

2016



ANNUAL REPORT

www.cusp.ws

Mission Statement

The Coalition for the Upper South Platte seeks to protect 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.



Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

CUSP marked its 18th anniversary in 2016. It is rewarding to look back at all that we have accomplished, especially in a new millennium. Some days it feels like these years have whizzed by in the blink of an eye; others... well some days can feel like a year when you are dealing with the aftermath of the latest fire or flood.

We accomplished a lot in 2016. One of the highlights of the year was the Board/Staff Strategic Planning retreat we held in late April at the Lost Valley Ranch located just north of Deckers, CO. It was a great mix of people: board and staff members who have been with CUSP since our inception as well as folks who are brand new to the organization. Together we reviewed our history of impacts, accomplishments, and challenges across two decades. We examined benchmarks and hallmarks, lessons learned and shared. Lost Valley Ranch is in the middle of the Hayman burn scar, so we viewed dramatically altered landscapes that tell the story of a watershed ravaged by wildfires and floods. We also saw in those same places the signs of restoration and growth, rejuvenation and renewal.

The Hayman fire taught CUSP more than any of us really wanted to know about post-fire recovery, but it also served as the incubator for better post-fire response, and those lessons are playing out well beyond our watershed's boundaries. At the state and national levels, we are recognized leaders on how to respond following a fire. But, Hayman also helped us become recognized for our leadership in pre-fire, green forest mitigation and restoration. This work not only reduces the intensity of future fires, but also protects communities and infrastructure, and improves forest health and resilience to insects and disease.

Although pre- and post-fire activities account for the bulk of our work, we also continue to find and implement many types of projects that help us fulfill our mission. From water quality monitoring, to addressing abandoned mines, and environmental education to engaging volunteers, CUSP is committed to caring for our watershed.

Of course, all that we do is made possible through strategic partnerships and the enduring support of our funders and donors. Without the trust and generosity demonstrated through their donations, we could not continue the work that has become so invaluable to our watershed community and beyond.

It is with deepest gratitude that, on behalf of the CUSP Board and Staff, I say thank you!

Carol Ekarius



Carol Ekarius
Executive Director

Water Quality



“ We need a global approach to this from all sides. We need to educate people, we need the scientists to create new technologies, we need the engineers to create the networks, we need every human being to be aware of how precious water is and save it. Everybody has to be involved in a very firm and assertive way.

Isabel Allende



2016 Baseline Water Quality Sampling

CUSP has been pulling samples from properties in Park County over the course of two years. Colorado Geologic Survey (CGS) is in the final stages of compiling the data from 2016 sampling results. CGS will present their findings at the February meeting of the Park County Land and Water Trust Fund.

- Total Wells and Springs completed- 40
- Maroon formation- 8 wells, 1 spring
- Laramie-Fox Hills formations- 6 wells, 1 spring
- Minturn formation- 8 wells, 4 springs
- Belden formation- 3 wells, 2 springs
- Paleozoic formation- 5 wells
- Precambrian- 1 spring
- Tertiary Intensives- 1 spring

Water Testing

CUSP has been working collaboratively monitoring stream temperatures at various sites along South Park streams because temperatures can fluctuate daily with differences of 10-20 degrees F. Both acute and chronic temperature standards were exceeded in each of the four monitoring seasons. This fluctuation greatly impacts aquatic life and water quality. In 2016 CUSP, through funding made possible by the South Park National Heritage Area (SPNHA) worked with a STEM group from DSST Public Schools in Denver on a South Park Water Science Day project that included several monitoring stations set up at:

- Eleven Mile Canyon at Camp Alexander
- The Dream Stream between Spinney and Eleven Mile Reservoirs
- Happy Meadows

Water quality was assessed through the collection of macroinvertebrates and testing for levels of nitrates, nitrites and lead.



Forest Health



“ The practical importance of the preservation of our forests is augmented by their relations to climate, soil and streams.
John Muir



- CUSP regularly hosts watershed tours like this one for US Senator Cory Gardner
- Homeowners spent 2683 hours mitigating fuels on the properties
- Fuels chipped – 147.8 acres on 89 properties
- Homeowners brought 2395 loads of slash to 3 sites (Bailey, Divide & Fairplay) managed by CUSP
- CUSP crews burned 336 piles from sites throughout the watershed

WILDFIRE TEAM DEPLOYMENTS

Local fires:

- Old Hall Fire, Florissant, 4 Mile, Fossil Creek, Bridlewood
 - Working with NE Teller & Florissant Fire Departments
- CMAT (Community Mitigation Assistance Team)
- Jackson, Wyoming (14 days) - Westcliff, Colorado (10 days)



To meet the fiscal challenges of safely and efficiently operating the site for the benefit of residents, in 2016 CUSP explored and pursued the use of an Air Curtain Burner at the site.

