



*Mission: The South Platte River Urban Waters Partnership collaborates across jurisdictions and disciplines to engage communities, and to protect and restore the South Platte River and Watershed.*

## Urban Waters Partnership Meeting Notes

Mile High United Way, 711 Park Avenue, Denver

3:30 – 5:00 p.m

4/14/2015

### **Action Items:**

- Casey will keep the UWP in the loop on the outcomes of the focus groups and subsequent steps of the (Water Quality Survey) project.
- Devon will send geomapping URL out when it's available.
- Devon will send early UWP survey results to Jeff L. for background / context. It was agreed that the transition of UWP / TWC to TGF from CSFS is a good opportunity to conduct another survey of the UWP for an updated perspective.
- Sarah with Denver Water and Marge with Capitol Representatives will send information on the Freeman Platte River study and the Platte River organization housed at NWCD (don't have the name) to Devon to send out to Jeff L. and others who are interested.
- Funding is needed for the WQ Assessment, the market analysis, and general ongoing expenses of the UWP/TWC. Please make contributions to The Greenway Foundation with specific instructions that the funding is for The Water Connection. (It will go to the new dedicated account for The Water Connection within The Greenway Foundation.)
- Devon will follow up with specific funding "asks."

### **Presentation – 2014 Water Quality Survey Results**

Presenter: Casey Davenhill, Colorado Watershed Assembly

Casey presented the findings of the latest statewide water quality survey, and engaged the group in discussion following. In 2014, the Colorado Watershed Assembly (CWA) conducted a phone survey of Colorado residents to repeat a survey first conducted in 2007 to understand opinions towards water quality and to see if opinions have changed over time. Colorado Watershed Assembly retained Corona Insights, the same consulting firm that conducted the 2007 survey, with funding from the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority. The study was conducted in five distinct regions of the state – Eastern Mountains, Eastern Plains, Front Range, San Luis Valley, and Western Slope. The full survey and summary can be accessed on CWA's website at [www.coloradowater.org](http://www.coloradowater.org). A few of the major findings include: Water quality has become more important as an environmental issue over time; public health is the greatest motivator to taking action to preserve water quality, and pet health is gaining importance; water quality messages differ by regions. Likely contributors to the increase is concern over water quality include recent drought, fire, flood events and fracking activities. Focus groups are being conducted as a follow-up phase of this project. **Casey will keep the UWP in the loop on the outcomes of the focus groups and subsequent steps of the project.** The information from this survey may be used to consider the best approach to water quality messaging in Colorado. Casey also encouraged the UWP to become familiar with the State Water Plan which will be signed by the Governor in December 2015, and the activities of the Basin Roundtables, looking at the overall process and scope of ideas being presented. The current comment period on the State Water Plan ends May 1<sup>st</sup>.



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## **Presentation – KIC-NET (Keep It Clean – Neighborhood Environmental Trios)**

Presenter: Donny Roush – Earth Force

Donny presented the KIC-NET project which was funded in part by an EPA Urban Waters Small Grant. The KIC-Net program aims to improve water quality by offering educational opportunities to schools located near parks with waterways. As part of the KIC-NET work, Earth Force has developed curriculum for the KIC-NET schools to use, including a toolkit, reference books for libraries, and pre and post testing with students. Topics addressed include MS-4 cleaning of storm drains and stream monitoring, including access to stream monitoring equipment. The program will be expanding from ten to fifteen located in several jurisdictions. Next year the program will include a headwaters component by working with Denver Mountain Parks.

## **Workgroup Reports:**

General: The UWP / The Water Connection will be changing host organizations over the next few months. The program, including the coordinator position, is moving from the Colorado State Forest Service to The Greenway Foundation. This move is a positive, potentially catalytic change for the UWP and The Water Connection, creating a better chance of growing local roots, and offering much greater flexibility in activities allowing the organization to be nimble and grow the “wings” it needs to survive beyond the federal pilot stage.

Mapping – Thank you to our partners for continuing to work with the EPA contractor to upload project data. We have requested a more user-friendly URL for the geomapping site; **Devon will send it out when it’s available.**

Water Quality Assessment - Representatives from the WQ Assessment Workgroup have made presentations demonstrating the tool to the Barr-Milton Watershed Association Board, Aurora Water, and The Greenway Foundation. Funding is needed to allow work to continue on completion of the framework, data analysis, development of the website and uploading of the project to the website.

Green Infrastructure Task Force - Jeff Lakey is the new Green Infrastructure Task Force leader. Jeff suggested that we think about what green infrastructure is and why it’s important that we work on it. What about green infrastructure do people in the UWP value? **Devon will send early UWP survey results to Jeff for background / context. It was agreed that the transition of UWP / TWC to TGF from CSFS is a good opportunity to conduct another survey of the UWP for an updated perspective.** Jeff also mentioned that the Natural Capital regional study funded by the USFS will begin later this year and there will be UWP involvement in that project. Jeff also asked if others were aware of work by Professor Freeman that focused on the larger Platte River basin, and an organization housed at the Northern Water Conservancy District was also discussed. **Sarah with Denver Water and Marge with Capitol Representatives will send information to Devon to send out to Jeff L. and others who are interested.** Other happenings: the EPA is working to get an intern who will create a virtual tour of green infrastructure sites in the UWP area.

The Water Connection: We are looking for an intern to help with a market analysis. Suggestions were made for connecting with interns through local universities and with Andrew Hudson’s job list. As of now, the internship is without a stipend, but sponsorships are encouraged. The Water Connection now has a dedicated account with The Greenway Foundation, so now we are able to receive contributions



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easily. The Greenway Foundation is a qualified participant in the Colorado Enterprise Zone. This means that any donation over \$250 qualifies for a 25% Colorado Income Tax Credit on your tax return.

Leadership Team - Mel thanked Devon for her dedication and hard work on behalf of the UWP/ The Water Connection, especially through this difficult transition time. She emphasized the need for funding for the WQ Assessment, for the market analysis, and for general funding to continue the UWP / TWC. Partners expressed that it would be helpful to receive specific “asks” for funding. **Devon will follow up with specific funding requests.**

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