



A Newsletter from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Colorado Service Office

Continuing Authorities Projects in Colorado

(Editor's Note: Congress has provided the Corps of Engineers with legislative authorities under which the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, is authorized to plan, design, and construct certain types of water resources and ecosystem restoration projects without additional, specific congressional authorization.)

Hayden Diversion Project:

The Hayden Diversion Project is located in the west central part of Routt County at an elevation of 6400 feet east of Hayden, Colorado. The eastern boundary is the proposed diversion in the Yampa River near the old town site of Mount Harris. The Hayden Project seeks to alleviate the need for temporary diversion structures on the Yampa River, which wash out in heavy spring runoff and damage the streambed and the natural course of the river, causing excessive bank erosion. The Preliminary Restoration Plan was completed in March 2001. This project is currently funded with \$4.4 million federal, \$2.4 million from local sponsors for a total of \$6.8 million.

Gunnison River Project:

The Gunnison River Project will accomplish aquatic restoration along a stretch of the North Fork of the Gunnison River in Delta County in Colorado. This river has been devastated by decades of channelization, gravel mining, overgrazing and encroachment. In 1996 a group of landowners and concerned citizens of the North Fork Valley met to discuss their options and form a volunteer coalition to investigate the possibility of rebuilding the river and its

associated habitat. The local sponsors for this project are Delta County, the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Department of the Interior. The estimate for federal money that will be spent on this multi-year project, which has a target end-year of 2003, is \$4.7 million. The estimate for the local share for this project is \$2.5 million.

Uncompahgre River Project:

The Uncompahgre River Project is located in the City of Montrose, Montrose County, about 65 miles southeast of Grand Junction in west central Colorado. The Uncompahgre River valley supported extensive woodlands and marshes. Much of the original habitat has been altered over the past 100 years through agriculture, gravel mining, residential and business development and industrial uses. Portions of the Uncompahgre River have been channelized, relocated, or mined for gravel, effectively short-circuiting the system's natural ability to treat runoff, provide water quality, nurture wetlands, and regenerate riparian habitat. The reestablishment of floodplain functions at the proposed sites would benefit wetland and riparian habitat quality and quantity along the river. The Preliminary Restoration Plan is scheduled for completion in December of 2002. Once public comment is gathered and local sponsors are identified, the Corps of Engineers can request money from Congress to start the project.

Arkansas River Fisheries Habitat Restoration:

This Section 206 project is located along 10 miles of the Arkansas River from Pueblo Reservoir to the Fountain Creek confluence

near Pueblo. This approximately \$6.5 million project is locally sponsored by the city of Pueblo. It consists of building fish habitat structures, bank stabilization, low-flow channel development, meander development, exotic vegetation control, establishing native vegetation, floodplain reconnection, and island development. The feasibility report was completed last October and the Corps is currently working on the construction drawings and specifications. The Project Cost Agreement (PCA) is scheduled to be signed in April and construction will begin in the fall.

Longs Canyon Creek Aquatic and Riparian Restoration:

This Section 206 project is located along five miles of Longs Canyon Creek, a right bank tributary of the Purgatoire River immediately upstream of Trinidad Reservoir. The approximately \$573,000 project is being locally sponsored by the Spanish Peaks-Purgatoire River Soil and Water Conservation District. It consists of meander development, bank stabilization, and establishing riparian vegetation. The Corps is currently working on the construction drawings and specifications and negotiating the PCA. Construction is scheduled to begin this July.

Rio Grande at Alamosa:

This Section 206 project is located along the Rio Grande near Alamosa. The City of Alamosa was the original local sponsor. However, the city did not believe the feasibility level alternative plans met its objectives and withdrew as the sponsor. The city recommended the Corps work with the Colorado Water Conservation Board to determine if the project could implement measures contained in the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project.

Habitat Restoration at Lake Hasty:

This Section 1135 project is located at Lake Hasty immediately below John Martin Dam. The project would consist of routing fresh water from the stilling basin through Lake Hasty in

order to improve fish habitat conditions. The total project cost is estimated at \$1 million. The project is currently inactive because the original local sponsor (Colorado Division of Wildlife) has been unable to obtain cost share funds. Another local sponsor must be identified prior to project implementation.

