



# Ryan Margaret Golten

Senior Mediator

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Nearly 20 years working as a facilitator, mediator and lawyer on complex resource issues involving communities, long histories, and diverse interests, with a focus on developing collaborative, equitable solutions to water, climate, and other natural resources challenges. Known for her ability to navigate complex technical and regulatory environments, help parties develop collective understandings of relevant interests and data, and facilitate broadly supported outcomes that build relationships and increase stakeholders' capacity for solving long-term problems.

## EDUCATION, AFFILIATIONS & LANGUAGE SKILLS

- J.D., magna cum laude, University of New Mexico School of Law (2004)
- B.A., with High Honors, University of Michigan (1994)
- Professional Mediation Certificate, CDR Associates (1992); Member, New Mexico Bar Association and Association for Conflict Resolution
- Spanish-speaking

## SELECT PROJECTS

### Climate and Equity

**Energize Denver Task Force, Denver Office of Climate Action.** Facilitated a complex, fast-paced Task Force effort to electrify Denver's 17,000 existing buildings and transition them to Net Zero Energy by 2040, while prioritizing benefits for communities of color and historically disadvantaged neighborhoods. Structured and facilitated monthly Task Force meetings, with several Work Groups and consultant teams providing regular decision-making input, tools and analysis, including on equity mapping and workforce development. The Task Force adopted its ground-breaking consensus recommendations in August 2021.

**New Mexico Climate Task Force.** Through the U.S. Climate Alliance, in 2020 helped the State develop a stakeholder engagement plan to guide the State's Climate Action Planning. Building on that work, was engaged by the State in 2021 to help design and facilitate a Climate Action Task Force to guide New Mexico's climate planning, with a strong focus on meaningfully engaging BIPOC leaders and prioritizing communities of color in climate planning, adaptation and mitigation.

### Water Resources Issues and Historically Disadvantaged Communities

**Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board MS4 Permit.** Facilitated discussions among the Los Angeles Water Board, Permittees and stakeholders, including advocacy organizations and community environmental justice groups, to develop new regional stormwater permit for nearly 100 cities and counties in the Los Angeles metropolitan region, in the midst of on-going litigation with several key stakeholders over related permits. Conducted stakeholder interviews, drafted briefing memo with recommendations for convening the parties, and facilitated a high-conflict stakeholder workshop process to seek areas of agreement among cities, counties, environmental groups and regulators to address concerns, reduce chances of litigation regarding the new permit, and address significant local environmental justice and community engagement concerns.

**Salton Sea Management Plan.** Co-facilitated Advisory Committee process to help the State of California implement its 10-Year Plan to manage and protect the Salton Sea. The process involved highly complex legal, regulatory and technical issues; a web of institutional and community stakeholders; and crisis-level air quality issues and habitat destruction. Worked with the State, local stakeholders and the Community Engagement Committee to address, in particular, the public health opportunities for, and meaningful engagement with, local communities of color in the Salton Sea region.

**WRAP Integrated Water Resources Management Planning (San Antonio River, TX and Verde River, AZ), River Network, EPA and National Park Service.** Co-facilitated six-month effort to assess opportunities to advance integrated, equity-focused water planning in San Antonio, Texas and Arizona's Verde watershed and highlight key learnings for EPA's Office of Water. After conducting a stakeholder assessment, CBI convened an Equity and Engagement committee within EPA's San Antonio Urban Waters Partnership to explore the use of equity mapping and community-based processes to integrate water projects to serve historically disadvantaged communities. Highlighted learnings for River Network, EPA and the National Park Service in their work to promote integrated, locally informed, equity-focused water management throughout the country.

**EPA Urban Waters Partnership Program (NM).** Facilitated workshops in Albuquerque to build collaboration among federal agencies administering programs in the Middle Rio Grande corridor and members and leaders of low-income communities and Tribes directly impacted by federal projects. The workshops addressed specific barriers to robust public participation in the NEPA process for each project and resulted in development of a strategic outreach plan for agencies working in Albuquerque's South Valley communities on issues of environmental justice.

**Water Resources Plan Workshop, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.** Co-facilitated workshop involving hundreds of participants to share information, receive input and discuss strategies related to the District's updated Integrated Water Resources Plan. Participants included member agencies and jurisdictions, elected officials, water managers, non-governmental organizations, private industry, academics, and community stakeholders. Navigated the tension of soliciting meaningful input in a process that involved significant technical and policy challenges, significant conflict, a severe drought, and resources central to millions of people's lives.

