

"Central's grown to administer dozens of water management sites, an extensive water quality network, and now provides services to thousands of residents. Growth brings new challenges, and Central has met these challenges head on."

Tom Cech, Executive Director

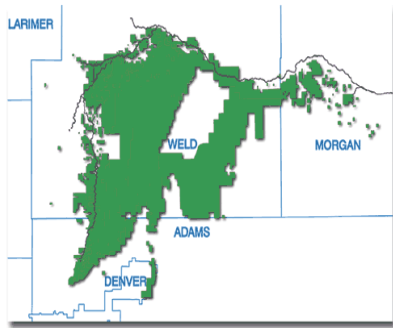
CCWCD continues to evolve, meeting constituent needs.

CREATED to develop, manage and protect water resources for northeast Colorado, the District has been in operation since 1965. Daily actions are carried out by a staff that has grown from 2 in 1965 to the current 15. Policy and goals are established by a 15 member **Board of Directors** who have been appointed by District Judges.

One of the first major projects entered into by Central was the proposed construction of a reservoir called the Narrows, in 1968. That particular reservoir was never completed due to environmental concerns in the Carter administration.

In 1973, the **Groundwater Management Subdistrict** formed, providing

augmentation plans to agricultural well owners within Central's boundaries. Augmentation plans were required under the **Water Rights Determination and Administration Act of 1969**. These plans prove there are sufficient water sources to replace any depletions caused by out-of-priority pumping, thus protecting senior water rights from injury. Hundreds of people petitioned the courts for inclusion in Central's district so they could participate in this augmentation plan.



By 1977, Colorado was suffering under a severe drought. Central's board of directors took action, obtaining a \$127,000 Drought Loan from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to construct augmentation facilities. The

drought ended by 1980 and the next 20 years experienced the most precipitation in northeast Colorado's history.

The 80's also brought growth to Central. For staff that meant relocating offices from Fort Lupton to Greeley, and adjusting from the original 2 employees to 5.

Operationally, it meant the construction of Central's first large water storage project, Kiowa Recharge. In 1982, Central built the Milliron Recharge. Central also obtained water rights in Hardin Reservoir, part of a collaborative effort between Central, the Lower South Platte and the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy Districts. The partners intended to build a 6 mile long reservoir on the South Platte's main stem, storing up to 400,000 acre-feet of water. In the end, Hardin failed because of other competing projects.

History Of Central Colorado Water Conservancy District



Central continued expansion of their water portfolio through the 80's and 90's, acquiring many senior rights in irrigation companies, reservoirs and recharge sites. The District also filed for a 1984 decreed storage right at Chatfield Reservoir.

Central became active in water protection in 1988; its groundwater quality program started, and aquifer water level data was collected. The **Water Quality Program** has since grown into a larger framework, with staff instituting monitoring wells at area schools for educational purposes.

Lobbying became a District initiative in the 80's as well. House Bill 1560, regarding the exemption of gravel pits to augmentation, was opposed by the Board. The bill was later amended to affect post-1981 gravel pits.

Ever since, the board has been active in opposing and promoting new legislation to protect the river, and the water rights of constituents and all Colorado residents.

The District branched out in education efforts, hosting the

first **Children's Water Festival** in Colorado. The one day, free event for 4th grade students continues to this day. CCWCD has since helped other children's water festivals get started across Colorado. The District also received an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant to create a water curriculum for teachers of grades 1 through 12. The "**Water Wise Colorado**" curriculum is still in use.

The 90's were also a time of innovative water projects. Central constructed its first gravel pit pond as a method of taking water during free river conditions. Siebring Reservoir - constructed in partnership with Hall Irwin - was the first known bentonite slurry lined gravel pit in the world for water storage. This unique lining allows for water storage; there is minimal water loss from the reservoir, and no infiltration from the aquifer to the reservoir.

The end of the 90's also brought an end to 20 years of record precipitation. Instead, Colorado entered a period of unprecedented drought, bringing water restrictions and conflict for all water users.

Into the Twenty First Century

Advancements continued with the formation of a second Sub-district, the **Well Augmentation Subdistrict (WAS)**. Formed in 2004, WAS assisted well owners who were suddenly without an augmentation plan when the Groundwater Appropriators of the South Platte (GASP) disbanded. WAS has gone through many trials and tribulations, but the Sub-district eventually obtained a Decree for a Plan of Augmentation from the Division One Water Court in 2008.

The Colorado Water Quality Control Commission awarded the 1992 Colorado Clean Water Award to Central in "recognition of exceptional efforts to protect, maintain, and improve the quality of Colorado's water resources."

The 1996 EPA Environmental Excellence Award was presented to Central for "Innovation and Leadership in Environmental Excellence."

As time moves forward, the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District will continue to lead the way in water storage, conservation, education, and protection of water quality in the region.