

Notes UWFP Meeting 12-05-12

This is the one-year anniversary of our South Platte partnership meetings. There is a lot to celebrate!

Here are some of our accomplishments:

- Started the South Platte Pilot and held 4 quarterly meetings
- Funded 4 EPA Urban Waters grants in Region 8
- Funded 4 Urban Forestry grants from USFS through CSFS
- EPA gave Hometown funding to City of Denver for Urban Waters projects
- Urban Waters grantee meeting Washington DC
- Funding obtained from USFS for the Pilot coordinator and hiring almost complete through CSFS
- Started a geomapping project funded by EPA
- Will soon begin a systems mapping project
- Partners successful in obtaining funding to continue work related to the South Platte corridor
- Other?

Presentations

Polly Hays, USFS, Hayman Fire 10-year anniversary (for Carol Ekarius, Coalition for the Upper South Platte)

Hayman Restoration Partnership: See attached Partnership materials for the history of the partnership, a summary of the scope of accomplishments to date, and planned future activities. This ambitious project has tackled numerous long term restoration challenges resulting from the 2002 Hayman Fire, including watershed scale channel restoration, using natural channel design, to address persistent accelerated rates of post fire erosion and sedimentation . This work includes the use of rocks, logs, and other natural elements to reconstruct the geomorphic features of the channel. The successes of this project are now serving as a model for restoration on the 2012 Waldo fire, which is in a similar geologic and geomorphic environment.

If Urban Waters partners are interested in seeing the project work at Trail Creek or other locations, contact, Polly Hays (USFS- Regional Office), Carol Ekarius (CUSP), or Sara Mayben (USFS – Pike and San Isabel National Forests).

For more information go to:

<http://uppersouthplatte.org/index.html>

<http://www.nationalforests.org/press/releases/vail-resorts-nff-announce-hayman-restoration-partnership>

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/psicc/home/?cid=STELPRDB5361919>

Claire Harper, USFS

Claire coordinates water-related partnerships for USFS, focused on the South Platte. USFS Region 2 just signed its 3rd annual agreement with partners. The South Platte serves 1.3 million customers and about 30% of the Front Range population. Some of the water is west slope water diverted to the Platte.

The Partnership identified 5 priority watersheds in the South Platte headwater. The main point of the Partnership is reduction of fire risk. The Buffalo Creek fire resulted in 40 years worth of sediment into Strontia Reservoir in one event. The Hayman fire in 2002 also caused damage. Seeking to reduce damage to drinking water infrastructure and reservoirs.

Denver Water invested \$26 million for immediate response and dredging of Strontia Reservoir. Aurora Water also invested in this.

In 2010 work began on hazardous fuel removal in 5 priority watersheds. Reforestation buffer from Hayman.

Goal of 38,000 acres, may get 41,000 acres done. Zones of concern are closest to infrastructure, about 25,000 acres.

The current project is 29,000 acres. The combined cost is \$39 million, \$16.5 Denver Water and \$22 million Forest Service funding. For the South Platte, Denver is investing \$7.6 million and Forest Service is investing \$11 million.

Zones of Concern methodology. Looked at wildfire risk, post fire erosion, flooding and debris flow potential, soil erodability and water supply infrastructure. Ratings for categories 1-5.

Goal of work is to reduce risk of high intensity crown fires. About 10,000 acres completed in the South Platte drainage. Currently working on reducing hazardous fuels and removing biomass, and reforestation (500,000 seedlings planted.)

Stacey Eriksen, EPA– Geomapping Platform

Many partners have commented on the data layers they want to see. If there are partners who want to give feedback, please do so as soon as possible.

We need to establish categories for the types of projects. These were sent out via email. Please give any feedback to Stacey.

Comment was made that there is a private sector data layer on land use, and it might be interesting to see the interface between this and the commercial side.

Categories for projects: Trash cleanup could go under “Other Projects.” Tree planting and invasives removal could go into one category. Each project will be entered under its primary purpose. Discussion

about categories: some potential ideas included: development; risks; urban forestry; tree planting. There was also a question about the ability to search across categories.