Greeley Cache La Poudre River Flood Plain Multi Purpose Study:

A Letter of Agreement for \$39,900 was signed December 5, 2001 to perform a study under the Section 22 Planning Assistance to States and Tribes program. This study is modeled after the proposed General Investigation (GI) for the Cache La Poudre flood plain in Greeley. The first phase of the study is a Land Use Assessment. Follow-on work was discussed with the City in a meeting last December in Omaha. A contract for land use assessment was awarded in late December 2001. A kickoff conference call was held on January 15, 2002. The study team submitted a proposal for additional work in mid- March.

Chatfield, Cherry Creek and Bear Creek, Storage Reallocation Study:

At the request of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, the Omaha District is examining the potential for reallocating a portion of the flood control storage in the Chatfield project to municipal and industrial water supply, agriculture, and recreation and fishery habitat protection and enhancement. The study was initiated at the beginning of 2000, although discussions among the Water Conservation Board, the Corps and several different water supply, environmental and flood control interests had been ongoing for several years prior to the beginning of the study.

The study will examine the effects of storage reallocations of various sizes to identify recreation, environmental and flood control impacts that would occur from these reallocations. The study is expected to be completed in 2004.

Denver's Colfax Reach:

This site is located in the South Platte River in Denver's Metropolitan Area. The total project cost is \$4.8million. The project is river restoration (about 3,500 feet of complete channel rehabilitation). The local sponsor is the Greenway Foundation. The construction contract was awarded to Tierdael Construction Company as a small business in December 2000. About \$1 million of the contract was executed in Fiscal Year 2001. The contractor remobilized to the -initiating construction. The east bank has been fully excavated and graded. The west bank is currently being built out to contract grades. The in-channel hydraulic features (jetties, pool/riffle structures) are nearing completion.

The landowner has agreed to allow the demolition of an old masonry building on the east bank. The modification is complete and was sent to the Resident Office. Denver is currently negotiating a property price with the landowner based on Omaha District appraisals. Construction is expected to be complete this summer, followed by extensive revegetation over the entire study area.

Chatfield Downstream:

The Colorado Water Conservation Board is the local sponsor for this project. The proposal is to revise an existing flood control channel's Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Manual, to allow some vegetation within and along the channel. A change would bring the sponsor into O&M compliance on the flood channel.

New funds received for Preliminary Restoration Plans:

Cherry Creek Reservoir Wetlands - Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority
Piney Creek - Cherry Creek tribs
Lower Boulder Creek - Boulder County, CO, stream restoration

Kingfisher Point, CO:

The local sponsor for this project is the City of Fort Collins. The total project cost is \$3. million. The project consists of river oxbow

restoration, gravel pit to wetland conversion, wetland excavation, and vegetative restoration on 100-acre site within Fort Collins. Weekly team meetings are held every Monday. Team members have provided much of the PMP. Groundwater monitoring wells and surface staff gages have been installed, and readings have begun.

The hydraulics is partially complete.

Gunnison:

At the request of the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), the Corps is contracting to develop hydrology for basins surrounding Gunnison, CO. Completion of the \$30,000 study is expected this fall. The hydraulics of flood plains is dependent on available topography and will likely be initiated in 2003.

There have been additional requests for flood plain assistance from: Delta, Delta County, CO: Eagle County, CO: Mineral, CO: Fraser, Grand County, CO

These requests will be prioritized in cooperation with CWCB and funded as money becomes available (approximately \$150,000 for Sacramento District per year).

Flood Insurance Study:

There are special difficulties in completing revisions to two studies, (100% Federal for FEMA Region 8). Glenwood, CO – A request for an additional \$18,000. Ouray, CO – An additional request for an estimated \$20,000. This is on hold since FEMA is short of funds.

Work for Others:

The Corps has been tasked to develop a physical model for FEMA Region 8, Denver, CO, at a cost of \$20,000. This is scheduled to be completed in April with two additional models to be built for \$20,000 in hand.

New Water Management System to be deployed in June:

The Corps Water Management System (CWMS, pronounced “swims”) is an integrated suite of water resources software that represents the standardized Corps of Engineers’ Automated Information System (AIS). This system, which is currently being deployed throughout the Corps, will provide real-time decision support for water management by integrating real-time data acquisition and storage, flow forecasting of watershed runoff, and reservoir operation decision support along with river profile modeling.