The curtain burner meets CUSP's requirements for environmental responsibility while maximizing our financial investment in a product that will quickly recoup the purchase cost.

Restoration and Rehabilitation



“ We who are gathered here may represent a particular elite, not of money and power, but of concern for the earth for the earth's sake.

Ansel Adams

Restoration by the numbers

- Raked, seeded and mulched ~ 7 acres of burn scar
- Installed 26,252 ft² of jute matting
- 7,860 trees planted on ~ 30 acres
- 500 willows planted
- 5 Flying Vs and 1 Log fall structure installed



CUSP continued working on projects impacted by the 2012 Waldo Canyon Fire.

Beleaguered home owners whose properties still feel the effects of post-fire floods were in desperate need of assistance.

With few resources available to them, they reached out to CUSP to help to secure funding and to get much needed projects completed.

More Projects and Programs of Note

Invasive Species & Noxious weeds

- ~993 acres inventoried
- 130.77 acres treated

Species Treated: *Orange hawkweed* / *Yellow toadflax* / *Canada thistle* / *Musk thistle* / *Common mullein* / *Myrtle spurge* / *Diffuse knapweed* / *Perennial pepperweed* / *Scentless chamomile* / *Hoary cress*



2016 Mushrooms Year 2

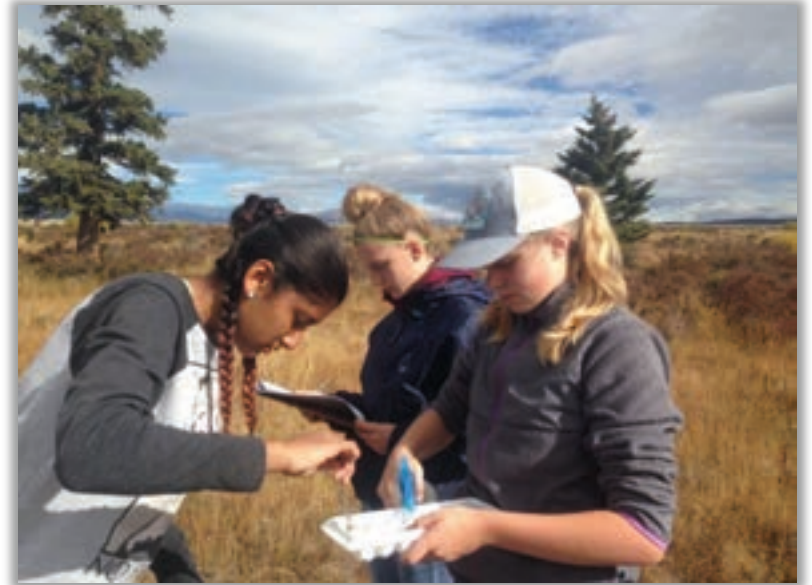
The results of Y2 tests are impressive. The mushrooms have demonstrated the ability to “over- winter” unaided in their beds. They have demonstrated good resistance to disturbance and have pioneered at a measured pace into new areas. They have shown greater decomposition in the control chip piles, and promise a route to transform what was previously considered a waste material into a usable nutrient compost; without the heat and subsequent danger of spontaneous combustion found with bacterial composting techniques. Again, we have noticed no significant difference between covered and uncovered, or nutrient enriched or plain woodchips. This is helpful allowing for treatment with minimal effort.

CUSP is continually impressed by the vigor, adaptability and ubiquity of these humble organisms and look forward to the next round of tests and the continued monitoring of our first square meters of “myco-forestry” in action.

Environmental Education

The primary goal of the **High Creek Fen Stewardship** program is to introduce students from South Park to one of the most valuable natural resources in the Park; to monitor the site annually, to teach students about water quality and biological indicators, and to encourage the next generation of natural and heritage resource stewards.

This program brings hydrologic, historic and watershed professionals into the field for one day with the students to learn about the High Creek Fen. The students perform water testing associated with World Water Monitoring Day, learn about macroinvertebrates as indicators of stream health, explore water chemistry and learn about local history. Students also assess any impacts to the fen from visitors or other sources and compared their monitoring results with those from previous years.



2016 Volunteers

Almost 2000 volunteers, both youth and adults, gave ~12,500 hours of service to a wide range of CUSP projects throughout 2016.

These numbers, combined with technical assistance time volunteered equate to significant in-kind dollars that we use as match on many of our grants.

