



RIVER CURRENTS

SPECIAL EDITION: COLORADO WATER PLAN

The Community's Voice Impacts the Future of Water: Refined River Center Plans



At the core of our vision is for individuals to be inspired to explore, value and protect our rivers. We do this by bringing people together to engage in dialogue and watershed action on behalf of our most precious resource: water. We are proud of our eighteen-year history and accomplishments, and we have continually envisioned a River Center which would allow us to expand our work and create a space that closely reflects our mission, that would not only be open to the public but also engage them in protecting our rivers. Our vision of the River Center has evolved throughout the years and we are excited about our latest refinement, all based on feedback we received from community members and donors.

So why is now the best time for a River Center? We began with a staff of one in 1997 and since then:

- Our staff grew to seven full-time professionals along with numerous consultants and interns.
- Our water quality monitoring grew beyond the banks of the Roaring Fork, including numerous sampling locations on the Fryingpan and Crystal Rivers.
- Our watershed education programs reach every single child in the valley, many more times than once, before they complete eighth grade.
- The influence of both our education and research has now surpassed the boundaries of the Roaring Fork Valley and is permeating the Western Slope. Some of our programs reach beyond the Colorado River watershed and have a state-level impact.

This growth has created an interesting dilemma: our work is increasing while our current work space is confining. In order to maintain the pace of our vision and goals, we created more space in the revised River Center – offices, a teaching and research lab, and a meeting space, just to name a few.

Why do we need more space or a meeting room? We are increasingly being asked to collaborate on projects with university scientists and industry professionals but do not have space to host them. One example took place in late May as we hosted a special meeting with Nancy Stoner, the Deputy Assistant Administrator at the U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency's Office of Water. This gave us an opportunity to engage with our stakeholders and partners in a Watershed Institute type dialogue and have a voice at the national level, but we were forced to spend time and resources searching for a space that could accommodate a meeting with such a guest. Our education programs are growing with hopes of including more teacher and university level training, but at this time, cannot offer such programming as we cannot accommodate groups larger than five. We are missing opportunities for exposure and growth and not fully utilizing the potential of our staff because of the

physical confines in which we work.

In order to continue protecting our rivers we must expand our presence and capacity. Our ongoing education programs, creative visions for re-watering our streams, and high level water quality evaluations already serve as examples at the state level and beyond. Our impact will only increase with enhanced facilities.

Take, for example, the Colorado Water Plan, the focus of this newsletter. It is a revolutionary way state leaders are thinking about current and future water and water issues. When current state policy shapes, and often confines, the work that can be done to benefit local rivers, we hope to involve every citizen on the Western Slope in this time-sensitive matter; the determination of our water future.

Leading by example with innovative ideas and impactful actions, we believe RFC has the potential to play a crucial and influential role in Western Slope and state-wide water, in the present and into the future. In order to fulfill this potential, we need to put the shovel in the ground on the River Center, not only to keep up with the demand in our programs, but also to keep pace with the evolving future of our water.

RFC heard what the local watershed community was striving for in a River Center, and we listened, by refining and updating the design for 2014. The new River Center plans will not only fulfill immediate space requirements but also propel us into the future, with a facility that matches the quality of our work. It will be a place where visitors leave with the knowledge and tools better to enjoy and protect their rivers and streams, whether they are residents, school children or guests. It will also be a place where professionals from all over the state, and potentially the nation, and maybe even the world, can come together to discuss and solve the complicated water issues we face today. Some of those influential individuals wrote the following articles.

We look forward to your support as we all move forward together in shaping the future of water, Colorado's most precious resource.

Moving Forward With A Plan

Heather Lewin, Watershed Action Coordinator and Rick Lofaro, Executive Director

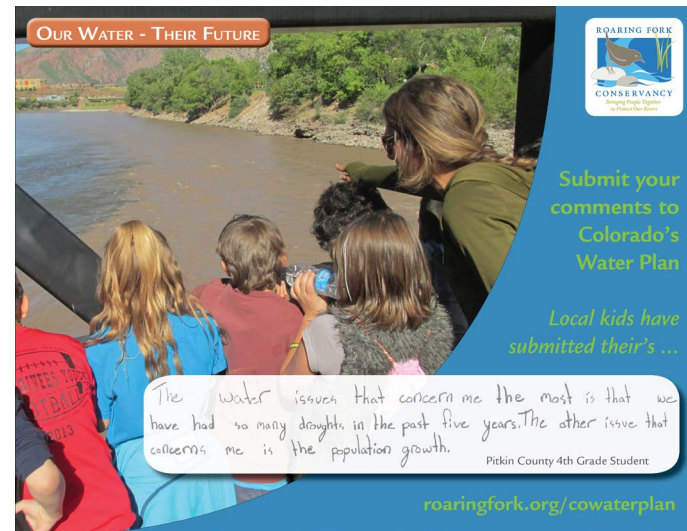
Imagine you are going on a weekend rafting trip on the Colorado River. You just decided two days before to make the trip, so you throw some food, a tent and a sleeping bag in your dry bag in the morning, hitch up your raft, drive to the boat ramp and set off on your adventure. Some of you may be nodding your heads, "Yes that is exactly how I like to raft and camp." Others might not be so sure: "Well, shouldn't you make a plan first? Get a map, check the weather, and make sure you have enough food, water and the right equipment?" The adventurer who goes intrepidly with no plan may be just fine. With a bit of luck, the weather is good, there are no mishaps and no problems. But what if, one day, she is unlucky. The weather turns. He breaks an oar. Food or, even worse, water starts to run out. Without that bit of luck, a great trip can turn into a disaster, a disaster that could have been prevented or

