this link are primarily historical, geological, and geographical. Examples include: the largest reservoir in Colorado is the Mesa Reservoir; less than 1% of water treated by public water systems is used for drinking or cooking; at 256 feet, Grand Lake is the deepest lake in Colorado; and the most acidic snow in the Rocky Mountain region falls in northern Colorado near the Mount Zirkel Wilderness Area. The *Cool Water Facts* link provides outlinks to the *U.S. Water News*, the *Colorado Water Research Institute*, and the *American Rivers* websites.

The second link is an *Overview* of Colorado water. *Overview* inlinks to information on (1) the hydrologic cycle; (2) the geologic description; (3) river channels, sediment, and runoff; (4) Colorado water history; (5) terms and definitions; and (6) Colorado climate. Each of these inlinks sub-links to more specific treatment of these topics. This *Overview* of Colorado water provides enough general information to familiarize a newcomer with the intricacies of Colorado water terminology, rights, and law. Yet, the overview is specific enough that an experienced water attorney will find it useful as well.

The third link, *Sources, Uses, Management and Conservation* of Colorado water provides in-depth information on the “how, when, and where” of water in the state. One of the inlinks provides statistical and factual data on each of Colorado’s major river basins, including total inflow and outflow, major tributaries, water quality, and a map of the basins. Another inlink provides the user with a chart on total water withdraws and deliveries for different purposes in each of Colorado’s

basins. In addition, one will find inlinks to the various water resources within the state, the different uses and consumptive uses in the state and each basin, and outlinks to water conservation sites.

The fourth link is *Aquatic Organisms, Wetlands, Water Quality, and Environmental Water Law*. This link inlinks to basic information on the different species of fish and aquatic insects in the state, descriptions of the four types of wetlands in the state, and surface water quality. This link also has outlinks to many of the federal environmental protection laws including the Clean Water Act, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, and the Endangered Species Act, among others.

The fifth link is *Water Administration*. This link contains four inlinks. The first inlink provides descriptions, addresses, and outlinks to federal, state, and local agencies that have jurisdiction over Colorado's water resources. The second inlink supplies information on the different diversions and water projects in Colorado, including maps, volume, and the fourteen hydroelectric power plants operated by the Bureau of Reclamation. The third inlink describes interstate water compacts to which Colorado is a party. The fourth inlink outlinks to information on how to obtain a water right, a guide to new well permits, filing fees for new applications, and contact information for the seven Colorado water courts.

The final three links from the site's homepage are inlinks to (1) frequently asked questions regarding Colorado water rights and law; (2) information on the recovery efforts for the Greenback Cutthroat Trout; and (3) information on Colorado watershed protection efforts. Each of these three links has inlinks taking the user to more in-depth treatment of each topic.

Finally, the site's homepage has three outlinks to (1) a children's website maintained by the Colorado Water Resources Research Institute; (2) the *USA Today Hydrology* website; and (3) the *U.S. Geological Survey Water Science for Schools* website.

Overall, the Waterknowledge website provides a wealth of useful information for both laypersons and water attorneys. The site is user friendly, and the links fairly describe the information contained within. Much of the data is simply a compilation from many legal and non-legal water sources. The website provides an efficient way to find information on almost any water topic. It is a site that should be "bookmarked" for future reference.

Adam B. Kehrt

<http://www.werf.org>; maintained by the Water Environment Research Foundation.

The website <http://www.werf.org> ("WERF" or "site") is an interactive website for those interested in water quality research programs, and in advancing science and technology in the water quality industry. WERF is geared primarily toward keeping

subscribers, volunteers, and others interested in water quality informed of ongoing research activities in the field. One focus of the site and the Water Environment Research Foundation (“Foundation”) is the recruitment of municipalities, industrial organizations, and corporations to get involved in addressing current wastewater research needs and forecasting future directions for water quality.

Users can access WERF either as a subscriber or visitor. This website review focuses mainly on how to access it as a visitor. The *Visitors Gallery* link provides useful general information on the Foundation. The *Visitors Gallery* link also provides useful information on how to subscribe to the Foundation and to the Foundation’s numerous newsletters and journals. This link offers outlinks to water quality websites, wastewater-related government agencies, associations, research groups, and news sites. The *Visitors Gallery* link also provides an inlink to the Foundation’s most comprehensive program, its research program. The *Our Research Program Areas* link provides subscribers with the ability to search a database of projects to find a specific research program or area. Another way to search for ongoing research is to inlink to one of the four broad research categories. These research categories include collection and treatment, human health, watersheds and ecosystems, and water reuse and bio-solids.

The second link on WERF’s homepage is *Research Programs*. This link establishes an “information network” for subscribers to communicate through the website and exchange information on ongoing research and projects. The Foundation utilizes this network to provide timely updates on the availability of final reports and products, workshops and subscriber meetings, funding for research, significant interim research findings, and information from other organizations. The information network also includes a topical list service, which allows anyone, including non-subscribers, to sign up to receive regular e-mails on topics such as bio-solids management, water reuse, and watershed management.

The third link from the WERF homepage is *Publications*. *Publications* allows individuals to read or subscribe to newsletters and journals published by the Foundation. Members and non-subscribers may read *Progress*, the quarterly newsletter, from the website. *Progress* gives updates on current research projects, award recipients, and in-depth reviews of current problems facing the wastewater management industry. This part of the site provides a helpful forum to understand the more technical aspects of water quality, and how this may relate to water law issues. Two other Foundation publications, *WERFindings* and *WERF Reports*, are available to WERF subscribers only. *WERFindings* summarizes research findings of ongoing projects and *WERF Reports* provides the complete research report.

The fourth link from the WERF homepage is *Requests for Proposals*. This link contains information on how to submit a research proposal. Since the Foundation manages only research projects, it strongly encourages proposals from entities qualified to undertake complicated research. Individual organizations or teams of researchers from

utilities, universities, industrial and commercial firms, and the government conduct most of the research. This link also solicits research for specific objectives that the Foundation defines. An inlink provides access to forms and instructions for research proposal submittals.

The fifth link from the WERF homepage is *News and Happenings*. This link provides updates on recent WERF announcements, water quality research news, and upcoming events. This link also contains four inlinks. The first inlink provides a summary of recent Foundation and subscriber research and happenings. The second inlink is a list of organization projects seeking participants from the water quality industry. This inlink also gives a short description of these projects and allows anyone interested to e-mail the participant-seeking organization. The third inlink is an events calendar noting upcoming Foundation-sponsored symposia and conferences. The fourth inlink provides monthly Foundation press releases and press releases from the last two years.

WERF outlinks to Cleanwater Central and the Water Environment Federation ("WEF") websites. By registering as a guest or becoming a member of the Cleanwater Central website, users gain access to more water quality research databases. WEF is another in-depth website dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the global water environment. WEF hosts North America's largest conference, WEF's Technical Exposition and Conference ("WEFTEC"), on water quality and wastewater treatment technology and issues. WERF subscribers can download the latest information from WEFTEC from the WERF website.

Overall, the WERF website is a useful tool for those interested in the technical aspects of water quality control. The website provides a scientific-based foundation for improving water quality around the world through research and education. This site would be most helpful to a company or municipality looking for ways to improve their water quality technology. Lawyers with limited or no water quality knowledge may find certain areas of the site confusing, simply because of the technical nature of the information provided. Yet, the website is a useful tool for learning more about the issues likely to affect water law in the future.

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