In 2016, the instrumental work of volunteers and “tech assistants” translated into a very impressive **\$277,103** of in-kind labor.

THANK YOU!



Thoughtful Leadership

2016 Board of Directors

- **Eric Howell, Chair;** *Colorado Springs Utilities*
- **Garth Englund Jr., Vice Chair;** *Douglas County*
- **Dan Drucker, Secretary;** *Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District*
- **Jim Idema, Treasurer;** *Interested Individual*
- **Patrick O'Connell,** *Jefferson County*
- **Tom Eisenman,** *Park County*
- **Marc Dettenrieder,** *Teller County*
- **Swithin Dick,** *Centennial Water & Sanitation District*
- **Lynda James,** *USP Water Conservancy District*
- **Don Logelin,** *Trout Unlimited, Cheyenne Mountain Chapter*
- **Mary Dawson,** *City of Aurora*
- **Suzanne O'Neill,** *Colorado Wildlife Federation*
- **Karen Berry,** *Jefferson Conservation District, CGS*
- **Christina Burri,** *Denver Water*
- **Lynne Buchanan,** *Interested Individual*
- **Josh Voorhis,** *USFS, S Park Ranger District* *(non-voting)*

In the Spring of 2016 the CUSP Board of Directors met for a 2-day retreat at the Lost Valley Ranch just north of Deckers, CO, deep in the heart of the Hayman Fire burn scar.

These two days were well spent and the board met with key CUSP staff to look at where we've been, where we are, and where we need to go.

It was inspiring to see the fruits of CUSP's labors throughout the landscape of the watershed.

The final product is an updated Strategic Plan that will take us well into the 2020s, supported by annual Adaptive Management Plans.

You can view the report at:

<http://cusp.ws/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Strategic-Plan-2016- editssept16.pdf>



FY 2016 FINANCIALS



CUSP EIN: 84-1469785

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

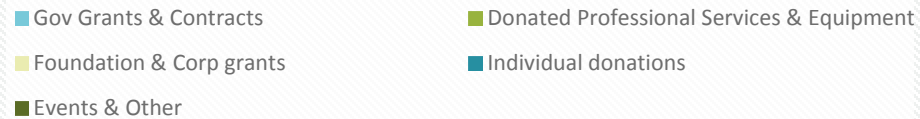
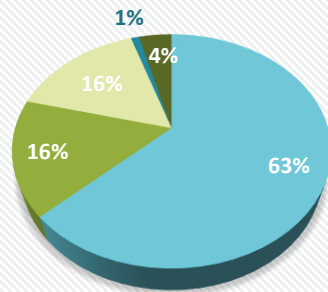
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES 2016

| ASSETS | <u>2016</u> | <u>2015</u> |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Current | \$480,007 | \$335,316 |
| <i>Cash & cash equivalents</i> | | |
| <i>Accounts receivable, grants, etc.</i> | | |
| Property & Equipment | \$251,370 | \$187,484 |
| <i>Land, buildings, vehicles & equipment</i> | | |
| <i>Less accumulated depreciation</i> | | |
| Other Assets | \$170,000 | \$181,812 |
| <i>Note receivable, Mineral interests</i> | | |
| <u>TOTAL ASSETS</u> | <u>\$901,377</u> | <u>\$704,612</u> |
| | | |
| LIABILITIES | <u>2016</u> | <u>2015</u> |
| Current | \$243,164 | \$193,385 |
| <i>Accounts payable, accrues liabilities, etc.</i> | | |
| Note Payable | \$ 57,285 | \$ 63,688 |
| <i>Land, buildings, vehicles & equipment</i> | | |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | \$300,449 | \$257,073 |
| | | |
| NET ASSETS | <u>2016</u> | <u>2015</u> |
| Current | \$600,928 | \$447,539 |
| <i>Unrestricted, board restricted/designated</i> | | |
| <i>And temporarily restricted</i> | | |
| | | |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | <u>2016</u> | <u>2015</u> |
| | \$901,377 | \$704,612 |