of drought some rivers have run dry. Some agricultural fields have gone fallow. Cities have implemented aggressive water restrictions. Legislation was passed in an effort to insure that a reliable water source is available prior to any new development. As Colorado is one of only two western states delinquent in formalizing a water plan, Governor Hickenlooper decided it was time for action. An executive order issued last fall charged each of the nine Basin Roundtables within the state to draft a Basin Implementation Plan by July 1, 2014. The Arkansas, Colorado, Gunnison, Metro, North Platte, Rio Grande, South Platte, Southwest, and the Yampa/White make up the nine watershed-based basins within the state of Colorado. These individual nine plans will be unified into one Colorado State Water Plan by December of 2015. Using past studies and current knowledge, each basin will work from the ground up to create a

plan detailing how water should be used and how gaps between local and statewide supply and demand can be met. The Colorado River Basin, which contains the Roaring Fork Watershed, has been actively working on their plan since December and continues to seek input from residents on water

issues and ideas to meet future needs.

In order to consider the diverse needs of the Colorado Basin, the Roundtable is framing their Implementation Plan around Agricultural, Consumptive (Municipal and Industrial uses), Non-Consumptive (Environmental and Recreational uses) and Policy implications. RFC has invited several guest authors with firsthand involvement and knowledge to participate in this



minimized with adequate prior planning.

Over the past 100 years, water use in the state of Colorado has been on a bold adventure without a plan. For the most part, citizens have been lucky. With minimal exception, water has been available for a variety of uses—municipal, recreation, agriculture, lawns, and more. In recent years, the droughts of 2002 and 2012 have raised some concerns that our luck may be running out. In years

Quick reference and glossary

Basin Roundtables = a set of designated members, 10 at-large members, non-voting members, agency liaisons and the CWCB Board member, who facilitate discussions on water management issues and encourage locally driven collaborative solutions. There are nine basin roundtables in Colorado, representing the eight major river basins and Denver metro area.

Colorado Water Plan = Throughout 2014, the state of Colorado will be creating a state-wide water plan to determine how the state will manage its water resources into the future. With imminent threats and growing demands including population growth, long-term drought, and climate change, Colorado is faced with the great challenge of managing water resources throughout the state.

CWCB = Colorado Water Conservation Board represents each major water basin, Denver and other state agencies in a joint effort to use water wisely and protect our water for future generations.

Headwaters = the source and upper reaches of a stream

One-acre feet = is the equivalent of a football field length filled one foot deep with water

Transbasin diversions = a man-made tunnel which carries water from one watershed to another watershed

Water banking = the practice of forgoing water flow downstream and storing it for a future use, therefore 'banking' on having the right to use it in time of need (similar to a savings account).

Watershed = the land area that drains water to a particular body of water

Sources:

<http://cwcb.state.co.us/>

<http://water.usgs.gov/edu/dictionary.html>

newsletter by sharing more detail on these important aspects of West Slope daily life and how they play into the Colorado Basin Implementation Plan.

The resulting State Water Plan, due to be finalized December 2015, will hopefully provide guidelines to the best use of Colorado's limited water resource. As a headwaters watershed, the Roaring Fork could be perceived as a source with excess water, available for diversion, to fuel the state's burgeoning population centers. Roaring Fork Conservancy is engaging the people of the valley, including the students, to

Water Lays A Sturdy Foundation

By Louis Meyer, P.E., President and CEO of SGM, Inc.



Water is important to me because.....It is the foundation of life, culture, food, recreation, the environment, my profession, my soul and my wellbeing. Water has always been an important part of my life. As a young boy growing up along the banks of the Mississippi River in Hannibal Missouri, I lived

the life of Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. The Mississippi was the foundation for transportation, culture, food, and the economy in this storied small river town. It was a haven for wildlife and the flyway for birds migrating from the Arctic Ocean to South America.

I left the banks of the Mississippi and went to college at the University of Missouri in Columbia along the banks of the Missouri River. The Missouri River was a refuge at times to escape the demands of being in college and the rigorous engineering curriculum. You could sit along the bluffs overlooking the Missouri and capture the scene of Lewis and Clark's great western epic adventure of discovery. This fascination with water and rivers in part compelled my interest in getting a degree in Civil/Environmental Engineering so that I could combine the hard sciences with communication skills with a passion for working with water. Both the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers are two of the most engineered river systems in the US. I recognized in college that a river should be viewed first as a biologically healthy river but not as something to be completely engineered.