Commitment of partners is needed, to update information and keep current.

Polly will get the Children's Forest layers to Stacey. The web site is about to launch. It would be good if our map could include these data

Systems mapping can be started if there is interest from the group. Cindy Cody of EPA has agreed to facilitate. Systems mapping identifies the main issues, the causes of the issues, and how each of us is working on the issue. Also identifies relationships among those working on an issue. Identifies interconnections and gaps.

Tim Watkins, City of Denver, Brownfields South Platte Area-Wide Planning Grant

Denver got 1 of 23 national Brownfields Area-Wide Planning grants. Aurora also got one for Westerly Creek.

Looked at an 11-mile stretch one half mile wide along the Platte River in Denver. Right now land usage is: 8% greenways/trails, 4% residential, 26% industrial, 10% other uses such as Mile High Stadium, etc, 10% transportation and infrastructure.

They looked at about a dozen "catalytic" sites, where the surrounding neighborhood would benefit.

A public report will be out in January.

National Urban Waters Meeting Comments – impressions of attendees:

Kaitlin: uniqueness and importance of partnership; emphasis on working with communities; what each partner can bring to the partnership; day before workshop: federal partners – different pilots talked about what they are doing, lessons learned and mistakes made.

Rachel and Amy: having a watershed stewards program – 15 week curriculum (or ¾ week learning); Tom Sawyer approach – encourage other people to do what they do best, and take credit for it; over 80% of population now lives in urban areas; importance of EJ; bringing in faith communities; keep up to date on reimbursement requests.

Donny Roush: wants a Bandalong trash trap on the South Platte, similar to the one on the Anacostia – real teaching tool (has a video to send out). Australian design (\$200K cost to design and install). Needs daily maintenance. Also saw at meeting the powerful nexus between urban waters work and environmental justice work.

Keith Wood: Environmental Justice piece – EPA folks involved were great, very educational; 1st day – different federal agencies involved – tie in with some agencies was a bit of a stretch (eg. CDC, DOT); seeing what was going on with different pilots (LA, Indiana) - \$\$\$ going through non-profits for that coordinator role; coordinators will have a network around the country.

Stacey Eriksen: Federal partner agencies cycled through rooms; next days -all the grantees. Presentation by conservation society (Manahatta), looking at island of Manhattan and can do scenarios and see what the effects of the changes are; EPA top management is invested in Urban Waters (Mike Shapiro) – grew up in NJ, and used to go to shore as a kid and find oil on the beach – interest is very personal; good news – continuity will survive transitions. There are 9 more grantees across the country for Urban Waters Small Grants, one in Utah for Region 8.

Around the room Partner Updates:

Keith Wood: Coordinator Position – an offer has been extended. Should have a person on board by the new year.

Stacey Eriksen, EPA: Funding opportunities have been announced: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funding for 5 Star Restoration Grants plus Urban Waters! Webinar tomorrow (Dec 06 to explain process). This was emailed out to Partners also.

EPA will have funding for another round of Urban Waters small grants in spring of 2013; hoped to go further down the list from last year – many great projects are on the list and remain unfunded; will have to do a new announcement (old one will expire before new monies show up).

Army Corps of Engineers update: 2008-2010 – reconnaissance study (\$50,000) for restoration and ecosystem management. May have some money to fund some specific tasks. Corps is talking with Denver. Funding would be categorical funding, not project-specific.

Darcy Campbell, EPA: Water Utilities and Wildfire workshop – Sponsored by Water Research Foundation and EPA. No date has been set yet, planning is just starting. Should be held in late March or early April in Denver. Polly Hays and Darcy are on planning committee along with Don Kennedy of Denver Water.

Cathy Tate, USGS: NWQMC – newsletter—National Water Monitoring News; new USGS report out last Friday -- Effects of urban development on stream ecosystems report; strategies for managing effects of urban development on streams; there is a generic poster to look at; (link to poster has been sent out by Stacey).