| REVENUE | Unrestricted | Temporarily Restricted | TOTAL |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Gov. grants & Contracts</i> | \$1,647,769 | \$100,00 | \$1,747,769 |
| <i>Foundations & Corporate</i> | \$ 416,753 | | \$ 416,753 |
| <i>Donated services, Equip. & materials</i> | \$ 323,963 | | \$ 323,963 |
| <i>Program Fees</i> | \$ 167,856 | | \$ 167,856 |
| <i>Ind. Contributions</i> | \$ 26,956 | | \$ 26,956 |
| <i>Events & other</i> | \$ 2,376 | | \$ 2,376 |
| <i>Satisfied program Restrictions</i> | \$ 13,716 | (\$13, 716) | |
| Total Revenue | \$2,599,389 | \$86,284 | \$2,685,673 |
| | | | |
| EXPENSES | | | |
| Programs | \$2,365,615 | | \$2,365,615 |
| Support Services | | | |
| <i>General Admin</i> | \$ 106,522 | | \$ 106,522 |
| <i>Fin. Development</i> | \$ 60,147 | | \$ 60,147 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$2,532,284 | | \$2,532,284 |
| | | | |
| CHANGE | | | |
| NET ASSETS | \$ 67,105 | \$ 86,284 | \$ 153,389 |
| <i>Net Assets BOY</i> | \$ 307,539 | \$ 140,000 | \$ 447,539 |
| <i>Net Assets EOY</i> | \$ 374,644 | \$ 226,284 | \$ 600,928 |

Check us out on Guidestar: <https://www.guidestar.org/profile/84-1469785>

Revenue & Other Support



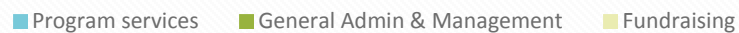
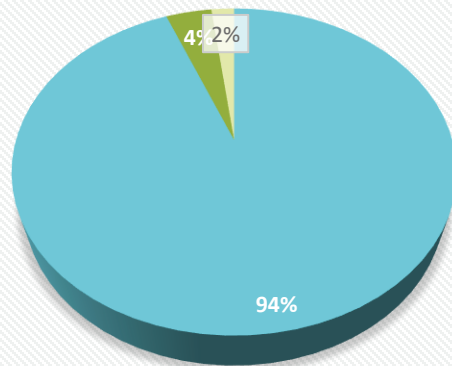
As seen in the Revenue pie chart, a significant amount of CUSP's funding comes from Governmental Grants and Contracts. It is important to note that this type of support means that Federal and State tax dollars are coming *back* into our communities.

This also means that we leverage nongovernmental donations as the required match to bring these tax-based grants back home to use on local projects, supporting local businesses.

Every time you donate to CUSP, your gift is amplified: it can be used once for a State grant and then again for a Federal grant match, doubling its value.

The Expenses pie chart exemplifies an extraordinary return on investment since 94% of your donation goes directly into programs and services.

Expenses



2016 CONTRIBUTORS & DONORS LIST

CUSP is deeply grateful for the generous support of the following individuals, foundations, corporations, governments, related agencies, and Volunteer groups. Without their ongoing financial and in-kind contributions, the work we do, so valuable to our watershed, would not happen. Thank you all.

GOVERNMENTS & AGENCIES

Centennial Water and Sanitation District ❖ Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District ❖ City of Aurora
Colorado Springs Utilities ❖ Colorado Department of Agriculture ❖
Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment ❖ Colorado Department of Transportation ❖
Colorado Water Conservation Board ❖ Colorado Department of Natural Resources ❖
Colorado State Forest Service ❖ Colorado State University ❖ Denver Water ❖
Douglas County Government ❖ Fire Adapted Colorado (FACO) ❖
Jefferson County ❖ National Park Service ❖ Park County ❖ Teller County ❖ United States Forest Service
❖ Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District

BUSINESSES/BUSINESS GROUPS

Canyon Enterprises, Inc. ❖ El Paso Country Bar Association ❖ Ent Community Fund
Honest Films, LLC ❖ LexisNexis ❖ Lockheed Martin ❖ Newmont Mining Company ❖
PK Enterprises ❖ Sanborn Western Camps ❖ Shell Oil ❖ Spectronetics ❖ Sunrise Solutions, LLC

FOUNDATIONS, FUNDS & NONPROFITS

Crown Family Fund ❖ Joseph Henry Edmundson Foundation ❖ Firefighters Fund at PPCF
Heyborne Family Charitable Fund ❖ Hillsdale Fund, Inc. ❖ Metro Volunteers
Park County Land & Water Trust Fund
Pikes Peak Community Foundation ❖ Queens of Spades ❖ South Park National Heritage Area
South Platte Enhancement Board ❖ Swayback Ranch ❖ The Nature Conservancy
❖ Ute Pass Impact Fund

