



# COALITION FOR THE UPPER SOUTH PLATTE 2019

## Grants & Donations at Work

- 11% Water Quality
- 67% Forest Health
- 10% Other Programs
- 12% Admin & Fundraising

## Water Quality Monitoring & Observation on the Middle and North Fork Upper South Platte River

## 140 Acres Treated For Noxious Weeds

## 4,882 Ft. Trail Construction and Maintenance

## 345 Acres of Forest Treated

## 3 Slash Sites

- 2,200 Loads Delivered
- 4,325 Owner Hours
- 140 Acres of Private Property Treated

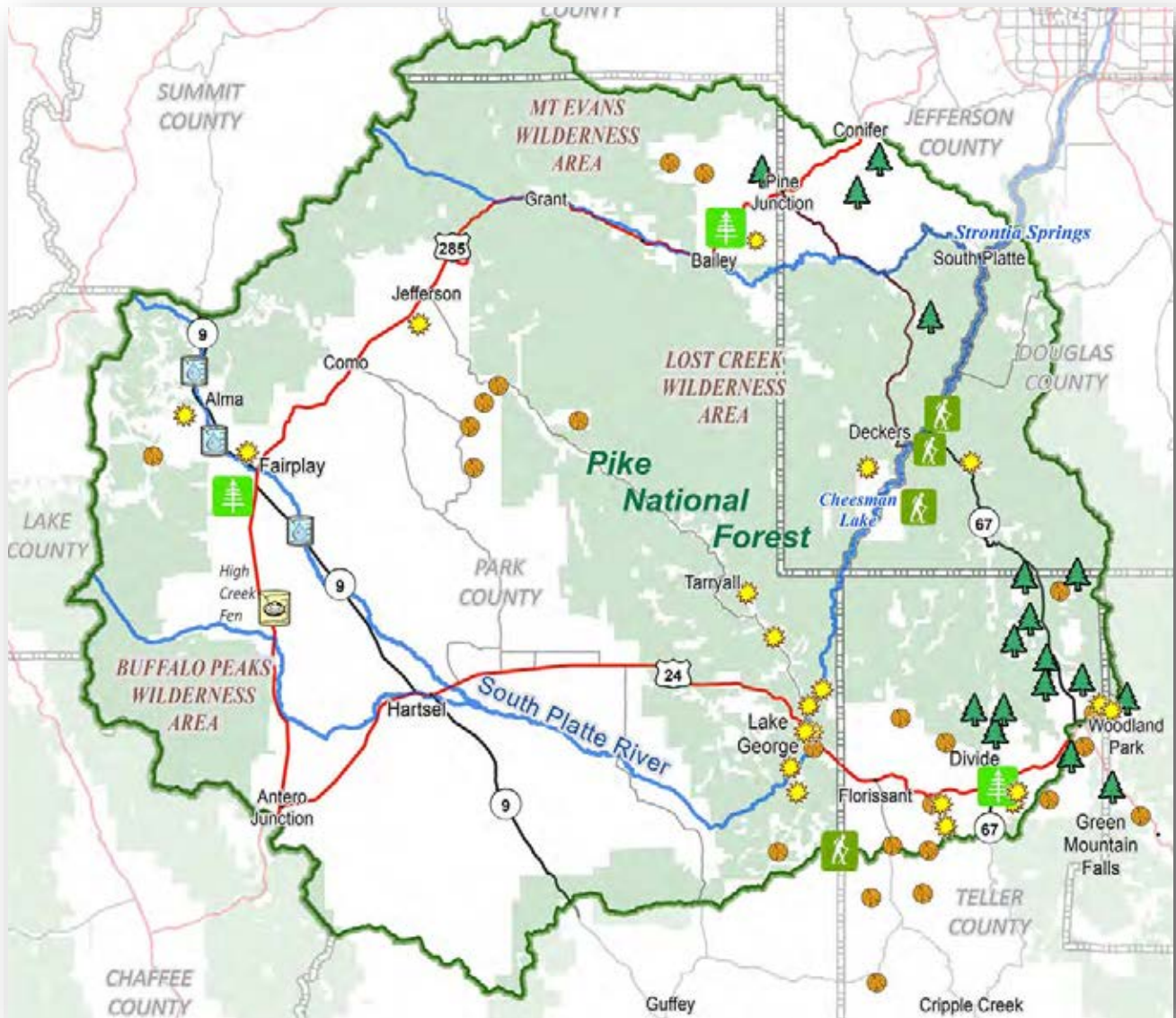
## OUR VISION

*A healthy watershed now ~ and in the future.*

## OUR MISSION

*The Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP) 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.*

