

# WATER IN THE DESERT

## 2026

A CONFERENCE ABOUT  
*Water in the Chihuahuan Desert of West Texas*

SUL ROSS  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
ALPINE, TEXAS

### AGENDA AT-A-GLANCE

#### Wednesday, February 11, 2026

12pm **Registration, networking and exhibits,** Morgan University Center

1:00 **Welcome and Setting the Stage;** A look at West Texas land trends and drought and climate trends in our arid Chihuahuan Desert region

1:30 **Stewardship for Healthy Watersheds**

2:00 **An Essential Primer on GCDs, DFCs and GMAs**

2:30 **Rio Grande and Pecos River Compacts, Flows and Challenges**

3:00 **Networking Break** with student research poster sessions and exhibits

3:30 **Water for Texas' Future; Prop 4**

4:00 **Produced Water;** The Biggest Conversation in the Permian Basin

4:30 **Data Centers;** What they may mean for water in West Texas

5:00 **Welcome Reception hosted by Environmental Defense Fund, Rio Grande Joint Venture and Texas Wildlife Association**

#### Thursday, February 12, 2026

8am **Networking breakfast**  
Morgan University Center

**Educational Sessions at Marshall Auditorium**

9:00 **Welcome and Opening Remarks,** **PAUL FOSTER** and **DR. LOUIS HARVESON**

9:15 **Keynote Session,** **BRIAN RICHTER**, Water Scarcity—Realities and Solutions

9:45 **Grounded in Science;** Groundwater research, data modeling and applications in local communities. Moderated by **JOHN DUPNIK** with a special introduction by TWDB Director **ASHLEY MORGAN**

10:45 **BREAK** (15 min)

11:00 **Legislative Action,** moderated by **VANESSA PUIG-WILLIAMS**, featuring State Rep. **BROOKS LANDGRAF**, State Rep. **EDDIE MORALES** and State Rep. **STAN KITZMAN**

12:00 **Lunch and Networking Break** with student research poster sessions and exhibits

1:30 **Reflections of Water,** **TRACY O. KING**, Senior Advisor to Texas Speaker of the House Dustin Burrows

1:45 **County Voices,** Brewster County **JUDGE GREG HENINGTON** with Pecos County **JUDGE SHUSTER**, Hudspeth County **JUDGE MACKENZIE** and Real County **JUDGE RUBIO**

2:30 **A Conversation about the Rule of Capture** **DR. ROBERT MACE** and **ROBERT POTTS**

3:15 **Break** (15 min)

3:30 **Research Lightning Rounds** moderated by **BILLY TARRANT** with special remarks by **ERIC R. MEADOWS**, President & CEO, The Meadows Foundation

4:00 **Our West Texas Elders,** moderated by **DR. ANDREW SANSON**

4:45 **Closing Remarks,** Congressman **TONY GONZALES**, U.S. House of Representatives (Dist. 23)

5:00 **Closing reception at the Museum of the Big Bend**

#### Friday, February 13, 2026

Morning Field Trips