**EPA/Lowry Landfill Superfund Site (Aurora, CO).** Mediated highly controversial groundwater contamination issues among EPA, State of Colorado, and the potentially

responsible industry parties (PRPs) in managing the Lowry Landfill Superfund site. Facilitated a Community Advisory Group (CAG) to provide input to EPA and the State in overseeing the site, including an effort to engage historically disadvantaged communities in the surrounding area. Worked with community stakeholders, government agencies, local jurisdictions, and industry to ensure the CAG met the needs of numerous stakeholders in addressing the major groundwater concerns and status of the site.

## **Collaborative Approaches to Water Resources Management and Conflict in the Western U.S.**

**Yampa River Integrated Water Management Plan (CO).** Facilitation and process design support to the Yampa-White-Green Basin Roundtable and its IWMP Committee, comprised of over 25 members representing local governments, NGOs, water districts and other stakeholders. Facilitated effort to clarify the purpose, need, and sideboards necessary to implement an IWMP for the Yampa River, and co-facilitates Committee decision-making based on extensive recent data and stakeholder assessments. The Committee is developing multi-benefit projects to advance Basin goals with support from River Network, Walton Family Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Colorado River District, and others.

**Ogallala Aquifer Summit/Coordinated Agriculture Project.** In 2018 and 2021, facilitated a 2-day groundwater summit of hundreds of water policy leaders, managers, and irrigators/producers in the 8-state Ogallala Aquifer Region focused on groundwater declines and agricultural sustainability. Outcomes included identifying and prioritizing state-based approaches and best practices for managing the aquifer; next steps for intra- and inter-state management and policy options conducive to sustaining agriculture and the well being of communities within the Ogallala aquifer region; and science/data needs and outreach approaches that enable producers and policy makers to achieve greater conservation and water use efficiency goals.

**Upper Roaring Fork River Integrated Water Management Plan (CO).** Facilitated a multi-stakeholder coalition of local, state and federal government, irrigators, NGOs, recreational groups and others to provide recommendations to Aspen and Pitkin County regarding river management alternatives. Conducted an assessment to understand key issues, opportunities and constraints, to help inform the process and approach in light of complex legal and policy conflict affecting future river operations. Worked with the coalition to study the river system, community priorities, regulatory and legal issues and constraints, feasible management options, and trade-offs in river management and restoration alternatives, and to vet, prioritize, and recommend options for the City and County's consideration.

**Big Thompson Watershed River Envisioning Project (CO).** In 2019-2021, provided facilitation to a multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee to develop an integrated plan for the Big Thompson River to meet the long-term needs of local communities, including towns, businesses, recreators, and irrigators, while securing the future health and resilience of the river and its resources. With a technical team of scientists and engineers, helped the BTWC and Advisory Committee integrate a data-driven river assessment with an in-depth stakeholder assessment of interests, values and needs for the Big Thompson River.

**Clear Creek Integrated Water Management Plan Steering Committee (CO).** After conducting a stakeholder assessment, facilitated Committee discussions to identify the goals and parameters for watershed-wide collaboration on Clear Creek. Goals include the increased alignment of projects and ongoing identification of watershed needs, to address environmental, recreational, stormwater, water quality, transportation, industrial, agricultural and other interests in the river.

**Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed Fish Passage Pilot Project (CO).** Providing facilitation to support partnership between the CPRW and local ditch companies to upgrade critical diversion structures in the Poudre River downstream of Fort Collins with river-friendly fish passage structures, as pilot for other locations in Cache la Poudre River.

**Yampa-White-Green Basin Implementation Plan Update (CO).** With a technical team, facilitates the Basin Roundtable's current BIP update. Facilitates a 25-person stakeholder committee working to refine Basin goals and objectives in light of current challenges, vetting a list of current and anticipated Basin projects in light of State criteria, identifying gaps in technical information that need further exploration for Basin planning, and developing an updated BIP for the Roundtable's approval.

**City of Fort Collins Poudre River Integrated Management Workshop and River Health Assessment Framework (CO).** Mediated discussions among the Utilities, Stormwater and Natural Areas departments to align their water supply, flood protection and river health priorities in managing the Poudre River. Staff identified and agreed upon guiding principles, relative priorities and next steps, including strategies for integrating water supply projects, storm-water management, and river health initiatives. Ryan then facilitated an internal effort to collaboratively develop a River Health Assessment Framework to quantitatively define the City's vision for a healthy and resilient Poudre River. The tool has been used for State of the River Reports and to evaluate the river health impacts of internal and external projects.

**City of Fort Collins 'River Flow Negotiations/Lessons Learned' Workshop (CO).** With the City's leadership, Ryan co-designed, organized and facilitated a workshop with partners to explore, discuss and build understanding about lessons learned for engaging in negotiations concerning flow regimes.