After college I immediately moved to the Roaring Fork Valley to the confluence of two of the greatest western rivers, the Roaring Fork and the Colorado. My profession as a Water Engineer became integrally tied to rivers. Our young and growing family grew up recreating along great rivers of the west including the Colorado, Fork, Gunnison, Green, Yampa, Salt, and Animas; rafting, fishing, exploring, kayaking and camping. To this day our kids who are now young adults think back to time along rivers with other families as their most cherished childhood memories. Today we live on a small farm located at the confluence of Cattle Creek and Fisher Creek. No one will ever mistake

weigh in on the future of their water. Now more than ever, we are making our voices heard in the name of river protection. Roaring Fork Conservancy continues to remain vigilant and on the forefront of watershed action and education both locally and statewide. Like a well-planned rafting trip, we are providing input to a statewide plan that sets us up for success by creating guidelines that are rigid enough to meet most needs, while flexible enough to account for uncertainties.

these two small tributaries as great western rivers. However, I have discovered something more personal with these small tributaries. We grow our own food, thanks to the water from irrigation rights from both creeks. Our farm is a wildlife sanctuary because of the vibrant and healthy riparian habitat. The confluence of both creeks is a sanctuary to sit with a cup of coffee and enjoy the wild bird songs and decompress from a long week of work, computers, interruptions, emails, cell phones, and technology. Brown and Rainbow trout spawn at different times of the year, navigating a gauntlet of man-made hurdles from the fork up to our farm. Just the sound of the water from both creeks has immense soothing qualities.

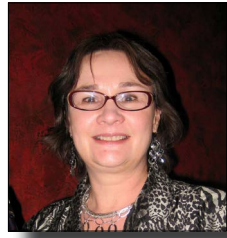
Today my best friends all have an affinity for rivers. We spend endless hours scheming and planning how to protect them.

Currently, I have the honor of assisting the Colorado Basin in preparing Colorado's first water plan (CWP). I view this plan as an opportunity for citizens to weigh in on the future of Colorado. Colorado's Water Plan is an opportunity to allow statewide thinking to transition from an individual perspective to a regional perspective. As I travel from the headwater counties and the headwaters of the Colorado River to the state line west of Grand Junction, I have come to relate to rivers not as engineered hydraulic conveyance channels, but rather as living biologically healthy sustaining wonders. I have tried to paint a human face on the rivers of western Colorado. Rivers have created our culture in Western Colorado, from the multi-generational ranchers in Grand County to the fruit growers in the Grand Valley. Our rivers provide water for our food and safe drinking water. Our rivers are what drive our tourism and recreational economy. Our rivers are part of that iconic vision of what we all cherish about living in the Rocky Mountains. Our rivers are at risk. The key to protecting our rivers is citizen involvement and education. Your voice is needed to guide our state policy to preserve this iconic vision of our state.

I would like to thank the Roaring Fork Conservancy for their leadership role in advocating for healthy rivers through outreach, education and fostering communication. The Conservancy has been a model for all watershed organizations around the state to emulate.

Get Informed, Get Involved

By Rachel Richards, Commissioner, Pitkin County



In the creation of the first State Water Plan, Colorado faces many challenges when deciding how to allocate a limited supply of water for an ever increasing demand. Farms being 'bought and dried' by growing cities for senior water rights threaten the state's agricultural economy.

New trans-mountain diversions from the West Slope threaten riparian areas, wildlife, and mountain communities' recreational/tourism economy. Energy development water demands loom large. Growth management and water conservation policies are strongly resisted with the mantra of local control.

In the Roaring Fork Valley, increased diversions from the Roaring Fork and Fryingpan Rivers may trigger a cascade of environmental and social impacts. Less water available in streams may reduce the ability to dilute sediment-loaded street runoff and wastewater treatment discharges. Loss of

flushing flows during high water in the spring can impact aquatic life and riparian vegetation. Less water in the river can also lead to increased water temperatures and decreased dissolved oxygen, which can adversely affect fish. In addition, diminished flows can decrease recreational opportunities for rafting and fishing, which could hurt tourism and local economies.

Avoiding overuse of the state's share of the Colorado River is also critical to preventing Colorado Compact compliance lawsuits which could 'turn-off' the water for many of our current 'junior' water right holders including agriculture and municipal users because a certain amount of water is required to flow out of the state for downriver uses. From the Colorado River Headwaters in Grand County through the watersheds of Eagle, Summit, Pitkin, Garfield and Mesa counties, all our communities will be affected by these planning efforts. Please get involved!

Visit www.roaringfork.org for more information.

Fryingpan River Clean Up

Thank you for a successful Fryingpan Clean up! More than 140 people cleaned more than 17 miles from the Fryingpan River at Basalt to Ruedi Reservoir, and the Roaring Fork River along Two Rivers Road in Basalt. Each year the clean-up ensures:

- Protecting Gold Medal Fishery
- Enhancing riverfront property and riparian habitat
- Safeguarding the water quality of our local rivers



Effect of Water Shortages and Colorado Water Plan on Agriculture in the Roaring Fork Valley

By Steve Child, Commissioner, Pitkin County

The effects of long term drought and projected water shortages in the Colorado River basin will have profound impacts on farming in the Roaring Fork Valley. The projected trends over the next 36 years predict a doubling in Colorado's population, more erratic precipitation events, warming temperatures with earlier than usual runoff in the spring, and more heat and evaporation in the summer. Our already water-stressed area will have even more demands put on it for sending our water elsewhere.

