

# On the Water Front

Rocky Mountain Water Quality Analysts Association

Second Quarter 2013

## A Beautiful Day in Estes Park: The 2013 RMWQAA Conference

The 2013 RMWQAA Annual Symposium was a picture perfect day in Estes Park on April 26th. As we drove into town that morning, the beauty of McGregor Mountain and the Needles reflected in beautiful Lake Estes emphasized the importance of the work that we all do in assessing and maintaining water quality in this splendid area. The conference did not disappoint. There were plenty of inspiring and informative presentations, as well as vendor products and information to help with everything from automating BOD to determining zinc concentrations.

A great day of presentations began with WET testing. Shannon Phelps from SeaCrest discussed the importance of WET testing (a test few of us truly understand... or maybe I am just speaking for myself here), and what your options are if your WET test does not pass. Paul Hindman from the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District then took to the podium to discuss issues in storm water management. He focused on the beaurocratic challenges of storm water management, and the use of numeric TMDLs versus non-numeric BMPs.

Attendees learned of an exciting new water education and stewardship center at Metro State University called the One World One Water Center from Tom Cech. Zach Schwalbe of the Colorado Climate center followed. He described the great variation in Colorado's climate, and how we can help monitor the Climate of Colorado through the (fun to say) CoCoRaHS network. Lisa Voytka spoke about the raw water quality issues that the City of Fort Collins faced (and continues



to face) due to the High Park and Hewlett fires. Alan Polonsky from the Denver Department of Environmental Health finished the presentations with an overview of the water quality sampling that Denver does, with some interesting insights into issues at several of their ponds. Thanks to all of the presenters for taking the time to share their expertise, insight, and experience! More infor-

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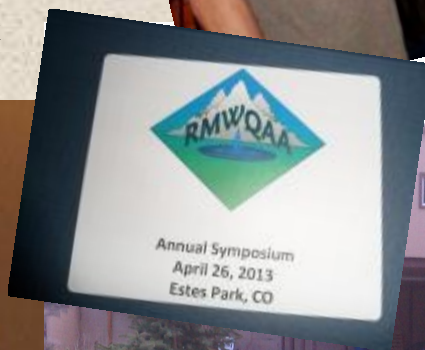


## RMQWAA Conference

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mation about the presentations, can be found on our website, [rmwqaa.org](http://rmwqaa.org)

Between presentations everyone took the opportunities to find out what's new in water quality testing by visiting the booths set up by eleven vendors that supported the conference. Vendors provided great opportunities to get new products, good conversation, and even prizes for participants... just for being present! And how great is that? Thank you to everyone who helped make the 2013 RMWQAA conference a great success! We look forward to seeing everyone next year!



**Beautiful venue, amazing presentations, and great people!**



# Analyst of the Year 2013 Steve Mustain!

Meet our 2013 RMWQAA Analyst of the Year Steve Mustain! Steve is the Chief Chemist at the Littleton/Englewood WWTP. He was nominated by Phil Russell, Environmental Services Manager. Steve was promoted last year to Chief Chemist after 10 years as an Analytical Chemist. He has transitioned very well into the new role and received great feedback from the other Analytical Chemists in the lab as well as the rest of the facility. Steve has maintained his high level of professionalism while learning and practicing new managerial skills with exceptional understanding and application. Steve spends most of his spare time on the golf course. He is passionate about the sport. He has a new canine friend named Murphy, a border collie mix who helps Steve wind down after work and his golfing trips.

Congratulations to Steve for winning Analyst of the Year and for the promotion!



## What's happening in your area? Get involved and have some fun!

For more events, search for an activities calendar on a city website near you!

### Denver South Platte River Fest

The Greenway Foundation's new signature event will be held at Confluence Park in downtown Denver. This free two-day event will feature stand-up paddle boarding lessons and demos, live music, food, and drink while highlighting local businesses and non-profits. Saturday, June 22nd from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm and Sunday, June 23rd from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

**Wyoming Cheyenne Frontier Days** July 19-28, 2013  
Concerts, rodeo, bull riding, carnival and more! Fun for all ages! Visit [cfdrodeo.com](http://cfdrodeo.com) for tickets and more information.

### Aurora Night Fishing at Aurora Reservoir

Anglers have asked for it - and now you have the opportunity to fish by the light of the full moon!  
Register online at [auroragov.org](http://auroragov.org) for June 22, 2013.  
\$30/participant per night and includes dinner.

### Morrison Film on the Rocks

Check out the Red Rocks website for the summer movie calendar. This year's lineup includes *Die Hard* and *Princess Bride*!