The new system is scheduled to be deployed in Albuquerque in June, with the Arkansas River Basin in Colorado selected as the basin to be used for the deployment. The portion of the basin to be modeled is about 25,000 square miles in size and runs from the headwaters of the Arkansas River to the Colorado/Kansas state line. The basin includes three multi-purpose reservoirs. Trinidad and John Martin dams are Corps projects. Pueblo Dam is a Section 7 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation project.

The key benefit of modeling the Arkansas Basin is to be able to reliably forecast the inflow into John Martin Reservoir. The channel capacity of 3,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) downstream of the dam is very small for its 13,000 square-mile uncontrolled drainage area. The design capacity for the channel was 15,000 cfs. Therefore, modeling efforts will focus on the hydrological and reservoir modeling aspects of CWMS.

Outreach Activities

Corps to assist in Greenway Development Plan:

In January, Omaha District Business Development Coordinator Deb Brey met with City of Boulder officials to discuss various Corps programs that could be used to implement portions of their recently completed Greenway Development Plan for Boulder Creek

through Boulder. Representatives from CDM, who are working with the city and county of Denver on the environmental restoration projects in Denver, were present at the meeting and discussed their experience working with the Corps. The City was aware that Boulder County has submitted a request for a Section 206 study and was considering contacting the County to see if something more regional could be pursued. Brey briefed Dave Brandon and Ralph Roza on the meeting.

Section 593 could expand to Colorado:

Section 593 is an authority found in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 1999 that authorizes the Corps to enter into cost-sharing agreements with local sponsors for design and/or construction of environmental infrastructure projects. The Albuquerque District’s Section 593 program manager spoke about Section 593 activities in central New Mexico at a meeting of the Southeastern Colorado Enterprise Development Council (SECED) last October. Significant interest in these activities was generated, as evidenced by a number of inquiries to insert an authority for southeastern Colorado similar to Section 593 in WRDA 2002. That interest precipitated visits by the Albuquerque District staff to Senators Allard and Campbell’s staffs in Pueblo, as well as Congressman Schaffer’s staff in La Junta. Representatives from Albuquerque District were subsequently asked by SECED Executive Secretary Jan Anderson to speak at its annual meeting last January. A number of communities have submitted letters to Southeastern Colorado’s Congressional delegation identifying specific projects along with requests for an authority similar to New Mexico’s Section 593 be inserted into WRDA 2002 for southeastern Colorado. In addition, in response to a request from Sen. Allard’s office, the Corps also provided a list of potential projects and draft authority language to the senator’s Pueblo office.

Three recreation facilities to receive improvement:

The Corps is currently working on the design agreements and Project Cooperation Agreements to implement the Colorado cost-share project included as a Congressional Add in the 2002 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill.

The project involves repair, replacement, and modernization of recreation facilities at three Corps lakes (Cherry Creek, Chatfield, and Trinidad) managed by the State of Colorado under lease agreements. The project, to be completed over a 10-year period, will be cost-shared 50-50 between the State of Colorado and the Corps of Engineers, with the State responsible for operation and maintenance of the recreation projects upon their completion.

The State will be doing the design and construction of the work, with oversight by the Corps. Phase 1 of the project will be initiated in Fiscal Year 2002. In all, \$900,000 (\$300,000 per lake) is in the Corps' Fiscal Year 2002 budget to initiate this work. Approximately \$288,000 per lake in Federal funds is available to initiate design and cover project management costs this year. Design, however, cannot be initiated until the Design Agreements are signed. The Design Agreements are expected to be signed within the next 45-60 days.

Project Management Plan underway for Fountain Creek Watershed Study:

The Corps' Albuquerque District is currently finalizing a draft Project Management Plan for the Fountain Creek Watershed study. The watershed, which encompasses 927 square-miles, is located along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains in central Colorado.

Rapid development along the Interstate 25 corridor within Colorado Springs and Pueblo has resulted in increased pressure on the existing infrastructure. That includes problems related to flood control, erosion, and environmental degradation along Fountain Creek and its tributaries. Flooding on the Fountain Creek in April and May 1999 caused

more than \$60 million in damage to public, agricultural, and private properties.