**Left Hand Creek Watershed Master Plan (CO).** Facilitated a 25-member Coalition of local, state and federal agencies, water districts, and community stakeholders tasked with developing a master plan for the Left Hand Creek watershed in the wake of the 2013 floods. Managed and facilitated the oversight and collaborative problem-solving work of the Coalition. In close coordination with a technical team of scientists and engineers, planned and facilitated the public engagement process for hundreds of private and institutional stakeholders to provide input and buy-in into the watershed master plan.

**Fourmile Creek Watershed Master Plan (CO).** Co-facilitated a County task force to develop a master plan for Fourmile Creek, working closely with Engineering team and project partners. The project led to extensive public engagement and meeting facilitation for Boulder County during its concurrent processes of watershed restoration and controversial road-rebuilding through Boulder's Fourmile Canyon.

**Colorado River District Strategic Planning.** Worked with staff and Board to refine the District's strategic priorities for protecting, optimizing, and advocating for Colorado's western water. She worked closely with staff and Board members from 15 diverse counties to develop a plan for the District that would address the often-competing interests in conserving, developing and advocating for water in Western Colorado. Through individual interviews and a two-day workshop, she worked with the Board to understand the needs of each sub-basin while aligning its vision and priorities for the basin as a whole.

**Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District Strategic Planning, Collaboration Training and Board Governance (CO).** Worked with the District to facilitate Board retreats, train staff in collaboration and facilitation, and conduct an assessment in 2019 to better understand stakeholder needs and priorities. Facilitated the development of a board governance policy manual as well as a strategic plan to guide the District in near and long-term operations and planning for controversial future projects.

**City of Aspen Long-Range Water Supply Study (CO).** Conducted assessment and process design for collaborative effort to study future water supply and demand under a range of climate scenarios, in context of contentious litigation and planning challenges. Interviewed 35 stakeholders including federal, state and local land and water management agencies, conservation groups, regional water management entities, jurisdictions, local landowners, and many others. Produced report with findings and recommendations for collaborative planning process in 2017.

**Colorado Department of Transportation Storm Water Task Force.** Co-facilitated a statewide Task Force charged with developing consensus recommendations for new policies and procedures consistent with state and federal regulatory requirements. Worked with Task Force to anticipate, understand, and mediate areas of conflict among different regional and headquarters offices.

**CWCB Technical Update (CO).** Provided facilitation support to the Colorado Water Conservation Board and other stakeholders to update the SWSI, a technical analysis of state water supply and demand forecasts, in support of Colorado's newly drafted and first-ever Water Plan. The process involved a large technical team working with the State and stakeholders to identify Colorado's current and future water needs, as well as potential approaches to meet those needs.

**Water Savings in Performance Contracting, Western States Peer-to-Peer Exchange.** Helped design and facilitated workshops for Western Resource Advocates and the State Energy Offices of Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Arizona to develop strategies to accelerate water savings measures in state performance contracting in the Colorado River Basin states. The process identified key gaps the states wish to address and priority next steps, including collaborating with partners, identifying funding sources, and developing best practices guidelines along with potential state-level policy changes.

**Colorado Energy Office Produced Water Policy Dialogue.** Co-facilitated a multi-stakeholder effort to identify interests and barriers to the reuse of produced water from oil and gas operations. Interviewed 30 stakeholders and designed and co-facilitated a one-day dialogue with 65 stakeholders from across Colorado, including energy companies, state regulators, federal agencies, NGOs, attorneys, counties and others. The dialogue focused on potential

opportunities, key challenges, and next steps for exploring the re-use of produced water. Co-drafted a white paper for the Energy Office to frame the issues and recommend next steps to lawmakers, industry groups, NGOs, and educational and policy institutions.

**Douglas County Water Permitting Mediation.** Mediated large dispute on Colorado's Front Range involving the future of a long-standing water system in a large, unincorporated area of Douglas County. This involved gathering and synthesizing information from a diverse array of State, County and private sources, building dialogue and identifying common interests among the diverse stakeholders, identifying and evaluating options, and working to develop a plan for a future water supply system.

## Collaborative Approaches to Land Management, Land Use and Energy

**EPA/Colorado Smelter Superfund Site.** Facilitates the Community Advisory Group (CAG) to provide local input to the Environmental Protection Agency and Colorado Health and Environment Department in overseeing the Superfund Site. With a strong environmental justice lens, mediates problem-solving within and among the federal and state government agencies, community stakeholders, and local jurisdictions to ensure the CAG is a productive stakeholder forum regarding public health issues impacting low-income and communities of color within the Superfund site.

**BLM Travel Management Planning, Southwest Colorado.** Facilitated a pre-NEPA stakeholder assessment and community meetings to explore how upcoming planning for a remote system of BLM trails and roads could support regional economic development and recreational goals in low-income, rural communities transitioning off coal and uranium mining in Dolores, Miguel and Montrose counties.

