



Advocates for our rivers

EAGLE RIVER COMMUNITY WATER PLAN

November 2018

Summary: The plan is an Eagle River Watershed Council (ERWC) led effort to develop proactive water management recommendations that anticipate changes to population growth and increasing municipal demand for water in Eagle County, climate change, and projects related to the 1998 Eagle River Memorandum of Understanding (ERMOU) – an intergovernmental agreement for developing municipal water supplies in the upper Eagle River watershed. Planning activities will focus on the mainstem Eagle River from its source on the East Fork Eagle River below Eagle Park Reservoir to the confluence with the Colorado River, including assessment on Homestake and Gore Creeks. (Refer to attached map.)

A thorough stakeholder process is central to a successful plan. Stakeholders, which include local conservation organizations, state and federal agencies, recreational users, commercial fishing/rafting guides, ERMOU partners, local governments, agricultural users, and other community groups and individuals, will help develop strategies that can respond to these changes in a way that helps meet municipal demands, while maintaining and improving ecological and recreational attributes in the Eagle River watershed.

This plan will integrate both consumptive and non-consumptive water uses to ensure that all existing and future uses are considered. It will safeguard the interests of the community and extended stakeholders, which include environmental and recreational use needs. ERWC will provide the opportunity for all interested parties to participate and will collaborate with the community so results of this plan are accepted as a fair and reasonable approach to managing our vital water source.

Background: In 2015, the state of Colorado adopted Colorado's Water Plan that sets forth a water management roadmap to achieve a productive economy, vibrant and sustainable cities, productive agriculture, a resilient environment, and a robust recreation industry. Specific to protecting and enhancing stream flows, the plan calls for 80 percent of locally prioritized rivers to be covered by Stream Management Plans by 2030.

In fall 2017, ERWC, in partnership with River Network, launched a stakeholder outreach process to build engagement and funding support for the planning effort and to create the plan goals/objectives that best reflect the interests and concerns of stakeholders. Stakeholders include Eagle County; towns of Vail, Minturn, Avon, Eagle, Gypsum, Red Cliff; Edwards Metro District; ERMOU Partners (cities of Colorado Springs and Aurora; Climax Molybdenum Company; Eagle River Water & Sanitation District; Upper Eagle Regional Water Authority; Vail Associates, Inc; and Colorado River Water Conservation District); Eagle County Conservation District; Northwest Colorado Council of Governments; American Rivers; National Forest Foundation; Colorado Department of Natural Resources; Colorado Parks and Wildlife; U.S. Forest Service; and Bureau of Land Management. The planning process will bring stakeholders together to promote sustainability of healthy rivers that support multiple economic drivers. The plan will provide a water management framework to provide for the continued sustainability of our water resources and equitably maximize benefits.

This three-year project commenced in June 2018 and has a budget of nearly \$390,000. Of this amount, about 47 percent is from a CWCB – Colorado Watershed Restoration Grant, 19 percent from the Colorado Basin Roundtable, 27 percent from stakeholders, and 7 percent in-kind contributions.

Eagle River Watershed

— Project Streams

