



Urban Waters Partnership Meeting Minutes
October 15 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.
Denver Botanic Gardens – Chatfield

Mission: The South Platte River Urban Waters Partnership collaborates across jurisdictions and disciplines to engage communities, and to protect and restore the South Platte River and Watershed.

Welcome and Introductions:

Round-robin introductions were made. Devon Buckels then introduced Patty Silverstein for an economic forecast presentation.

Presentation: “A Delicate Balance: The 2014 Economic Forecast for Metro Denver”

Patty Silverstein, President, Development Research Partners

(Powerpoint posted on Urban Waters Google Dox site at <http://goo.gl/aiTEK>)

Development Research Partners conducts economic analysis for a seven county region in the Denver metro area. A question and answer period followed the questions with topics ranging from the debt ceiling, inflation, the role of natural amenities in attracting corporations and their employees, and current issues in the homebuilding sector.

Work Group Updates:

Geomapping Workgroup: Melissa Toering from Aurora Water

- Please send any information you would like to have included on the geomap to Melissa (email)

Data Workgroup: Rachel Hansgen of Groundwork Denver and Don Moore of Jefferson Conservation District.

- A survey of those who collect data showed that some organizations use the data-sharing network [<http://www.coloradowaterdata.org/>]. There is a need for an analysis of the data to address South Platte water on a basin-wide basis. This would require funding. Also, some data is proprietary so would need to ask for access. The question was asked what the value is of the data in the DSN if 20 of 32 organizations don't use it? Older data can be incompatible and it would be work to incorporate it. Survey results:
- 32 respondents
 - 26 groups collect WQ data
 - 26 have at least some WQ data publicly available
 - 20 don't have WQ data in DSN
- Next steps: survey to Partnership about what/how they will use data. Survey results will inform format and content of tool (with survey results) being developed by WQ group.
- Could look into including current water quality data info in geomapping platform

Watershed-wide Education and Engagement Workgroup: Donny Roush, Earth Force

Education and headwaters groups have combined efforts – now called the Watershed-wide Education and Engagement workgroup. A short history of environmental education as a field was shared, as well as the Colorado Environmental Education Plan, which was adopted by the CO Board of Education in Dec. 2012. It calls for more use of outdoor settings, stronger connections between formal and nonformal providers, and professional development in both the practice and content of environmental education. The regional councils will share the Plan with various groups in the coming months. Shauna Crocker serves on the NE regional council. Donny reiterated that the Partnership goal is to communicate and collaborate across disciplines.

CDC Foundation Proposal Update:

The CDC Foundation project concept was introduced at the full Partnership meeting in June, when we had an initial brainstorm to determine categories of project. All Partners were invited to participate in a subsequent brainstorming / project concept development meeting on July 16th. Those Partners who chose to participate in July came up with the following concept areas and project teams: Water quality and trails, Forestry, HIA and a Water Center. The project teams have had meetings between July and October and some teams are continuing to work on proposals.

The consensus out of the water quality / trails group was that the first need was to develop a plan or assessment. Since that time, one of our Partners, John Voboril (thank you John!!) captured this thought and developed an overall framework for a regional water quality and connectivity plan, along with a structure for establishing a fund to support future projects. It is called the Healthy Waterways, Corridors and Connections Program. The framework is being used to fold in the more specific topics from the brainstorming session.

For example, the Forestry group is moving forward with developing 2 demonstration project proposals: one is focused on green infrastructure in the metro area; 2nd project is to develop mitigation strategies to address mine drainage contamination in the headwaters area.

The HIA team has changed its focus to a Needs Assessment, and is evaluating what components need to be included – water quality, trails, education. This Needs Assessment could tie in under the Healthy Waterways, Corridors and Connections Program.

The Water Center team has developed a concept for a phased center for the South Platte River that could potentially include virtual services such as a clearinghouse for South Platte River data, a water quality lab, and in the future, hosting small businesses developing water products and technologies. The center could also provide demonstration areas and serve as a convener for business, academia and non-profits working to solve complex water issues. Hope Dalton with Tri-County Health has pulled together the information for this proposal.

We also have had participation from Partners who developed a context section, telling the story about water in the west and the background and importance of the South Platte River.

