

**Lori A Blau**

**Rural Development Specialist II - Environmental**

**Spokane, WA**

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### **Skills**

- Technical assistance and training
- Outreach and networking
- Technical, Managerial, and Environmental assessments
- Government regulations and policies
- Emergency response planning and training
- Wastewater treatment system operation
- Wastewater financial modules and decision trees
- Group and team facilitation
- Environmental compliance
- Environmental Management Systems development and auditing

### **Experience**

Lori Blau joined RCAC in 2018. As a member of the Environment Finance Center Region 10 Community and Environmental Services team, she provides training and technical assistance to mutual water companies, nonprofits, and local and Tribal governments to improve or develop water, wastewater and solid waste systems and programs for rural communities. She conducts sanitary surveys, needs assessments, and Level 1 and Level 2 assessments; provides technical, managerial and financial assistance in all aspects of utility operations; plans and delivers training for groups of operators, managers or board members; performs outreach and networking; develops new contract opportunities and oversees contract implementation.

Before joining RCAC, Ms. Blau was Environmental Manager for Cascade Pacific Pulp in Halsey, Oregon; Senior Technical Services Engineer for Ponderay Newsprint Company in Usk, Washington; and Environmental Engineer for Pacific Refining in Hercules, California. She has extensive experience in public policy, working with regulators, stakeholder groups and the public. She has also taught middle school and high school math and science. Ms. Blau has been trained as a facilitator, and in problem solving techniques/root cause analysis.

### **Education & Certifications**

Master of Arts – Teaching, Whitworth University

Master of Science – Engineering Management, Washington State University

Bachelor Science – Chemical Engineering, Washington State University

ISO 14001:2015 Lead Auditor Certification (Environmental Management Systems), BSI

### **Professional Affiliations**

American Institute of Chemical Engineers

Society of Women Engineers

**Jason Carman**  
**Rural Development Specialist - Environmental**

**Veneta, OR**

## **Skills**

- Water system operations and management
- Industrial automation/electrical system integration and maintenance
- Operations, planning and budget development
- Operator and technician training and development
- Water quality testing and analysis
- Emergency management planning

## **Experience**

Jason Carman joined RCAC in 2019. He has over 20 years of experience with water, wastewater, and industrial infrastructure operations, maintenance/repair and capital improvement. He provides technical and managerial assistance and training for rural water and wastewater systems. He also fosters positive working relationships with various state and federal partners dedicated to rural community advocacy.

Before joining RCAC, Mr. Carman was a water operations supervisor for the Eugene Water and Electric Board where he was responsible for water distribution system operations, the backflow/cross-connection program, customer metering, and the electrical/control/SCADA work for the water production and distribution systems. Working with the water engineering team, he was also responsible for capital improvement plan creation and execution. He served as the Oregon Health Authority's Direct Responsible Charge (DRC) for the water distribution system.

Previously, Mr. Carman was the Water Production Foreman for the Springfield Utility Board where he was responsible for pumping and storage system operations, treatment operations, pressure zone control, and all electrical/control/SCADA work for the water production and distribution systems.

## **Education and Certifications**

AAS, Computer Networking Technology, Pioneer Pacific College, OR  
Oregon Health Authority, water distribution 4 certification  
Oregon Health Authority, water treatment 3 certification  
Oregon Building Codes Division, limited maintenance electrician license

## **Professional Affiliations**

American Water Works Association

**Mario Casillas**  
**Rural Development Specialist**

**Phoenix, AZ**

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### **Skills**

- CWA, SDWA, and NPDES regulations compliance inspections
- Community advocacy
- LEAN/Six Sigma
- Process improvement/optimization
- Public speaking
- Relationship building
- Sample plan development
- One-on-one and group training

### **Experience**

Mr. Casillas joined RCAC in February 2020. He provides technical, managerial, and financial (TMF) assistance to small disadvantaged community water and wastewater systems so that they can operate sustainably and deliver quality services to the communities served. Mr. Casillas works closely with rural residents and local leaders to assist them in the development and management of water, wastewater, or solid waste systems, and prepares and delivers classroom and individual trainings as needed to build the capacity of local partners.