# CUSP 2019 Project Areas



Forest Health work on over 345 acres to improve the sustainability of the forest and reduce impacts of wildfire on private and public property.



Water Quality Monitoring on the Middle Fork of the South Platte from the Alma area to Fairplay, Seven sites were tested in the Spring and Fall to characterize the water quality and identify potential issues. Reports and project planning are in development.



Neighborhood Fuels Reduction mobile chipper to assist neighborhoods to manage slash from fire mitigation forest management.



Noxious Weed Mitigation on over 140 acres. Weeds of focus include Thistles, Toadflax, Common Mullen, and Orange Hawkweed.



Ongoing Biological Monitoring at High Creek Fen with Silverheels Middle School students.



Trail Work – CUSP continues our ongoing partnership with Sanborn Western Camps, Denver Water, Aurora Water and US Forest Service to maintain trails. In 2019, 4,882 feet of trail construction and maintenance were accomplished. Volunteers assisted with Gill Trail work, which is actively used by fishermen on the South Platte. The Trumbull Trail, north of Deckers, has been restored and new interpretive signs will be installed in 2020.

# Making a Difference ~ For Neighborhoods and Property Owners

CUSP's Neighborhood Fuels Reduction program works with property owners and Homeowners' Associations to mitigate slash material from forest health projects. Meaningful fuels mitigation helps protect homes and property.

The mobile chipper also gives CUSP staff one-on-one mentoring opportunities with property owners throughout the watershed to assess their properties and recommend Home Ignition Zone mitigation projects.

In 2019, CUSP crews traveled with the mobile chipper to 80 locations throughout the watershed. Assisting 316 private property owners and their neighborhoods chip slash from over 500 acres of property mitigation.



Why is this work important to the watershed?

Activities that reduce fuels and improve forest health can reduce the impacts of wildfire and improve recovery in areas that do burn. Fire and the floods that follow have a major impact on the watershed water quality.



# Driving Solutions ~

## Laying the groundwork for future projects Lake George

The old diversion structure at the mouth of Eleven Mile Canyon was used by Colorado Springs Utilities until the early 1990s. This lower dam, not to be confused with the larger Eleven Mile Reservoir Dam, no longer serves it's original purpose for the water delivery system.

Our partners with the US Forest Service, Colorado Trout Unlimited, Colorado Springs Utilities, and CUSP started thinking... Would it be possible to remove this last barrier between Eleven Mile Dam (the big one) and Cheesman Reservoir?

You might imagine that it takes quite a bit of legwork, planning, engineering, and communication to gain approval to remove a structure in the river.



Step one for this project is an engineering study to research what is exactly in place, how it impacts the river, and with enough detail to complete the USFS NEPA review. This work began in 2019, laying the groundwork for beginning planning, gathering comments, and gaining approval from all agencies involved.

Why is this important to the watershed?

By removing this structure aquatic species will have free movement from the Eleven Mile Dam to the Cheesman Reservoir. This structure represents that last remaining impediment to free passage.



DAM



### South Platte River - Lake George Dam

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



# Protecting the watershed ~

## By taking the larger view, seeing the long term

The Weston Pass Fire began June 28, 2018 burning approximately 14,182 acres in Park County, south of Fairplay. Although a relatively small area of the burn, Pole Gulch drainage was identified as high risk in the USFS post-fire BAER report.



Partners to complete the stabilization work included: CUSP, Park County Land and Water Trust Fund, Denver Water, Aurora Water, and the US Forest Service.