**Browns Canyon National Monument (BCNM) Planning Assessment Process (CO).** Co-facilitated a stakeholder assessment process for the BLM and U.S. Forest Service, which are jointly charged with managing BCNM in southern Colorado. The process involved designing and facilitating in-person listening sessions, stakeholder interviews, and an overall stakeholder assessment to inventory human views and values regarding the area. Project culminated with a Social Landscape Assessment to guide future NEPA scoping and planning for BCNM.

**City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks Community Engagement Framework.** Facilitated a multi-disciplinary team working with the City to develop a framework to guide the its engagement of visitors on the its extensive public lands. The first-of-its-kind planning framework will guide City decision-making regarding services, programs, associated infrastructure and media for engaging community members in each site, with a strong focus on ensuring benefits and access for low-income communities of color.

**Assessment of Colorado Oil and Gas Community Agreements.** Lead facilitator for a stakeholder effort to assess the effectiveness of MOUs as a tool to address development disputes related to oil and gas in Colorado, with a focus on air and water quality issues and BMPs. The effort involved a series of stakeholder interviews and white paper in 2016, as well as a repository of MOUs negotiated between oil and gas producers and Colorado communities. The process focused on challenges, opportunities and learnings from communities, regulators, industry and others in using MOUs and similar instruments to address impacts of oil and gas development near and around communities.

**Oil and Gas Regulatory Review Process (CO).** Co-facilitated a process to gather public input on the City of Thornton's proposed draft ordinance to regulate oil and gas development, including detailed new areas of air and water quality regulations. The process focused on designing and facilitating a community meeting to provide information, respond to concerns, and solicit input from residents, conservation groups, oil and gas companies, attorneys, state regulators and others concerning the current draft of this proposed and highly controversial ordinance.

**Mediation of Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest Forsythe II Objection Resolution Process (CO).** Mediated process involving controversial Environmental Assessment and Draft Decision Notice involving 30 objections from individuals, groups and agencies, regarding controversial forest plan and its implementation in the wake of significant floods and wildfires. Conducted interviews and facilitated a problem-solving workshop involving objectors and the National Forest to address areas of concern.

**Earth Day 50 Challenge (Future 500, Dallas TX).** Provided facilitation support for Earth Day Challenge, bringing together nearly 100 environmental, corporate and philanthropic leaders in a national collaboration to protect the world's oceans, forests, and climate. Led the Forests Work Group, with the goal of driving concrete, measurable, market-based collaborative action to protect forests, focusing on global supply chains.

**Public Lands Summit (The North Face, California).** Facilitated a public lands strategic planning process of outdoor industry leaders, industry associations, and national NGOs to collaborate on 2017 public lands education and outreach campaigns with a focus on national monuments. Worked with leadership team to design and facilitate the summit with a focus on collective impact priorities and actions.

**Dispute Resolution Training and Collaborative Process Design, Tonto National Forest (AZ).** Worked with National Forest leadership to design and lead training program for nearly 30 National Forest staff to facilitate community engagement and stakeholder consensus decision-making processes around lands management issues ranging from off-road vehicle use to trail designations, mining interests, and others.

**Western Governors Association Species Conservation and Endangered Species Act Initiative.** Facilitated lively WGA workshops involving stakeholders around the West to share best practices and engage in robust conversations regarding species conservation and the ESA. Facilitated and documented small-group discussions regarding legal and policy issues, challenges, and potential opportunities concerning ESA administration and policy. Resulted in white paper available on WGA website.

**Bureau of Land Management Listening 2.0 Workshops.** Helped facilitate a series of BLM Planning 2.0 listening sessions, as part of an effort to make BLM planning and land use decisions more efficient, adaptive, and transparent. The sessions included key stakeholders including local and state government, sports and recreation, ranching and conservation. Facilitated small group discussions in the Denver meeting and coached and prepared facilitators for the Denver and Sacramento, CA meetings. Produced a report from the session for the BLM and the public.

**Community Facilitation, Training, and Legal Support, New Mexico Acequia Association and Land Grant Consejo.** Over many years, helped facilitated strategy meetings in New Mexico among ranchers and farmers, legislators, environmentalists, academics, federal and state agencies, and other stakeholders to find common approaches to state and federal land-reform, water allocation and water planning. Provided written analysis regarding a variety of relevant issues, including federal public land issues, water rights, land use, stewardship, zoning, land recovery and land swaps, liability, ownership and easements.

**Community Land Use, Water Rights and Dispute Resolution Training, Colorado Open Lands.** To help protect traditional land uses in the San Luis Valley, provided training, strategic planning and facilitation for irrigators, leaders and agencies within an evolving legal context and increasing demand for water rights. Consulted with Colorado Open Lands and its partners, the Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment, and Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association, to develop project goals and strengthen community engagement and conflict resolution strategies.