

PRESS RELEASE

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FREE Community Event & Celebration: UGRWCD Film Screening of *Thinking Like Water*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2025, Gunnison, CO - The Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (UGRWCD), in collaboration with Western Colorado University's Center for Public Lands will host a FREE community film screening of *Thinking Like Water* on **Friday, April 18, 5:30-8:00 pm at Western's University Center Theatre** in Gunnison. The film, starting at **6:00 pm**, will be followed by door prize giveaways and a Q&A discussion with local watershed restoration leaders. Stop by exhibit tables featuring local organizations before the film and secure your FREE ticket to win a door prize! Concessions will be available by donation and all proceeds will benefit the Gunnison Country Food Pantry.

We will be showing the second episode (which takes place in Gunnison!) of *Thinking Like Water*, a docuseries where each themed episode follows different watershed restoration leaders throughout the southwest. This series celebrates the pioneering work of "water wizard" Bill Zeedyk, who started using creative and simple approaches to heal damaged waterways and fight against the ravages of drought across the southwestern United States; the restorationists highlighted in each episode follow in his footsteps, using his innovative approaches to heal their communities' waterways.

The episode we will see, titled "All About a Bird: 1,000 Acts of Restoration," highlights the Upper Gunnison Basin's Wet Meadows Restoration Program, a collaborative, on-the-ground, watershed-scale effort that was started in 2012. In our Basin, functioning wet meadows are a rare but disproportionately important ecosystem for our community and wildlife. Our wet meadows provide many benefits, including water supply stabilization, improved water quality, and high-quality forage for animals, including migratory birds, elk, mule deer, livestock, and the federally threatened Gunnison Sage-grouse.

Many wet meadows in our Basin have been damaged and left vulnerable to additional threats, including drought. These impacts lead to soil erosion and loss, resulting in diminished benefits, the most notable of which is water quality and supply, and without water, there is no life. The star of the film developed easy-to-understand techniques that our local restoration program uses to address the root causes of damage to our

land, wildlife, and livelihoods. As Bill Zeedyk says, “When it stops getting worse, it can start getting better.” *Thinking Like Water* demonstrates the use of simple yet effective tools that improve habitat for many species of wildlife, build communities’ resilience to drought, and promote productive landscapes for land-based livelihoods.

Please join us Friday, April 18th at Western’s University Center Theatre, 5:30-8:00 pm to celebrate the 14th season of the Wet Meadows Restoration Program, and to learn more about restoring water resources in your Basin! Chat with local organizations, including the Gunnison Country Food Pantry, High Country Conservation Advocates, and more! The film starts at **6:00 pm** and will be followed by a Q&A discussion and free door prizes at 7:00 pm. Come to meet restoration pioneer Bill Zeedyk, learn about local restoration work, and leave with inspiration for the future of your watershed!

(Below: Gay Austin explains how the hand-built structure is healing the landscape.)

