

Frank (Buck) Skillen: Application for the At-Large Environmental Seat on the Southwest Basin Roundtable 04/17/2024

Having served for 2 years as an At-Large Representative on the Southwest Basin Roundtable and recognizing that Mely Whiting has stepped down as the At-Large Environmental Representative, I am asking the Roundtable to consider my request to be considered for the now vacant At-Large Environmental seat.

As I've noted in the past, agriculture's need for water must be balanced with the needs for the natural environment. Agriculture, in addition to being a valuable part of the food chain, serves as an important steward of vast tracts of land in Colorado. Colorado's natural environment is fundamental to hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing which in 2001 accounted for more than \$1.5 billion and 20,000 jobs in statewide economic impact.

I am applying for the At Large Environmental Seat on the Southwest Basin Roundtable because I want to be a part of the process to balance these disparate needs. The following outlines my past involvement relating to water in SW CO.

1. **Animas River Stakeholders Group (Participant):** Addressed mine waste and draining mines contamination from the Silverton area.
2. **Animas Watershed Partnership (Past Steering Committee member):** Addresses the Animas watershed from Baker's Bridge down to the confluence with the San Juan River at Farmington, NM.
3. **Water Advisory Commission to La Plata County Board of County Commissioners (Member and Chair):** Commission sought to answer 5 questions posed by BOCC and completed work in 2015.
4. **Animas River Task Force (Member):** An ad hoc advisory group to Durango Parks and Recreation to advise on recreation issues on the Animas River through the town of Durango.
5. **Water Information Program (Steering Committee member).** I coordinate and present a program on the importance of healthy water for aquatic life (bugs and fish) at the Children's Water Festival and recruit volunteers from 5RTU for guides at CWF.
6. **River Watch (CPW Volunteer):** Since Feb. '06. Sample 15 sites on the Animas River and selected tributaries on a monthly basis from Durango to Silverton. Samples are tested for metals, nutrients, ph, alkalinity and hardness. Since early 2015 have served as back up to primary volunteer (another 5RTU Member).
7. **River Protection Workgroups (Participant):** Address wild and scenic suitability designations by USFS for Hermosa Creek, San Juan (East and West Forks) River, Pine and Piedra Rivers, Vallecito Creek, And the Animas River in the SJNF above Durango. The RPW for Hermosa Creek resulted in the Hermosa Watershed Protection Act (Federal Legislation).
8. **Five Rivers Chapter of Trout Unlimited (5RTU);** Past President and Board Member since 1999.
9. **Southwest Basin Roundtable:** At-Large Representative since early 2022.

Born in 1944 in West Palm Beach, FL.: University of South Florida (BSIE) and Univ. of NC-Greensboro (MBA). Adult working life in North Carolina. Relocated to Durango, CO mid 1998.

Fly-fishing: Started as a youngster, got involved seriously in late 80's. Have worked for Duranglers Flies and Supplies part time since 1998 and retired from working in the shop at the end of 2015. Actively fish the area waters including the SJ Quality Waters.