

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & VOLUNTEERISM

Education is the common thread that runs through all of CUSP's work. In everything we do, we hope to teach and inspire those we work with to become stewards of the land and water. We are committed to continuing to learn and share knowledge. CUSP's education programs include:

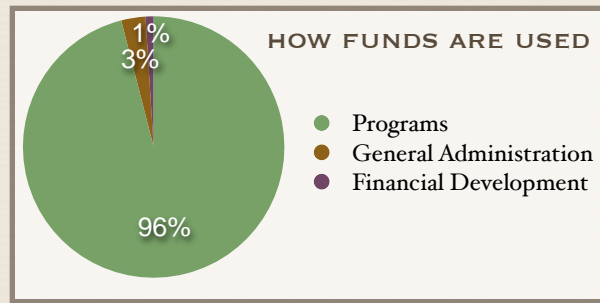
- Free environmental education activities & lessons for teachers & students available on learn.uppERSouthPlatte.org
- Meaningful service-learning projects to compliment lessons learned in the classroom
- Internship opportunities in a variety of disciplines



The thousands of dedicated volunteers that work on watershed projects each year are critical to improving the health of the watershed and advancing stewardship.

Volunteers work on:

- Wildfire mitigation & forest health
- Wildfire rehab & post-fire flood mitigation
- Noxious weed control
- River restoration
- Trails & recreation improvements
- Habitat improvement



ABOUT CUSP

WHY CUSP is committed to the health of the Upper South Platte Watershed because it is a fundamental reason why we love Colorado. Not only does a majority of Colorado's high quality drinking water flow through the Upper South Platte Watershed, but it provides a myriad of recreational opportunities to enjoy the splendor of nature in our backyard.

HOW Since our inception in 1998, our dedication to our watershed, our community, and striving toward a greater good have driven our work. We believe in working with stakeholders big and small, supporting our local communities and economies with our work, fostering stewardship of the land and water, and sharing our knowledge and skills with partners near and far to promote and sustain ecological health in our natural world.

PROGRAMS We focus on all things related to the health of the watershed, including: water quality, forest health, wildfire control and impact mitigation, habitat, recreation, river restoration, sustainability and energy, invasive species, education, and volunteerism.

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CUSP

A HEALTHY WATERSHED -
NOW AND IN THE FUTURE



COALITION FOR THE UPPER
SOUTH PLATTE

CUSP is dedicated to protecting the water quality and ecological health of the Upper South Platte Watershed, through the cooperative efforts of watershed stakeholders, with emphasis placed on community values and economic sustainability.





WATER QUALITY

A majority of Colorado's drinking water flows through the Upper South Platte Watershed, and countless residents and visitors enjoy the recreational opportunities and beauty of the watershed's rivers, streams, and reservoirs. Managing the watershed's resources in a thoughtful and collaborative way is imperative for ensuring Coloradans have a secure and high quality water supply now and in the future. CUSP embraces this approach through programs such as:

- Working with partners to assess and address sources of pollution
- Surface water & groundwater monitoring
- Water testing
- Mine reclamation
- Erosion control
- River restoration



"A river is the report card for its watershed."
- Alan Levere

FOREST HEALTH & ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

Our source water is largely surrounded by forests, so what happens in the forest affects our water. The plants, animals, and soil act as a living filter whose health directly affects water quality in the Upper South Platte Watershed. Restoring the watershed's ecosystems bolsters forests' resilience to disturbances such as wildfire, disease, and insect infestation, and improves the quality of water flowing through the watershed.

FOREST HEALTH & WILDFIRE MITIGATION

CUSP works to restore forests to historically healthy conditions and uses proven wildfire mitigation techniques to reduce wildfire risks for communities and vital resources. These proactive initiatives include maintaining 2 slash sites; chipping services for communities; assisting with Community Wildfire Protection Plans; fuels mitigation on private and public lands; and serving as a Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network Hub.



Chipping slash reduces fuels & wildfire risk in communities.



Thinning projects open up forest canopies, reducing wildfire risk & improving habitat

WILDFIRE CONTROL & REHAB

A century of well intentioned, but misguided, fire suppression policies have excluded natural fire cycles that maintain robust forests across the West. This has led to catastrophic wildfires that impact communities and environments for decades. CUSP works to protect communities & promote restoration of healthy ecosystems through wildfire control and rehab efforts. Rehab work increases vegetation and habitat; protects water sources; reduces erosion and flooding; protects property, and infrastructure; and minimizes loss of life.



Clockwise from top: CUSP's brush truck; restoration continues in the 2002 Hayman burn scar; volunteers work on erosion control & revegetation above Colorado Springs in the 2012 Waldo Canyon burn scar



HABITAT & RECREATION

The watershed encompasses many unique ecosystems and is home to several rare species. Promoting healthy habitats and reducing the impact of recreation activities in the watershed are crucial to ensuring generations to come are able to experience and enjoy this magnificent landscape. CUSP works to protect these values through noxious weed control; river restoration; trail and road maintenance; monitoring; and erosion control.



Noxious weed mitigation reduces impacts on native species, crops, & animals.



Maintaining trails improves access to natural areas & reduces erosion & other impacts