### Colorado Springs Pikes Peak International Hill

**Climb** is the second oldest motor sports race in America and a long-standing tradition in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region. First competed in 1916, 2013 marks the 91th running of the "Race to the Clouds." Sunday June 30th. Fan Fest before the event is Friday June 28th in downtown Colorado Springs. Free Admission 5:00 p.m. -10:00 p.m. Check out [www.ppihc.com](http://www.ppihc.com) for more info.

## What are you up to RMWQAA?

We are always looking for input from our members, both professional and personal. Got stories? Photos? Send them our way!

Email Effie Ginsberg:  
[eginsberg@mwr.d.dst.co.us](mailto:eginsberg@mwr.d.dst.co.us)

# Changing Phases: Stephen Ellis

When Stephen Ellis offered to take over the position of President of the RMWQAA in May 2007, he assumed the term would last a year or two. Little did he know he would be tied to the position for nearly seven years! During that time, his dedication to the organization as well as his dedication to the lab only grew.

Stephen graduated from the University of Wyoming and planned on going into teaching. Instead he got into the laboratory field and never looked back. Stephen is currently the Wastewater Chemist at South Adams County. He started at SACWSD in December 2004 and quickly made it apparent that he was a keeper. Stephen has helped keep the lab up to date by improving on, and developing new methods. Some examples of these are Stephen's push to upgrade an antiquated distillation apparatus to a new, safer micro distillation unit as well as procuring and developing the methods for a new Dionex ion chromatography system. He also spends time training the operators and keeping them up to speed on their lab



*Stephen as emcee of our RMWQAA conferences*

analyses. Stephen is active in outreach events through the local district schools as well.

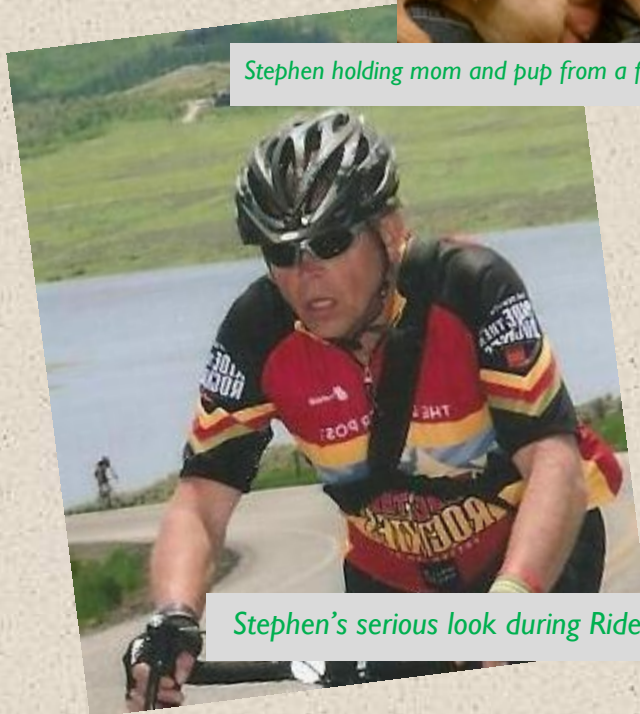
In his spare time, Stephen is devoted to helping animals at the Foothills Animal Shelter. Stephen spends time at the shelter, but also volunteers on weekends for adoption events, fosters dogs regularly, and even poses as Santa so everyone's furry friends can have their pictures taken with Santa too. Stephen is an avid soccer fan, taking off work and braving 8am start times to watch World Cup games at the bar.



*Stephen holding mom and pup from a foster litter.*

More recently, Stephen has taken up distance cycling, participating in the 2011 Ride the Rockies, as well as a 300+ mile, multi day-long Tour of Wyoming. To train, Stephen rides his bike to work throughout the summer, which also significantly reduces his carbon footprint. When not on the bike or caring for dogs, Stephen can be found in his garden filled with both veggies and flowers.

As president of the RMWQAA, Stephen aided in developing the concept of the "RMWQAA Quarterly Connection", which ensures there is at least one training opportunity/event available to analysts every quarter. Stephen will remain active on the RMWQAA board as the newest Database Chair. We wish him the best of luck in his future analyst endeavors!



*Stephen's serious look during Ride The Rockies.*



## 'Tis the Season for Watering Restrictions

Now that the snow has stopped falling, it's time to get outside and do some yard work! Keeping a garden beautiful and your grass green takes a lot of manpower and diligent watering. With the current drought conditions across Colorado, it would be beneficial to find alternative landscaping solutions that satisfy your aesthetic while conserving water. There are mandatory and voluntary residential watering restrictions in place throughout the Front Range. Be sure to find out what your community's restrictions are to avoid costly fines. If you have a HOA, find out if they are taking the restrictions into consideration as they monitor the appearance of your lawn.

