

Colorado Water



Garin Vorthmann spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on December 1. She lives in Denver Colorado with her husband Chad. She grew up on a cattle ranch and received a degree in Ag Business from Colorado State University.

Garin worked for Senator Wayne Allen in Washington DC and as a Farm Bureau regional manager. For Farm Bureau she coordinated membership, worked in the policy department, worked on wildlife issues, and was a lobbyist on policy at the Colorado State Capital.

Garin works for Colorado Legislative Services now. It is the oldest lobbyist firm in Colorado. She mainly focuses on natural resource issues, especially water.

In Colorado, no water runs into the state; it all leaves. The water in the Western part of the state is mainly surface water. That on the Eastern side is mainly ground water.

The State owns all the water rights in Colorado. Water law is based on first come, first served. There are seven water basins in Colorado. Surface water rights are older, therefore they have priority. Wells directly impact the surface water. Therefore, Colorado meters well and water surface pumping.

Agriculture uses 80% of the water in Colorado. Water rights can be leased on a temporary or permanent basis. Water quality is now becoming important. Cities and counties are trying to control sub-surface drilling.