Before joining RCAC, Mr. Casillas spent seven years in the Water Quality Division of Arizona's Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). As a rules specialist, he helped public water systems (PWS) with their monitoring and reporting requirements. In 2015 he moved into the inspection and compliance unit and performed hundreds of inspections to ensure compliance with the SDWA, AZPDES, and some APP. Subsequently, his work focused on standardizing the inspection process, developing tools to assist PWS with their compliance requirements, and developing and conducting trainings.

### **Education & Certifications**

- Associate of Arts, Liberal Studies, Chandler/Gilbert Community College
- Bachelor of Science, Environmental Science, Northern Arizona University
- Arizona Grade I Drinking Water Distribution Operator certification, 2013
- Arizona Grade I Wastewater Collections Operator certification, 2014
- Arizona Grade II Drinking Water Treatment Operator certification, 2014

### **Professional Affiliations**

Arizona Water Association

**Claire Miller**  
**Rural Development Specialist – Environmental**

**Spokane, Washington**

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### **Skills**

- Needs assessments
- Technical assistance and training
- Rate studies
- Technical, Managerial, and Financial assessments
- Research and expertise on government regulations and policies
- Work plan management
- Income surveys

### **Experience**

Claire Miller joined RCAC in 2018. She provides training and technical assistance to rural communities on water and wastewater system management and funding sources and opportunities. Ms. Miller conducts outreach and networking at local, state, and regional levels where she coordinates rural development networks and coordinates with state and federal agencies. She also conducts Technical, Managerial, and Financial (TMF) assessments, income surveys, rate studies, and other technical and needs assessments.

Before joining RCAC, Ms. Miller was an associate planner for the Washington State Department of Commerce in the Military and Community Compatibility Program where she developed relationships between Department of Defense entities and local planning bodies, including land-use officials, emergency response planners and officials, utility districts, state agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, ports, and regional planning organizations. She also identified and encouraged links between compatibility planning and funding, and other programs within the department, such as energy efficiency programs, school siting studies, and water banking efforts.

### **Education**

Master of Urban and Regional Planning - Eastern Washington University, Spokane, WA  
Bachelor of Arts in History - Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA

### **Professional Affiliations**

American Planning Association

**Neil Worthen**  
**Rural Development Specialist-Environmental**

**Las Cruces, NM**

### **Skills**

- Water/wastewater system on-site technical assistance
- TMF capacity building
- Certified Energy Auditing – Water and Wastewater Systems
- Water/wastewater system Board and management training
- Water/wastewater system operator training
- Water/wastewater system loan/grant writing
- Web-based training workshop facilitation and instruction

### **Experience**

Neil Worthen joined RCAC in 2006. He delivers classroom and online training to small water and wastewater system operators and managers, and provides direct onsite technical assistance in all aspects of water and wastewater system operations and management.

As a former state revolving fund specialist for the California Rural Water Association, Mr. Worthen spent six years traveling throughout California assessing and improving the technical, managerial and financial (TMF) capacity of hundreds of small water systems. During this time he wrote DWSRF and CDBG infrastructure loans and grants totaling more than \$6 million on behalf of small water systems. Mr. Worthen also worked as director of public works for the City of Rio Dell, where he managed the operation and maintenance of water and sewer systems, streets, parks, storm drainage, public buildings, animal control and fleet maintenance for a city of 3,100 in Humboldt County, California.

Mr. Worthen's prior experience includes 11 years as project manager for Hawaii's largest water and wastewater operation and maintenance contractor, where he developed and delivered eight wastewater courses as instructor for the State of Hawaii Operator Training Center, and three years operating and managing water and wastewater systems in the Marshall Islands and Micronesia.

### **Certifications**

- American Water Works Association Water Conservation Practitioner, Grade 1
- California Grade 3 Water Treatment Operator Certificate
- California Grade 2 Water Distribution Operator Certificate
- California Grade 2 Wastewater Treatment Operator Certificate
- Hawaii Grade 3 Water Treatment Operator Certificate
- Hawaii Grade 4 Wastewater Treatment Operator Certificate
- Association of Energy Engineers - Certified Energy Auditor (CEA)