Watering restrictions also apply to large properties with shared common spaces, like the Dam West community in Aurora, but there are some differences. For example, Dam West qualifies for Aurora's Large Property Water Variance Program. This allows them to water the common areas on a seven day a week basis, but no zone may be watered more than three times a week. The reason for this large property variance is there are many watering zones and it would be difficult to water them all in just two days. There are signs posted at the entrances to the community that explain the watering program to avoid any confusion. Another stipulation is they are severely limited in the amount of water used for irrigation per square foot for the entire summer.

As a result of persistent dry conditions, Governor Hickenlooper has activated the Drought Response and Mitigation Plan to ensure that the state is doing everything possible to address drought related impacts. The Colorado Drought Response website, [www.coh2o.co](http://www.coh2o.co) has information about statewide drought conditions and watering restrictions. You can find information about your specific community by your zip code. As stated on the site, many communities throughout Colorado are currently experiencing below normal precipitation and below average reservoir storage.



## It's a drought.

*Denver Water is getting the message out about the drought!*

### **Lawn and garden water conservation tips from [wateruseitwisely.com](http://wateruseitwisely.com):**

- Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street.
- Choose shrubs and groundcovers instead of turf for hard-to-water areas such as steep slopes and isolated strips.
- Water your lawn and garden in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation.
- If water runs off your lawn easily, split your watering time into shorter periods to allow for better absorption.
- Adjust your lawn mower to a higher setting. A taller lawn shades roots and holds soil moisture better than if it is closely clipped.
- Use sprinklers for large areas of grass. Water small patches by hand to avoid waste.
- Install a rain sensor on your irrigation controller so your system won't run when it's raining.
- Use drip irrigation for shrubs and trees to apply water directly to the roots where it's needed.
- Remember to check your sprinkler system valves periodically for leaks and keep the sprinkler heads in good shape.
- To decrease water from being wasted on sloping lawns, apply water for five minutes and then repeat two to three times.

## July is Lakes Appreciation Month in Colorado!

**Barr Lake** - Show your appreciation for Barr Lake State Park through a volunteer community event on Saturday, July 13th from 8am-3pm. Bring your family, friends and more for:

Volunteer projects- shoreline cleanup, invasive weed removal and planting trees from 8:00-12:00pm

FREE BBQ lunch at 12:00 pm

Multiple fun activities from 12:30-3pm. Ranging from face painting, boat rides, climbing wall, jumping castle, archery range and MUCH MORE!!

Free park admission for volunteers!

RSVP necessary for groups of five or more -call 303-659-6005

**Cherry Creek State Park** – Lake Appreciation Day will be celebrated at Cherry Creek Reservoir on Saturday, July 20th 2013. Volunteers are invited to participate in shoreline cleanup and other activities, starting at 8:00. Lunch will be provided for volunteers at 11:30 and activities including a raffle and boat rides will follow. Contact the naturalist, Karen at 303-766-6566 for more information.

**Ridgway Reservoir** – On Saturday, July 20th 2013, the usual festivities will be underway at Ridgway Reservoir from 11:00 to 3:00 including fun and educational booths and boat rides. Come on down to the swim beach at Dutch Charlie to get involved. Admission to the event is free and hot dogs will be available for purchase at the event.

### Earth Tips:

While in action, tumble dryers consume more energy than any other household appliance, so if you have one, try to use it less. Hang clothes up to dry instead.

From  
*1001 Ways to Save the Earth*

## The Rocky Mountain Water Quality Analysts Association

### Annual Scholarship Application 2013/2014

This annual scholarship was created by RMWQAA board members in 2008 to encourage and assist students who wish to pursue higher education in the water environment field by providing a scholarship to be used toward education at a college or university. The student winner must show proof of enrollment in an environmental related program at a college or university to receive the scholarship. The RMWQAA scholarship is for \$1,000 and is given annually. The scholarship also entitles the recipient to a one-year complimentary membership in the Rocky Mountain Water Quality Analysts Association.

#### To qualify for this scholarship:

- You must be enrolled in a 2yr or a 4yr college or university for study related to the water environment profession.

**You must submit an application and essay by the July 31, 2013 deadline.**

Please visit the RMWQAA website for more details and the application: [www.rmwwqaa.org](http://www.rmwwqaa.org)

### Looking for a Job?

We have new job postings on the website.

Check it out!

[WWW.RMWQAA.ORG](http://WWW.RMWQAA.ORG)

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