Albuquerque District prepared a 905(b) analysis at the request of Pikes Peak and Pueblo Councils of Government and its 11-member governments. That analysis, which was approved on November 9, recommended proceeding into feasibility level studies, and identified a federal interest in addressing flood control, environmental restoration, and other allied purposes in the watershed. It is estimated the study will cost about \$4 million. A Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement (FCSA) is scheduled for April.

Regulatory Activities

Rueter-Hess Reservoir Project for city of Parker Colo.
Section 404 Permit:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the lead federal agency for this project near Parker, CO. The Parker Water and Sanitation District (PWSD) proposes to develop a 15,000- acre-foot reservoir to provide terminal storage to manage the available water supplies for the Parker District and eventually as a structure that can also manage regional water supplies. The project is located on private land in Douglas County, one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation. The need to manage these limited resources and ensure an adequate future water supply is driving the Parker District to look at a reservoir as the best means to serve local and regional water supply needs. They are currently averaging 1,000 new housing starts per year.
Points of Contact: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District: Rodney Schwartz, 402-221-4143

Meetings

In late February, the Denver Regulatory Office met with Great Western Diamond Company on the 404 permit for the Kelsey Lake

Diamond Mine (located northwest of Fort Collins near the Wyoming line).

March 3 – The Tri-Lakes Project Office met with Lockheed Martin to discuss construction of a water quality improvement project on Massey Draw at Chatfield Lake.

March 12 – There was a public hearing on the Draft EIS for the Reuter-Hess Reservoir (Rod Schwartz will provide more information on this).

March 14 – The Denver Regulatory Office met with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to discuss proposed habitat mitigation bank along Plum Creek.

March 14 - Denver Regulatory Office meeting with the Federal Highway Administration and CDOT on the Gaming Area Access EIS.

News Briefs

City of Fort Worth wants to study enlarging Halligan Reservoir Dam

The Denver Regulatory Office was contacted this week by several engineering firms regarding a Request for Proposals (RFP) the City of Fort Collins has on the street.

Corps of Engineers opens regulatory program office in Durango

If you needed a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers to work in a wetland, stream, river, lake or other waters in northwest New Mexico, southwest Colorado, or San Juan County, Utah, you can now contact the Corps in their new Durango, Colorado, office.

Regulatory experts from the Corps' Sacramento and Albuquerque Districts recently opened an office at 278 Sawyer, #1 in Durango

Col. Michael Conrad of the Sacramento District and Lt. Col. Raymond Midkiff of the Albuquerque District stated: "The establishment of our new regulatory office will provide improved service for the public in the four corners area, which is experiencing steady growth."

The Corps of Engineers administers Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which requires federal approval prior to discharging, fill or dredged material into waters of the United States, including wetlands.

Information regarding the Clean Water Act, permit applications, reports of violations, and requests for jurisdictional determinations may be directed to Houston Hannafious, (970-375-9509), project manager for NW New Mexico, or Lesley McWhirter, (970-375-9452), project manager for SW Colorado and San Juan County, Utah.

Their mailing address is U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Durango Regulatory Office, 278 Sawyer, #1, Durango, CO 81303.

New Nationwide Permits in effect

The new Nationwide permits took effect March 18 and can be found on Albuquerque District's Regulatory web-site at www.spa.usace.army.mil/reg/

Regulatory Meeting to be held April 1

The Corps' regulatory districts in Colorado (Albuquerque, Sacramento and Omaha districts) will have a meeting April 1 in Denver with the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. The purpose of meeting is to educate the department about Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and to introduce district representatives and answer any questions on regulations and permits.

The Rocky Mountain "Essayons" is an unofficial publication of the South Pacific Division and Northwestern Division Colorado Service Office, telephone number (303) 507-1368 AND E-MAIL van.v.shipley@usace.army.mil. Editorial views expressed are not necessarily those of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the Department of Army. This publication is authorized under AR 360-1. South Pacific Division Commander: Brig. Gen. Robert L. Davis and Northwestern Division Commander: Brig. Gen David A. Fastabend, Colorado Service Office Acting Chief: Van Shipley. Public Affairs Officer: Joan Mier. Editor: Van Shipley.