Work included stabilization of several ponds, restoration of headcuts, and road de-commissioning.

Why is it important for the Watershed?

Recovery of the burn area is important due to the potential for flooding and debris flows, creating hazardous conditions within and downstream of the burned area. Treatments were recommended to mitigate risks to human life and safety, damage to property and infrastructure downstream, including Antero Reservoir.



# YOU Make a Difference in the Watershed

## THANK YOU!

Paul Adams  
Carolyn Arnold-Marsh  
Connor & Kate Baker  
Linda & Tim Balough  
Dick Bratton  
Dave & Terri Brown  
Jonathan & Jennifer Bruno  
Lynne & Gary Buchanan  
Kim Bundgaard  
Jim & Jackie Burghardt  
Susan & Brent Burrows  
Tom & Linda Camblin  
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Stacey Cochran  
William Collins  
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John & Sally Savoy  
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Cameron Sims  
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Jean Smith  
Matthew Smith  
Bob Spainhour & Barb Pender  
Suzanne Staples  
David Stark  
Bonnie & Mark Sumner  
Jennifer Superka  
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Kevin Tobey  
Chuck & Mary Ann Todd  
Pete & Roxanne Tysdale  
Scott Useman  
Steve Vela  
Lauren Verno  
Carle Zimmerman & Rita Derjue  
Diane Zingler

In Memory of JoAnn Dufty

In Honor of John Schneider

# Our Trusted Partners In Conservation

## **GOVERNMENT AND AGENCIES**

Centennial Water and Sanitation District  
Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District  
City of Aurora  
Colorado Department of Agriculture  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment  
Colorado Springs Utilities  
Colorado State Forest Service  
Denver Water  
Douglas County  
Florissant Fire Protection District  
Jefferson County  
Park County  
Park County Land and Water Trust Fund  
Teller County  
United States Forest Service  
Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District

## **BUSINESS/BUSINESS GROUPS**

AmazonSmile  
Chatfield Reservoir Mitigation Co, Inc.  
Colorado Mycological Society  
FIN-UP Habitat  
Nationwide  
Newmont North America - CC&V  
Newmont Legacy Fund  
Park County Water Preservation Commission

## **FOUNDATIONS, FUNDS, NON-PROFITS**

Benevity  
Colorado Combined Campaign  
Colorado Lions Camp

Community First Foundation  
Creative Providers Foundation/ PK Enterprises  
Cutthroat Chapter Trout Unlimited  
Colorado Trout Unlimited  
Leighty Foundation  
Palmer Land Trust  
Pikes Peak Chapter Trout Unlimited  
Pikes Peak Community Foundation  
Pikes Peak Council of Boy Scouts  
Rising Sun 4WD Club of Colorado  
Sanborn Camps  
Shell Oil Foundation Matching Gifts  
South Park Chamber  
South Park Enhancement Board  
South Park Natural Heritage Area  
The Nature Conservancy

## **HOA AND NEIGHBORHOODS**

Colorado Mountain Estates  
Conifer Meadows  
Echo Valley  
Flying Cloud  
Foxtail Pines  
Green Mountain Falls  
Landis Ranch  
Palmer Lake  
Red Rocks Ranch  
Richmond Hill  
Ridgewood POA  
Sportsmen's Paradise  
Spring Creek  
Ute Lakes  
Woodside

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United States Forest Service

2019 was a year of change for CUSP as we continued to fulfill our mission for the health of the Upper South Platte Watershed.

Following 21 years of leading the organization, Carol Ekarius made good on her threat to retire from CUSP to pursue new opportunities. She hasn't gone far, to our sister organization Coalitions & Collaboratives, Inc, and she still has a desk in Lake George. Carol is always willing to share her knowledge and history to move CUSP ahead.

John Geerdes joined CUSP as the new Executive Director. John comes to us by way of a long and distinguished career with Colorado Parks and Wildlife. "The learning curve is steep, but Carol, staff and the Board have been generous with their time and knowledge."

2019 financial reports are available on our website

<https://cusp.ws/financial-info/>