Casey Davenhill, Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners: Partners got a water quality improvement grant for a how-to video for low impact development – BMPs – stormwater. Casey has just been named the Interim director of Colorado Watershed Assembly –congratulations!

Laura Wing, City of Thornton: Working on Colorado Water Wise (coloradowaterwise.org - look at 2012 information). "Value of Water" awareness campaign for water conservation, water quality, etc. Still working on it, not sure of target audience, etc. This will be an umbrella message for the whole state. Need a manager, social marketing strategy, developing a brand. Amy Conklin adds: Value of Water campaign wants to leverage energy of Water 2012 into 2013 and beyond.

Jolon Clark, Greenway Foundation: New Greenway signature event June 22-23 – recreation through stand-up paddle boarding, plus education focus. Working with partners, may be 5000 people over 2 days. Water quality and water quantity focus. He needs partners. Talk to Jolon if interested.

Sarah Dominick, Denver Water: Denver Water is looking to move beyond Forest Health – may be doing some source water planning in 2013. Consultant putting together a report using 10 years of water quality data. Will be able to share results in about six months.

Rob Davis, Denver City Forester: Urban Canopy assessment (with USFS and UCD) – should be an interesting study – hot spots; able to do GIS analysis (e.g. trees/population/ env. justice issues, etc.) Also, Denver Mountain Parks doing lots of tree thinning. He will be looking at the environmental services trees provide. This layer may be useful in our Urban Waters mapping effort.

Patsy McEntee, NPS Rivers and Trails: AGO – Rocky Mountain Greenway – collecting info on all the conservation projects underway from Denver to Rocky Mountain National Park. Not well defined as to what conservation project means. They will call partners to put together list. AGO goals not set yet, steering committee is working on. The 2012 annual report for AGO should be on their website. Children's Forest project through USFS is an AGO project.

Rachel Hansgen, Groundwork Denver: 319 funding for investigation of E-coli contamination in Bear Creek. Community-driven project. Currently putting together a steering committee.

Chris Storey, Bluff Lake Nature Center: Working with CSFS through an Urban Waters grant– invasives, removal, – planted 80 trees – survival rate should be good moving forward.

Chris Poulet, ATSDR: Will look at 2011 and 2012 water quality data on S. Platte, particularly pharmaceuticals and personal care products. Each May there are two land reuse/Brownfields grants that are available through ATSDR. They are for \$150,000 - \$200,000. There have been none in our region and Chris would like to promote this. He will present information at the next meeting, or call him for more information.

CDPHE, John Duggan, Source Water Protection program: John has been successful in getting drinking water protection included in the new Colorado NRCS 590 standards.

Tami Allen, CDPHE NPS program:

State NPS Program gave large 319 grant to Coalition for the Upper South Platte– for Rosgen work

Implementing BMPs on dirt roads,

Trash sampling project; working with Greenway folks on trash study, moving into behavioral study.

Jolon mentioned that they are working on trash monitoring and Riverwatch monitoring and trying to get a middle school to take on the monitoring.

More discussion on trash: types, volume, etc. There was a presentation at the national meeting on this about a DC trash study.

Can see lots more trash in the river corridor since downtown sleeping ban (homeless).

Meeting Close/Next Steps

Top activities for new Coordinator to work on:

- Administrative oversight of web tool (nag us to get info on tool)
- Systems mapping (contribute to research, coordinate the mapping)
- Talk to other coordinators around the country
- Create subcommittees in this group, e.g., urban, headwaters, smaller work groups.
- Outreach—how to share the work of this group with a larger group
- Attend events on the calendar for partners, such as Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners meeting
- Branding our information and efforts as Urban Waters
- Help group come up with much more specific goals/top four goals
- Develop management structure to help the group sustain over time.

Meeting Facilitation:

Any partner interested in facilitating a meeting should let Polly or Stacey know.

Kaitlyn may have an NRCS person interested.

Denver Water will host the next meeting.

Next meeting will be in early March.