

DTW Conveners' Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2025

Participants

- Conveners: Kate Appleby, Shannon Bacon, Maria Berkekotter, Stephen Brown, John Schlegelmilch, John Thorson, Eric Wildman, Sherri Zendri.
- Alf Brandt and Julia Iveson (NJC staff) also participated.

Executive Chair's Welcome

Kate Appleby

- The water judge certification program has not attracted any takers, so it will disappear unless there are objections. There were no objections.
- *DTW* still needs Convener lists of who *DTW* should invite to join the network.

NJC Staff Report

Alf Brandt

- **Online Water Quality Course.** Alf reported that the online course on water quality is proceeding. It has 3 segments – structure of Clean Water Act federalism, state laws on water quality, and the biggest challenges in water quality (e.g. agricultural runoff). Robin Craig (University of Kansas) and Jon Mueller (University of Maryland) will be the presenters for the first two segments. ELI is reviewing its speakers to see whether a technical speaker may present on the final part. Four Conveners will review the materials and advise the presenters (Brown, Zendri, Robie, Appleby).
- **AJA Meeting.** Justice Stephens and Alf Brandt presented on adjudicating water cases at the American Judges Association in Vancouver.
- **Conference Evaluation Data.** Conference data is not yet available. Some judges have not completed evaluations and asked to reopen the evaluation program.
- **Evaluation.** John Schlegelmilch asked for an evaluation of the workshop. After explaining why the workshop was not included, Alf Brandt agreed to create an evaluation of the workshop.

Spring 2027 Conference Brainstorming

Conveners

- **Locations.** Conveners identified possible locations for the 2027 conference:
 - Washington State
 - Arizona (Phoenix/Tucson)
 - Nevada (Reno, Walker River watershed)
 - Colorado (Boulder)
- Kate Appleby asked that each person with a proposed location send a 3-sentence email to Alf, who will assist with their development.

Planning the Next Webinar

Conveners

- Conveners discussed possible fall webinars, including state-federal water management, instream flow and a Judge Johnstone discussion. Alf will pursue these options and respond to Conveners via email.

Next Meeting: November 21, 2025

On-Line Courses

Kate Appleby, Sherri Zendri

- **Water Quality Course.** Presenters were selected and plans are for recording in December and completion in early spring. Professor Robin Craig (University of Kansas) will present the federal law segment, with help from Professor William Andreen (University of Alabama). Professor Jon Mueller (University of Maryland) will present the state law segment, with assistance from Professor Dave Owen (UC College of Law SF). Environmental Law Institute's Adam Schempp is working on who will present the big Clean Water Act challenges (more science). Discussed ELI's participation; Alf Brandt assured Conveners that ELI's role will be small.
- **Groundwater Law.** Reed Benson expects to focus more on drafting the script for this course in early 2026, with completion by May. He cannot cover all the western Plains states water issues, but Conveners wish to have at least a "light touch" on Plains states groundwater law, mentioning that there are overlapping issues with the Western states
- **Funding Update.** Water Foundation is funding water quality course. Environmental Defense Fund will provide enough to cover Reed's fee and Alf Brandt continues to pursue additional funding, including from the Walton Family Foundation.

Wrap Up: No meeting in December

Next Meeting: January 16, 2026