

# The History of the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District, the Groundwater Management Subdistrict, and the Well Augmentation Subdistrict.

Colorado eastern plains



1965  
Central Colorado Water Conservancy District formed.

1968  
The District begins involvement with the Narrows Reservoir.

1975  
The well fields near Brighton are installed.  
• Central has an office in Fort Lupton.



Chatfield Reservoir

1980  
Central moves office to Greeley.  
• First Water-line published.  
• Box Elder Recharge System first used.

1984  
Chatfield Reservoir storage right filed by District. • Central lobbies alongside Colorado Water Congress against gravel pits being exempt from augmentation rules.

1981  
Kiowa Recharge site constructed.  
• Diversion structures built on the Fulton, Greeley #3 and Greeley/Loveland Ditches.

1960 -

- 1980 -

1973  
Groundwater Management Subdistrict (GMS) formed.  
• There are 500 Class D contracts.

1977  
Board member Everett Kissler is part of the State Drought Study.

1982  
Tom Cech hired as Manager, and is active in Colorado Water Congress.  
• Milliron Recharge site constructed.



Headwaters of the South Platte River

The South Platte River at the Denver Metro outfall



Aerial view of Kiowa Recharge site





JoDee Reservoir

1990 Central helps inventory open abandoned wells in area for safety concerns. • Miller Recharge completed. • Over the years many water shares have been purchased.



The Earth Balloon, Children's Water Festival

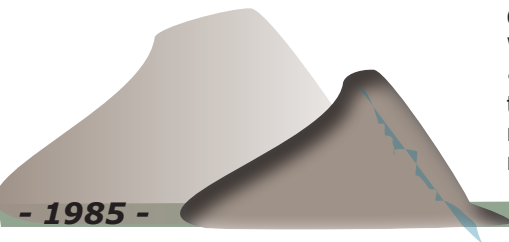


1998 The Three States Agreement is signed, Central fights to protect Colorado's water. • JoDee Pond and La Poudre Pit are integrated through a pipeline.

1985 State Engineer starts using satellite to monitor stream flows. • South Platte Basin Water Coalition formed.

1994 GIS software has been used for 2 years now. • Work with CSU to build a working stream at John Evans Jr High School.

1991 Central hosts 2nd Children's Water Festival in the world. • Start Sustainable Agricultural Project. • Receive grant money to develop water curriculum for K-12 students.



- 1985 -

- 1995 -

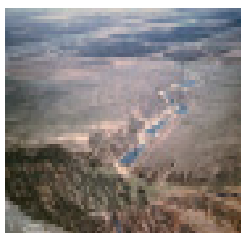
1987 Central hires staff engineer. • Office moves to present location in Greeley. • First computer purchased.

1992 First EPA grant for developing water curriculum. • Siebring Reservoir constructed, one of the first bentonite slurry lined water storage pits in the world.

1995 Water Wise Colorado Curriculum completed • Teacher training workshops held at the University of Northern Colorado.

1997 1,000 wells are augmented. • District and GMS have spent approximately \$4.7 million since 1981 on water rights and water projects. • Receive EPA award for Environmental Excellence.

1988 Milliron Recharge expanded to 5 lakes. Kiowa enlarged too. • First groundwater quality and depth measurement samples taken. • Start recharge program with Farmers Independent Ditch in addition to one with Western Mutual.



Milliron Recharge Project



WR Jones Ditch Augmentation Structure

Central's office at 3209 W 28th Street, Greeley, Colorado





Siebring Reservoir and Poudre Learning Center

**1980 - 2000  
20 wettest years in recorded  
Colorado history.**

2001  
Central stores 300 AF at the 83rd Ave Pit.  
• First time a water swap agreement arranged between Central and a municipality.

2005  
GMS obtains permanent court decree.  
• District donates 5 AF from Siebring Reservoir to new Poudre Learning Center.

2006  
All WAS wells shut down due to drought and legal battles. • Ask Groundwater Commission to declare Box Elder area a Designated Basin.  
• \$300,000 grant received for well metering program. • Work begins on Orchard Groundwater Banking Project.

2008  
May 14, WAS obtains permanent decree of augmentation plan. • Wells still not pumping due to depletions vs. supply.  
• Education efforts expand, website updated. • Colorado Agricultural Conservation Outreach (CACO) program launched.  
• Nissen Storage Ponds become operational.

