

Boulder County Flood Restoration Coalition (BCFRC) – DRAFT NAME

BACKGROUND

In the aftermath of the September Flood, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers consulted with local municipal (Boulder, Longmont, Lyons, Lafayette), Boulder County and state officials about the need to bring the community together to address impacts of the flood in Boulder County. We were encouraged to convene a Coalition, which we did. WRV convened a preliminary group of stakeholder organizations on Oct 24 and Nov 5 to begin the conversation, with additional meetings already scheduled for Nov 26, 1 to 4pm, and Dec 9, 2:30 to 5pm at the Boulder County Parks and Open Space headquarters west of Longmont.

In the first meeting we facilitated input from the group about a purpose and geographic range for the Coalition. From that process, a purpose statement and geographic range were defined, which are articulated below. On Nov 5, we gathered input about priority goals and actions which are summarized in draft form below.

At our next meeting on Nov 26, we will refine Coalition goals, hear reports about continuing and emerging watershed restoration efforts, identify more stakeholders to invite, and begin to define the structure of the coalition and sub-committees to get work done.

COALITION PARTICIPANTS

We are still contacting and inviting more stakeholders (there are so many!), but here is a list of the organizations that have participated thus far:

Boulder County, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks, City of Longmont, Town of Lyons, City of Lafayette, Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest, Senator Udall's Office, GOCO, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, FEMA, Colorado Department of Transportation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Army Corps of Engineers, Colorado Water Conservation Board, Eldorado Canyon State Park, Community Foundation Serving Boulder County, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Greenplay, Colorado Parks & Recreation Association, Walsh Environmental, Biohabitats, Natural Resource Services, Trout Unlimited, REI, Outdoor Industry Association, Active Boulder, Elevations Credit Union, Colorado Mountain Club, Boulder Mountainbike Alliance, Colorado Water Trust, Cottonwood Institute, Rotary Club, Colorado Youth Corps Association, Contour Logic and CDR Associates.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The area deeply impacted by the Colorado Flood of September 2013 contains a variety of important assets, including riparian corridors and floodplains, irrigation infrastructure, parks, trails, open space, and more. The BCFRC will coordinate and support efforts between government agencies, volunteer stewardship organizations, water providers, private property owners, and other community stakeholders, to restore and/or mitigate damage caused by the Flood, to our water resources and recreational infrastructure, acting as a clearinghouse to identify and link needs with available resources, share best practices, etc. The BCFRC will add to existing efforts, not replace or duplicate, in order to enhance overall impact. Of course, Jurisdictions will make decisions about what happens within their boundaries.

GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

The geographic range of the BCFRC is Boulder County, including portions of its watersheds that extend outside Boulder County. Some call this the "Greater St Vrain Watershed" because virtually all streams that flow through Boulder County merge into St. Vrain Creek before exiting the county. Some members of the BCFRC have expressed a need for a coordinated "flood-wide" response and/or the desire to include other stakeholders outside of Boulder County that want to collaborate.

RESOURCE CATEGORIES

We identified two major categories of resources impacted by the flood, which this coalition will focus upon.

Water Resources:

- **Focus:** Watersheds, riparian corridors, flood plains, ditch systems, what else...?
- **Unique to water resources:** streams and ditches pass through a mosaic of jurisdictions (public and private), and require a landscape approach, because actions upstream have more direct effects downstream.

Recreational Infrastructure:

- **Focus:** Trails, greenways, climbing access, what else...?
- **Unique to recreational Infrastructure:** Comprised primarily of trail systems managed by single public entities, where actions within one jurisdiction have less direct impact on adjacent jurisdictions.

GOALS – draft based on input from Nov 5 meeting

1. Support the development of watershed restoration master plans for all watersheds within Boulder County, assisting existing watershed-focused groups as needed, and identifying those watersheds that still need attention. Give attention to human safety, landowner needs, regulatory requirements, ecological design principles, floodplain function, water distribution, and recruitment of needed technical expertise in the planning process.
2. Considering inventories of flood damage to the recreational infrastructure compiled by land management agency jurisdictions, work with those jurisdictions to help match recovery needs with available resources.
3. Develop a plan to engage volunteers in the restoration of water resources and the recreational infrastructure, which will attract and link volunteers with specific appropriate activities through a clearinghouse, and provide the leadership/coordination/support/tools those volunteers need to be safe and effective.
4. Develop a communications/marketing plan to engage all key stakeholders; explain the impacts of the flood to water resources and the recreation infrastructure to the general public; coordinate messaging; articulate assessment results, goals and timelines to the public; and engage the community through volunteerism and philanthropy.
5. Define the leadership, structure and functioning of this Coalition that will sustain momentum and utilize available human resources efficiently to accomplish the goals of the Coalition, learning from the successes and failures of similar past efforts.
6. Identify and pursue adequate resources, including funding from public and private sources, to sustain the goals listed above.