There is also continuing pressure from the east slope to divert an additional 200,000 AF (acre feet) of water to the front range, when water experts contend that the Colorado River is already over-adjudicated and that there is no more water to give up to diversion. The Roaring Fork River already loses 40% of its water to trans-mountain diversion, and we may lose more before everything is settled.

Since about 80% of the water in our water-short state is used by agriculture, there will continue to be unprecedented efforts to convert water from agricultural to municipal and industrial use. Already thousands of acres of farm and ranch land have been lost to "buy and dry" efforts of the front range cities looking for easy water to supplement their water supply.

Much better alternatives exist than this tactic which pits east and west slope farmers and ranchers against each other to see who gets to keep their water. In the Roaring Fork Valley

there is not much opportunity for front range municipalities to buy and dry our irrigated land to divert water over the hill. But with an increasing probability that a Colorado River Compact call will eventually be placed on the river, there will be pressure from the cities to buy water here to be sent downstream to Lake Powell to help satisfy the Compact call. Water rights that are earlier than the 1922 Compact should not be threatened, but there will be intense

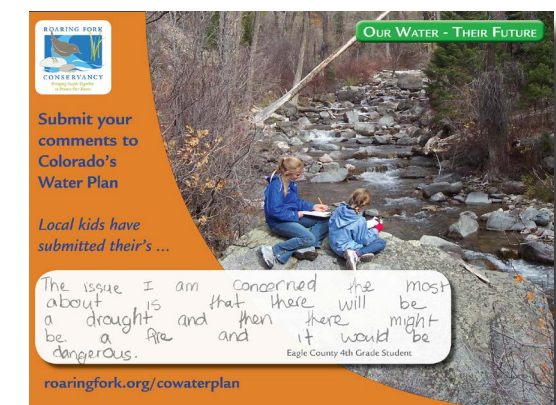
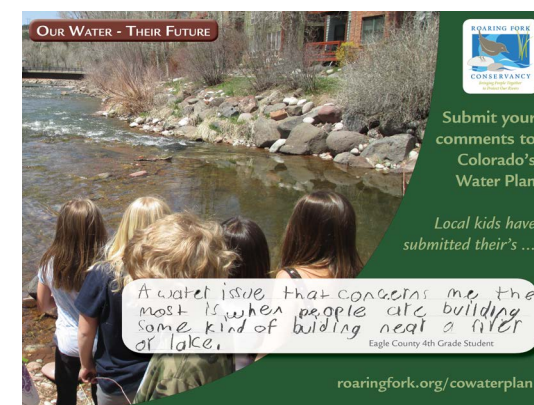


pressure, especially on those with the more senior water rights, to give up part or all of their water.

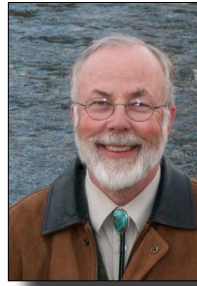
This produces both a challenge and an opportunity for valley irrigators. We are being called upon to become more efficient with our water, not to waste water, to leave water in the streams for the fish and recreation-

alists, and pressured to get as much water into Lake Powell as possible to help satisfy our compact obligation to deliver 76 MAF (million acre feet) of water over a rolling 10-year average period. There will very likely be more opportunities for local irrigators to put water efficiency practices in effect on their land, insuring that they will still have irrigated farm ground, and can lease or sell the saved water to municipal and industrial users both downstream and from the front range. This water banking idea is gathering increasing support across the state as a mechanism to keep enough water on our farm ground to ensure continued irrigated agriculture, while providing more water for other uses. Another idea being tossed around is a temporary fallowing, where a farm would lease its water during dry years, and be able to irrigate during wetter years. A third idea worth looking at is to grow crops which are more water efficient, thus allowing owners to grow and sell a crop while using less water.

Our high mountain green grass meadows may well become a thing of the past if local irrigators don't heed the warning signs of increasing water demands on our state. By taking proactive steps now, and taking an interest in the development of our statewide water plan, we have our best chance of emerging from this challenging situation with irrigated farmland still producing crops here in our valley.



Considerations For The Colorado State Water Plan



By Ken Neubecker, Associate Director, Colorado River Basin Program at American Rivers

Colorado will need a lot of water by the year 2050. The State, through the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) and Basin Roundtables has embarked on a Colorado Water Plan for providing that water. The Plan is directed to incorporate Colorado's core values of "a productive economy that supports

vibrant and sustainable cities, viable and productive agriculture, and a robust skiing, recreation and tourism industry". Another core value is "a strong environment that includes healthy watersheds, rivers and streams, and wildlife" (Governor's Executive Order D 2013-005).

The CWCB thinks it knows how much water we'll need for cities and farms, but water needs for the "healthy watersheds, rivers and streams" is pretty vague. That's a problem. How can you plan for the "needs" of rivers and streams if you don't know what those needs are? The general assumption is that environmental water needs will be filled as "enhancements" to projects that store and divert water for consumptive needs. But rivers need more than that.