2003  
Drought continues  
• Board of Directors elects Jim Reasoner as the 6th president.



Pumping water into Nissen Recharge Pond

**- 2000 -**

**- 2005 -**

**- 2008 -**

1999  
Agreement signed to build Koenig lined gravel pit reservoir. • Partnered with CSU on Integrated Decision Support Group.

2002  
Colorado Foundation for Water Education established.  
• District and GMS own more than 4,000 AF of senior water and storage rights, 8,000 AF of junior water rights.

2007  
220 wells dropped from the WAS plan to better chances of obtaining decree. • The WAS trial begins in Division 1 Water Court. • Very active in lobbying and legislation. • Gary Herman becomes 7th Board President. • Water Festival resumes after 3 year hiatus, over 1000 students attend. • October 18 the court rules WAS is entitled to a decree.  
• Meter reading program begins. • Numerous small recharge projects constructed.



Installed flow meter

2004  
The Well Augmentation Subdistrict is created to keep 500 wells in operation. • In house engineer hired. • WAS members approve bond and deburring the subdistrict.  
• Well metering program begins. • Walker Reservoir construction started. • More augmentation structures built.

Loeffler Recharge Pond



**2002  
Empire Lodge v. Moyer Supreme Court Ruling.  
♦ Worst drought in 300 years.**

# A Quick Guide to the Three Districts

**W**hen the **Central Colorado Water Conservancy District** was first created in 1965, its directives were straight-forward and simple. Develop, manage and protect water resources for the benefit of the citizens within its northeast Colorado boundaries. With a 15-member board of directors and a staff of 2, the District's operations were fairly simple at first.

Central's mission expanded dramatically as a result of the Water Rights Determination and Administration Act of 1969. This act required groundwater wells to become part of the statewide priority system. Further, in order for the wells to pump out-of-priority, they were required to have augmentation plans to replace depletions to the river caused by any pumping. The **Groundwater Management Sub-district (GMS)** was formed in 1973 to provide this essential service. 500 contracts were signed in the first year of operation.

Activities of the late 1970's were directly correlated to the severe drought that afflicted Colorado at that time. The District and the newly formed Subdistrict began construction of water storage and augmentation facilities. A board member became part of the State Drought Study. Yet Colorado weather is unpredictable if nothing else, and by 1980 the area had entered into a 20 year period that would break records for having the most precipitation in recorded history.

Thus began a new direction for GMS and the District. Large recharge projects such as Kiowa and Milliron were constructed. Numerous water rights were purchased, and storage reservoirs built. Central also became active in testing surface water and groundwater samples for water quality, and taking groundwater depth measurement samples.

**Water Education** was a primary focus during the 1990's. The first Children's Water Festival held in Colorado was organized by Central in 1990; a tradition that continues to this day. Grant money was used to develop a water curriculum for grades K-12. "Water Wise Colorado" is still used by teachers across the state.

**Lobbying** became an important forum for influencing the future of Colorado's water resources. Whether opposing detrimental legislation or promoting new laws to protect the river, Central has been an active voice in the State House.

When Groundwater Appropriators of the South Platte disbanded in 2004, Central's Board of Directors made the decision to aide as many of these people as possible, and formed the **Well Augmentation Sub-district (WAS)**. 440 contracts were accepted into this new subdistrict.

While WAS operated under a substitute water supply plan, several objectors filed claims that operation injured their senior water rights. At the same time, the State Supreme Court determined the State Engineer did not have authority to approve Substitute Water Supply Plans, and the worst drought in over 300 years hit Colorado. WAS agreed to discontinue operations until the augmentation plan went to trial in water court.

The Division 1 Water Court judge signed the official Decree for an Augmentation Plan for WAS in May, 2008.

Future activities of the District and Subdistricts will continue to focus on augmentation, storage, education and legislation. Water quality and conservation will also be areas of increasing effort. The challenges are plentiful in the coming years, but cooperation and vision will help protect and enhance the water needs of our Districts.



*Siebring Reservoir, located in west Greeley*

*GMS has approximately 543 contracts, providing augmentation for 907 wells. Its boundaries encompass 320,333 acres.*

*WAS operates with 202 contracts, for a total of 206 wells. Its boundaries cover 40,093 acres.*