

Yampa Basin Rendezvous 2023:
Snows, Flows, and Drought: Managing for Western Water Resilience



June 1-2, 2023, Colorado Mountain College Steamboat Springs

Organized by the Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes (CW3E), Colorado Mountain College, Yampa Valley Sustainability Council, Friends of the Yampa, the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District, River Network, Yampatika, and Steamboat Ski and Resort Corporation

The Yampa River is one of the wildest remaining major tributaries of the Colorado River and supports a rich ecosystem, local agriculture and ranching, and a robust recreation industry. It also provides crucial water supplies to local stakeholders and all those downstream. However, warming temperatures, rising snowlines, and increased drought occurrence and severity pose serious risks to the alpine and riverine ecosystems of the Yampa River Basin. **How are we, as a community, managing snows and flows amidst historic long-term drought to ensure our own water resilience?** This question will be at the forefront of the 2023 Yampa Basin Rendezvous. This 2-day event will provide an overview of the record weather and water extremes that continue to define our present and future in the Yampa River Basin, and whether current water and riparian land management practices will lead to the resilient future we desire. The overarching goal is to provide a venue that encourages a science-based, community-centered approach to create informed, adaptive, proactive, and science-based management strategies for the Yampa Basin's natural resources and communities.

During the sixth-annual Yampa Basin Rendezvous, participants will examine the Yampa River Basin with a focus on *Snows, Flows, and Drought: Managing for Western Water Resilience*. The Rendezvous will include morning discussion panels with regional experts, water

managers, scientists, and leaders, afternoon field learning, and an evening community event. We will explore new opportunities for water retention, storage, and sustainable use with the goal of building water resilience in the Yampa River Basin. Through this dialogue with our community, we hope to pair CW3E's research directions with local expertise on the challenges and successes of current natural resource management practices in the Yampa Basin to identify how and where additional research, partnership, and collaboration may be beneficial.

This event is an ongoing effort to connect graduate students, post-doctoral scholars, researchers, staff and faculty from the Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes (CW3E; cw3e.ucsd.edu) to river basins throughout the west. CW3E is based at the University of California San Diego's (UCSD) Scripps Institution of Oceanography and is building a regional community of scientists and engineers to work on western weather and climate problems. Building deep, meaningful connections with people who live, work, and steward rivers in the west is essential and it is preferable that this happen at an early career stage.

YBR Mission: The YBR strives to be an opportunity for shared exploration, reflection, communication, appreciation, and collaborative learning about the Yampa Basin ecosystem, environment, weather, climate, people, and culture and their intersections, for members of the Yampa Basin community as well as all the communities downstream who rely on the Yampa's water.

YBR Goals: Connect students, researchers, institutions, and community members who live and work in the Yampa River Basin to share knowledge regarding climate variability and change that has impacts on the environment, people, and economy. Build community and encourage collaborative problem-solving and planning, and provide an opportunity for citizens and visitors to be informed about the state of the Yampa Basin and the people and plans in place and in process to protect it.

2023 YBR Steering Committee Members:

Madison Muxworthy, Co-Chair, *Yampa Valley Sustainability Council*

Nathan Stewart, Co-Chair, *Colorado Mountain College*

Halie Cunningham, *Yampatika*

Jenny Frithsen, *Friends of the Yampa*

Sarah Jones, *Steamboat Ski and Resort Corporation*

Holly Kirkpatrick, *Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District*

Ellen Knappe, *Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, UC San Diego*

Garrett Mcgurk, *Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, UC San Diego*

Kerstin Paulsson, *Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, UC San Diego*

Marty Ralph, *Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes, UC San Diego*

Nicole Seltzer, *River Network*

For information on the Yampa Basin Rendezvous visit: yvsc.org/yampa-basin-rendezvous