It's good that environmental needs are now being incorporated in projects that traditionally destroy rivers. Reservoirs store water by drowning rivers, turning them into lakes. The flows downstream are altered for the demands of diversion delivery, hydropower and other needs that disregard or supersede those of the rivers. As consumptive demands grow, flows for rivers may become politically inconvenient. Many dams have been built with the promise of a better river downstream, only to see that promise prove as empty as the rivers.

Reservoirs and storage for human uses are vitally important, but so are the needs of the living rivers that they transform. New projects for storage and diversion must be considered carefully and sparingly. They should be a last resort only after all other options are exhausted.

The Colorado Water Plan must also recognize that most rivers and streams of Colorado have already been severely degraded by thousands of existing reservoirs and diversions. You cannot plan for or hope to restore healthy rivers and watersheds if you don't consider the degraded state they are in already.

Rivers and watersheds are connected systems of

complex biological and hydrologic forces. They cannot be separated into neatly engineered segments: one that provides water for cities and farms hundreds of miles away and then another for rafting and fishing. Natural systems don't work that way.

Another problem is the notion that additional water for cities and farms on the Front Range can be filled by building another large diversion out of the Colorado River. The upper Colorado River already has most of its flows diverted to the thirsty cities and farms of eastern Colorado. Current plans alone could see even more water going east from the Colorado and tributaries like the Eagle and Roaring Fork.

Then there is climate change. The Bureau of Reclamation expects the native flows of the Colorado River at Lees Ferry to drop 9% by 2060. The melting snows of Colorado and Wyoming's mountains provide water for 36 million people. How is a diminished river going to continue providing water for twice as many people in 2060? And what about 2061, or 2100?

A warming climate also means increased agricultural demands from longer growing seasons and increased evaporation. There simply isn't any "new" water available from the Colorado River to meet future needs of the Front Range.

If the Colorado Water Plan is to incorporate honestly Colorado's values of "a strong environment that includes healthy watersheds, rivers and streams, and wildlife" it has to address what our degraded rivers and streams really need. It must also face the reality of diminishing flows. We can no longer wave an engineering magic wand over the Colorado River.

It will take new thinking and new ideas if we hope to honor Colorado's core values through water. As Einstein said, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." Colorado looks to a future that includes vibrant, sustainable cities and viable, productive agriculture and recreation blessed by truly healthy rivers and watersheds. It won't be easy, but it can be done.

Ken Neubecker works for American Rivers and is the Environmental Representative on the Colorado Basin Roundtable. He has worked for rivers in Colorado for more than twenty years, and spends far too much time in meetings and too little time in his "office" on the river.

Colorado Basin Roundtable Vision Statement

The Colorado River Basin Roundtable envisions a Colorado River basin that is home to thriving communities benefiting from vibrant, healthy rivers and outstanding water quality that provides for all of the Colorado Basin's needs.

We acknowledge the interdependence of the varied Basin water users. Protecting the water and river flows that will ensure the future for all of us is a high priority. We also recognize that the influence of historic drought patterns, the uncertainty of climate change, population growth, energy development and compact compliance are interwoven within this vision. Much of this vision's success depends on how we collectively adapt to these forces.

Colorado Water Plan West Slope Principles: Solutions in the Colorado Water Plan (CWP) to supply water for growth and development in one part of the state should not override land use plans and regulations adopted by local governments in the part of the state from which water will be taken.

1. The CWP should protect and not threaten the economic, environmental, and social well-being of the West Slope.
2. The CWP should identify a process and requirements for each basin to exhaust available water supply within its own basin before planning diversions from another area of the state.

3. The CWP should outline mechanisms to mitigate the risk of potential Compact curtailment of the Colorado River. For example, the CWP should adopt low-risk legal and hydrologic assumptions related to Colorado's obligations under the Colorado River Compact and the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact in order to minimize the risk of curtailment on existing uses of Colorado River basin water.
4. The State should not assume a role as

a proponent of a water project until the State regulatory process has been completed and the project has been agreed to by the impacted counties, conservancy districts and conservation districts in the area from which water would be diverted.

Conservation Easement Profile: Grange Loadout, Redstone

Roaring Fork Conservancy acts as a land trust to hold 280 acres in 16 Conservation Easements in the Roaring Fork Watershed. In each issue of River Currents we highlight one of these easements.

Stats

Acres: 9.33
Date Acquired: December 4, 2008
Riverfront Protected: 1,250 feet of Crystal River
Owner: Pitkin County
Public Access: Passive Fishing Access

About the Easement

Located north of Redstone, just across the Crystal River from the south end of Filoha Meadows, the Grange Loadout Easement provides an invaluable buffer between the nearby developments of Highway 133 and the Crystal River. Under the towering narrow-leaf cottonwoods and blue spruce, a dense shrub layer provides habitat for the mountain bluebird, northern pocket gopher, a variety of raptor and owl species, short-tailed weasel and red fox among others. This former ranchland serves as a migration corridor for an abundance of elk population through the fall and winter. Passive fishing access and a historic cattle chute highlight the riverside ecology at Grange Loadout.