We're focusing right now on tying the ideas together – the framework program, the studies, the water center and the demonstration projects, for an initial preliminary, review by the CDC on the general concept and structure. Then we'll work to refine and flesh out these proposals over the coming months through Partner engagement. Thanks to everyone who has participated in this process.

Presentation: “Development of Riparian Plants at DBG Chatfield”

Larry Vickerman, Chatfield DBG Director

- The Front Range is behind on collection of native seeds
- Seed increase and seed stock needed for restoration projects
- Chatfield park has greenhouse and space for seed bank – seed bank could be large enough to furnish seeds for DBG projects (Dear Creek restoration) and other restoration projects
- 4 wetland ponds at Chatfield were built as flood mitigation when C-470 was built
 - On Nov 1, 2013 CDOT will begin repairing infrastructure
 - DGB will replace head gate
 - Spring burn in wetlands
- Volunteers are welcome to contact Larry to assist with the seed bank project

Work Session: Systems Thinking

Tammy Allen was originally scheduled to present the results from Phase 1 of the Systems Thinking project but she was unable to attend. Devon Buckels gave the presentation in Tammy’s absence.

Kaitlin Fischer previously had identified there was a need within the Partnership to determine: “Who are the partners and how are they related?” or, “How do we achieve synergies in order to accomplish shared priorities?”

Tammy Allen found funding through CDPHE to move the project forward with Phase I. The consulting firm LMI was hired to assist with the project. Their strategy was:

- Information gathering
- Systems analysis
- 20 of the Partnership’s most active groups were invited to participate
 - Initial research conducted online
 - Phone interview
 - Facilitated meeting

This presentation was intended to introduce the Partners to the work done to this point. The materials presented are posted on the Urban Waters Partnership GoogleDox site at <http://goo.gl/aiTEK>. Devon and Tammy are planning to distribute the consultant’s report and accompanying materials to the full Partnership with a request for review and comment in the next few weeks. Information coming out of this Systems Thinking process will feed into the Urban Waters Strategic Plan. We are looking for funding for Phase II. Please contact Devon if you are interested in beginning work on any of the Priority areas.

Partner Updates:

- Don Moore, Jefferson Conservation District – JCD received Forest Health grant. They will thin thousands of acres (essentially tripling their previous efforts)
- CUSP – Received \$1M forest mitigation grant
- Sarah Dominick, Denver Water – partnering with CUSP to implement upper South Platte storm water project

Next Meeting

Next meeting –December 10, 2013 at Denver Botanic Gardens (York Street – Denver). The meeting is scheduled to begin at a later time, at 2:30 instead of 1:30. We invite you to stay for a social / networking time at 5:00, and then enjoy the Blossoms of Light. DBG has offered discounted tickets for Partners (advance purchase requested). Friends and family are welcome to buy tickets at regular price and join you!

Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned at 3:50 pm

Urban Waters Partner Meeting Attendance – 10-15-13

Organization	Contact Name	15-Oct-13
Audubon Society of Greater Denver	Karl Brummert	X
Audubon Society of Greater Denver	Emily Hertz	X
Denver Botanic Gardens - Chatfield	Larry Vickerman	X
Greenway Foundation, Capitol Representatives	Marge Price	X
Greenway Foundation, Capitol Representatives	David Howlett	X
Groundwork Denver	Rachel Hansgen	X
Coalition for the Upper S Platte	Amy Jacobi	X
The Park People	Kim Yuan-Farrell	X
Chatfield Area Network for Outreach and Education (CANOE)	Gene R. Reetz, Ph.D	X
Earth Force	Donny Roush	X
Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership	Katie Lampe	X
Bluff Lake Nature Center	Chris Story	X
Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed Association	Amy Conklin	X
Colorado State Forest Service	Shawna Crocker	X
Adams County	Adrienne Dorsey	X
City and County of Denver, Parks & Recreation	Mark Bernstein	X
City of Englewood	John Voboril	X
City of Englewood	Chris Neubecker	X
City of Aurora	Ray Ribota	X
City of Aurora, Water Department	Melissa Toering	X
Denver Water	Sarah Dominick	X
Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment	Susan Newton	X
Natural Resources Conservation Service	Garrett Hanks	X
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Jefferson Conservation District	Don Moore	X