VOLUNTEER GROUPS

American Jewish Society for Service ❖ Boy Scouts of America ❖ Catamount Institute
Catholic Heart Work Camp ❖ Church of Latter Day Saints (Stillwater, OK) ❖ CoBank
Colorado College Miller/Coors ❖ Cutthroat Chapter of Trout Unlimited
DeLaSalle High School (MN) ❖ Denver Audubon Society ❖ Early College High School
El Paso County Bar Association ❖ First United Methodist, Colorado Springs
Girl Scouts of America, Troop 256 ❖ Honors Leadership Program, CU Denver
Jim Elliot Christian School ❖ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints ❖ LexisNexis ❖ PepsiCo
Rollins College (FL) ❖ Sanborn Western Camps ❖ St. John's Episcopal Church
STEM DSST Byers Middle School ❖ Team Rubicon ❖ Teens INC
The Classical Academy ❖ The Nature Conservancy ❖ United Methodist Church (Clinton, KS)
United Methodist Church (Eureka, MO) ❖ United States Air Force Academy ❖ Up With People
USAFA Athletics (Dance and Cheer) ❖ Wells Fargo

INDIVIDUALS

Anonymous – 18

Deirdre Aden-Smith

Steve Allard

Gayle Allen

Kerry Alstrom

Greg Aplet

Gerald Arni

Barb Asbury*

Ron Baker

Misi Ballard

John & Keegan Barkley

Jean & Rip Blaisdell

Rosann Bowen

Val Brown

James Brozo

Jonathan & Jennifer Bruno

Ken & Claire Bruno

Lynne & Gary Buchanan*

Susan Burrows

Linda & Tom Camblin

Laura Canby

Chris Carlson & Marty Wolf

Marie Chisholm

Pricilla Clayton

Todd Clayton

Deborah Clendenning

Stacey Cochran

Michelle & Tim Connelly

Connie Cooper

Stewart Couch

Carol Davis

Mary Dawson

Billie Diemand-Niligh

Swithin Dick

Sara Doud

William Dragon

Dan Drucker

Karen Dudnikov & Mike Meadors

Kimberly Dufty

Helen & Mike Dyer

Tims & Cathy Edwrds

Carol Ekarius & Ken Woodard

Jeffry Elkins

Rick Favinger

Julius & Barbara Faulkner

Marv Fiala

Frank Filas

Nell & Lou Fletcher

Jeff Fowler

Pete Gallagher

Jennifer Gannon

Caleb & Sydney Gates

Nancy George

Patty Gladfelter*

Trent Green

Beltecezar & Lori Gorospe

Dave Hatler

Kayle Higinbotham*

Jason Hulme

Margaret Hunt

Jim Idema

Amy Jacobi

Lynda James

Robert Janowski

Rebecca Jewett

Jara Johnson

Ruth Johnson-Mullis

Kathleen N Jones

Thomas W Jones

Kristine Kasper

Dennis Kennedy & Burke
Munger

Don & Susan Kennedy

Ellen Kennedy

Lynn & June Koester

Bradley Klafehn

James Klug

Jeffrey Knight

April Dawn Knudsen*

Dave Knudtson

Robert Kawalski

Leon & Dina Krain

Joe Kraudelt

Pamela Kuipers

Greg Langer

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Steve Latsch | Jeffrey Phegley | David Stark |
| Carol Lavoie | Carol Phelps | Jim Starkweather |
| George Lee | Ellen Pitrone | Nancy & Tom Stavish |
| JD Leonard | Dave & Kathy Praner | Roy Stoller |
| Don Logelin | Nancy Rawson | Jennifer Superka |
| David Lord | Larry Renninger | Roger Sung |
| Bruce Mahncke | Ann Rhodes | Christopher Sutton |
| Pam Maier | Ronald Rickert | Caesar & Peggy Sweitzer |
| Vicky Manlove | David Root | Steve & Christa Taylor |
| Matt Matwijec | Kevin Russo | Jeffrey Tienkin |
| Sara Mayben | John Schwabe* | Kevin Tobey |
| Janice McCabe | Judith Sellers | Mary Ann & Chuck Todd |
| Sally McCracken* | Peggy Setter | Edmund Tong |
| Carol McGowan | Gerald Shin | Emily Troisi |
| Gary & Diane Melody | Cameron Sims | Peter Tysdal |
| Robert Mitchell | Gail Smith | Steven Vela |
| Lindsey Murdoch | Randy Smith | Lauren Verno |
| Patti Newman | Denise Snow | Jack Wallick |
| Gay & Allen Neuls | Julie Snyder | Wendie Warner |
| Gary & Valerie Nichols | Kenneth & Bonnie Spitze | Jessica Watkins-Stuart |
| Suzanne O'Neill | Ed Speck | Jim & Charlotte Winzenburg |
| James Pardikes | Cory Spoonmore | Tommie Jean Wise |

****These individuals also served on fundraising and event committees, giving generously of their time and talents.***

Coalition for the Upper South Platte

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www.cusp.ws