Recent Activity

In the summer of 2012, Roaring Fork Conservancy teamed up with the US Forest Service, Pitkin County Open Space and Trails, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Colorado Coalition for Land Trusts and Rocky Mountain

Elk Foundation to remove nearly half a mile of barbed wire fence throughout the Grange Loadout property. The event was part of the first annual Colorado Land Conservation Appreciation Week. Removal of this fencing allowed not only for safe passage through the property, but also prevents congestion as elk attempt to cross the highway.

In addition, Pitkin County has been hard at work to manage the noxious weed population left over from past ranching activity. Through their continuous hard work, there has been a significant reduction in the number of weeds, with the potential of full elimination in sight.



WATERSHED
Action FUND

Whether protecting riparian habitat, restoring rivers or planning for your water future, Roaring Fork Conservancy is getting things done. Your support of the new Watershed Action Fund is making things happen.

Watershed Action Fund Enables us to:

- conserve riparian land
- conduct river science & research
- engage in watershed planning
- implement restoration projects
- impact local & regional water policy

Crystal River Assessment and Coal Basin Update

Sharon Clarke, Watershed Action Director

Work continues on the Crystal River Assessment. Working with Earth Systems Institute (ESI) we finished identifying and ranking sediment sources in the Crystal River Watershed using NetMap's state of the art Watershed Assessment tool. The goal was to determine the relative contribution of Coal Basin compared to other major sediment sources in the Crystal River and eventually to differentiate between human causes and natural conditions (unstable geology and steep slopes). Predictions showed that Coal Basin and the hill slopes surrounding Redstone contribute the highest coarse sediment volume (i.e., coarse sand, pebbles, gravel, cobbles and boulders) in the Crystal River Watershed. Large inputs of coarse sediment to a river can alter the channel and raise the channel bed, increasing flood risk. The ESI analysis also concluded that, in Coal Basin, much of the coarse sediment is from natural sources. Coal Basin was also a major contributor of fine sediment to the Crystal River. Surface erosion from hillsides and unpaved roads contribute fine sediment to the river. These finer sediments can threaten fish, aquatic insects, and water quality. Work is continuing to determine what fine sediment sources are controllable.

We collected and started analyzing the first round of soil moisture and vegetation monitoring data from the pilot project area on the South Fork of Dutch Creek (Winter/Spring 2013 newsletter). Soil amendments (compost-biochar blend and compost only) increased soil moisture content by 4-5% at the 8" depth (the heart of

the plant rooting zone) relative to the control; this, along with increased nutrient content and more favorable soil structure from the soil amendments, likely accounts for the stark contrast in plant establishment and vigor in areas of the pilot project that were amended. Vegetation monitoring also allowed us to compare the suitability of three plant species (mountain brome, slender wheatgrass, and blue wildrye) for future restoration efforts. In 2014 several activities will occur in the pilot project area: 1) the electric fence to exclude cattle from the pilot project area will be reinstalled, 2) the need for additional weed treatment and reseeding will be assessed, and 3) soil moisture and vegetation monitoring will continue. The recently completed "South Fork of Dutch Creek Pilot Project Report" contains more details about the pilot project and monitoring results.

The first data were downloaded from the new permanent stream gage station that included a turbidity meter, automated sediment sampler and companion meteorological station. The gage was established in Coal Basin to collect the basic hydrologic/meteorologic information necessary to support the design of site-specific

mitigation measures and eventually to help determine the effectiveness of restoration efforts in the Coal Creek watershed. These data show that relatively small storms in Coal Basin can cause rapid increases in flow and can generate very high suspended fine sediment concentrations. For comparison, these concentrations are similar to samples that have been collected following wildfire.

Partners for this work include the White River National Forest, Rocky Mountain Research Station and S.K. Mason Environmental, LLC. Major funding received from the Colorado Basin Roundtable and the Colorado Water Conservation Board's Water Supply Reserve Account allowed work to continue on this project. Other funding sources included: Pitkin County Healthy Rivers and Streams Fund, Garfield County, Aspen Skiing Company-Environment Foundation, West Divide Water Conservancy District, and Carbondale Rotary.

To learn more about these projects or to download the pilot project report visit www.roaringfork.org/coalbasin.



Lower Fryingpan River Assessment Underway

Sharon Clarke, Watershed Action Director

The Comprehensive Lower Fryingpan River Assessment is in full swing. The goal of this project is to ensure the environmental and economic sustainability of the Lower Fryingpan River including its designation as a "Gold Medal Fishery." Working with an aquatic ecologist last fall, we kicked off the project with the first round of macroinvertebrate sampling and deployment of continuous stream temperature monitors. To inform people about the temperature monitors and to request they leave them alone, signs were installed along the river. The primary purpose of the temperature data is to identify periods when anchor ice (< 32°F) would form. With a much snowier winter, Bureau of Reclamation was able to keep flows in the Lower Fryingpan above 90 cubic feet per second for the entire winter, which kept stream temperatures above freezing for the most part. In April, the second round of macroinvertebrate sampling occurred.

