

WATER BANKING: A COLORADO CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

As societies grow, the institutional environments that support them become more complex. This institutional complexity either supports changes within the institutional environment or it does not. The central question of this research focused on what organizational form was best suited to address institutional change within the long-standing water markets that have been operating in Colorado's lower Arkansas River basin for the past 150 years. What attributes characterize the form of a long enduring organization that empowers individual water users in the Arkansas River basin to provide themselves with a common property resource and/or collective goods resource? To tackle this question, two organizations for water management-located in the Arkansas River basin of Colorado-were compared. The method focused the research on the attributes of each organization and compared them against a set of conceptual benchmarks that reflects the common pool resource management research tradition.

PALAVRA-CHAVE: water banking, water marketing, common pool resource management, water planning, collective goods management