American dippers are included in this assessment because they are excellent biological indicators of stream and riparian health. In February, a local ecologist kept an eye out for courtship behavior and territory establishment to determine when to start surveying. Based on these observations she began surveying in mid-March and recorded all dipper locations and nest sites along with an assessment of stream condition. A second round of surveys focused on searching for fledging dippers prior to their moving out of their parents' territory. Current distribution and abundance of the American dipper on the Fryingpan River will provide a good baseline indicator of stream health.

We are also working with the Natural Resource Management Program at Colorado Mountain College to determine the presence or absence of *Didymosphenia geminata* (aka "rock snot"). They will survey the river after spring high flows, and in

the summer and fall. The impact of didymo on the "Gold Medal Fishery" in the Lower Frying Pan River and subsequently the Roaring Fork River is currently unknown.

This spring we will also be out on the river and at Ruedi Reservoir surveying anglers and boaters. We are working with the Regional Economics Institute at Colorado State University to update Roaring Fork Conservancy's 2002 Fryingpan Valley Economic Study. The survey will continue for one year and produce a report that details the overall contribution of these activities to the regional and state economies. Please take the time to talk with our surveyors so we can obtain the most accurate information possible.

For future updates on the Fryingpan Study visit www.roaringfork.org/fryingpan.



Chad Rudow, Water Quality Coordinator, and Dr. Bill Miller, Senior Aquatic Ecologist with Miller Ecological, conduct macroinvertebrate sampling and install temperature loggers on the Fryingpan.

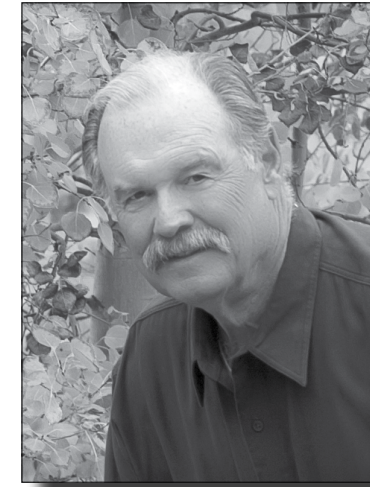
Robert Woods Honored as 2014 River Conservator

This summer Roaring Fork Conservancy will honor Robert Woods as the 2014 Robert Billingsley River Conservator at the 15th Annual River Rendezvous.

After serving as the Chairman for Aviation Operations (which was associated with security) for the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, a much-needed vacation to Aspen was planned for the summer of 1985. Robert is an avid fisherman but had never been fly fishing. One trip on the Frying Pan River with a guide from Taylor Creek changed his life. That one trip cost him "a lot of money" in that they purchased a house on the Pan, lots of fly fishing equipment and clothing, and many trips to Aspen.

Robert retired from the Los Angeles Police Department in 1993, having served 33 years in various jobs. The last 15 years of his career he was Commander of Helicopter Operations. He and his wife, Sarah, moved to their home on the Pan in 1993 and he started the second half of his life joyfully! Prior to actually moving to Basalt, Robert purchased a sporting goods store, renamed it Western Sports and moved it from Basalt to El Jebel next to City Market. He sold it in 2001 and finally had time to fish, hunt, ski some and play golf.

Robert became involved in community volunteer work after selling the store as he decided it was time to "give back."



He was involved in Kiwanis Club and served as its President for five years and worked in the soup kitchen for the homeless once a month during that time. He has been a committee member

of Ducks Unlimited for 15 years and is still on that committee. For the past 10 years Robert has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Basalt and Rural Fire Protection District.

In 1999 Robert was asked to be on the Rivers Council Executive Committee. That was 15 years ago and this is the 15th year for River Rendezvous. Robert has served as the logistics manager of the event, has watched the event change over the years and assisted in it becoming what it is today....considered one of the best events in the valley. His efforts are endless when it comes to time that must be dedicated --- layout of where the tents must go, setting up generators

so the "lights stay on" and the food can be cooked, building ramps that are needed, etc. When asked what he does for River Rendezvous his reply was " my task is to design and construct those facilities necessary to stage the annual event. Fifteen years ago, we started with two small tents, some tiki torches and a home electric generator. It has certainly changed and all for the better."



Christina Medved joins staff as Watershed Education Director

Education Programs Manager and Leaf Pack Network® Administrator at Stroud Water Research Center near Philadelphia, PA. Before moving to PA she was a Field-Instructor at Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education

Center within Cuyahoga Valley National Park near Akron, OH. She has a B.S. in Environmental Science from Ashland University in Ohio and an M.A. in

Communication Studies from West Chester University in PA. Christina's experience ranges from teaching field-based, boots-in-the-water stream studies to students in the 4th grade all the way to retirement age: training citizen volunteers on how to monitor streams, and coordinating two watershed treks which gave high school students a full-immersion experience in tracing the drinking water supply of New York City and Wilmington, DE. She has presented stream ecology workshops across the United States as well as in villages of Costa Rica and Peru.

Christina Medved recently joined Roaring Fork Conservancy as the Watershed Education Director. Prior to this move, she spent 13 years as the

Staff Flows



Adam Smith,
Education Intern, Spring 2014

Adam was born in Asheville, North Carolina where he grew up playing in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. He graduated from Appalachian State University as recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Award in the Recreation Management program where he concentrated in Outdoor Experiential Education and minored in Psychology and Spanish. After college Adam moved to Aspen and has been teaching skiing for the Aspen Skiing Company for four seasons.



Emma Gildesgame,
Education Intern, Spring 2014

Emma graduated from Colby College in Waterville, ME in 2010 with a degree in Environmental Science: Conservation Biology. She grew up near Boston, MA and has been exploring rivers, lakes, mountains, and oceans across New England. Emma is a Wilderness First Responder, Leave No Trace Trainer, and PSIA Level 2 ski instructor. She first moved to the Roaring Fork Valley in 2011 to teach skiing at Snowmass. When not skiing, she can usually be found dancing, climbing mountains, baking cookies, swimming in cold mountain lakes, or curled up with a book somewhere.



Christina Briseno,
Watershed Action Intern

Christina grew up in Alabama but spent more than 20 years living in Washington, DC, working for various statistical agencies of the Federal government. Inspired by Peter McBride's movie, Chasing Water, she left her job in DC and moved to Leadville, CO, in 2013 to attend Colorado Mountain College. She already had a B.S. in Finance from the University of Kentucky and an M.S. in Accounting from George Mason University and is now pursuing an A.A.S. in Natural Resources Management at CMC. She plans to graduate in Spring 2015 and pursue a career in the environmental sciences. When she is not working or studying, Christina can be found riding her bike, skiing, hiking, and enjoying the outdoors every chance she gets. She is thankful to have the opportunity to intern with the Roaring Fork Conservancy for the summer and will be helping with the updated Fryingpan valley economic study.



Larry Gruel,
Bookkeeper

Larry is a financial professional with 20 years of experience in management accounting, finance, and banking with strong analytical skills and advanced accounting knowledge. He is a graduate of Western State College of Colorado and has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, Finance. He is the father of two children.



Kristjan Danis,
Watershed Action Intern

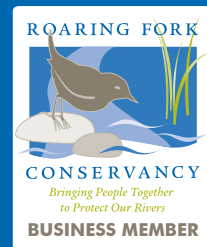
Kristjan grew up in San Diego, but he has also lived in San Francisco and spent his four years of high school living in Japan. He moved to Boulder in 2010 to attend the University of Colorado, where he graduated in 2014 with a degree in ecology and evolutionary biology. He is passionate about the outdoors and appreciates the science behind ecosystems and their preservation. He has been a raft guide in Colorado and spent the summer of 2013 interning for the Roaring Fork Conservancy. On the weekends you will find Kristjan fly fishing, hunting, or backpacking through the Rockies.

Carter Brooksher steps down from Board after 16 years



Carter Brooksher joined Roaring Fork Conservancy's Board in September 1998. She co-founded the Rivers Council and was instrumental in the creation of the River Rendezvous. Carter's experience with numerous nonprofit organizations combined with a passion for rivers and an undying devotion to Roaring Fork Conservancy provided vital support for the organization and the River Center. Carter will remain active with the River's Council and the River Center Committee, and she will be dearly missed by the board and staff. Thank you Carter!

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Every business depends on healthy water and many businesses in the Roaring Fork Watershed depend directly on healthy rivers (fly-fishing, rafting, for

example). Business memberships start at \$50 per year.

Membership benefits include:

- Invitations to membership events
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Join today at
www.roaringfork.org/biz.

WATERSHED EXPLORATIONS

Events Calendar

MAY

- 8 Heron, Eagle, Osprey Watching
- 13 High Altitude Heron Watching
- 31 Birding Maroon Creek Wetlands



JUNE

- 3 Northstar Roaring Fork River Float
- 7 River Festival and Float 2014
- 12 Northstar Roaring Fork River Float
- 18 Northstar Roaring Fork River Float
- 19 Filoha Weed Pull Project
- 26 Ruedi Dam & Hydropower Tour
- 30 Family Filoha Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs

JULY

- 2 Filoha Firefly & Rare Orchid Walk
- 7 Filoha Firefly & Rare Orchid Walk
- 15 15th Annual River Rendezvous
- 17 Family Filoha Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs
- 22 Family Filoha Fireflies, Bats, and Bugs
- 30 Aspen Mining & Water History Tour

AUGUST

- 1 Twin Lakes Tunnel & Diversion Tour
- 2 Independence Lake Headwaters Hike
- 12 Rio Grand Wetland Walk
- 21 Filoha Meadows Family Exploration

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Carbondale Bicycle Ditch Tour
- 17 Aspen Tap: Drinking Water Tour
- 18 Cold Mt. Ranch Riparain Walk
- 20 Family Fall Exploration at Filoha
- 30 Filoha Fall Evening Walk

Photo: Sarah Johnson

For more information and to register visit:

www.roaringfork.org/events

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Roaring Fork Conservancy was
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bring people together to protect
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support and comments.

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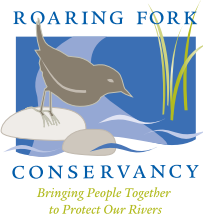
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