

Stream: Spring Creek

Executive Summary

Water Division: 4

Water District: 62

CDOW#: 43288

CWCB ID: 10/4/A-005

Segment: Headgate of Creede Trail Ditch to Confluence with Cebolla Creek

Upper Terminus: HEADGATE OF CREEDE TRAIL DITCH

(Latitude 38° 03' 53.67"N) (Longitude 107° 00' 9.77"W)

Lower Terminus: CONFLUENCE WITH CEBOLLA CREEK

(Latitude 38° 05' 46.88"N) (Longitude 107° 02' 7.72"W)

Watershed: Upper Gunnison (HUC#: 14020002)

Counties: Hinsdale

Length: 3.25 miles

USGS Quad(s): Mineral Mountain

Flow Recommendation: 5.0 cfs (April 1 – September 30)
3.3 cfs (October 1 – November 15)
2.0 cfs (November 16 – March 31)



Staff Analysis and Recommendation

Summary

The information contained in this report and the associated instream flow file folder forms the basis for staff's instream flow recommendation to be considered by the Board. It is staff's opinion that the information contained in this report is sufficient to support the findings required in Rule 5.40.

Colorado's Instream Flow Program was created in 1973 when the Colorado State Legislature recognized "the need to correlate the activities of mankind with some reasonable preservation of the natural environment" (see 37-92-102 (3) C.R.S.). The statute vests the CWCB with the exclusive authority to appropriate and acquire instream flow and natural lake level water rights. In order to encourage other entities to participate in Colorado's Instream Flow Program, the statute directs the CWCB to request instream flow recommendations from other state and federal agencies. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recommended this segment of Spring Creek to the CWCB for inclusion into the Instream Flow Program. Spring Creek is being considered for inclusion into the Instream Flow Program because it has a natural environment that can be preserved to a reasonable degree with an instream flow water right.

Spring Creek is approximately 11.3 miles long. It begins in the La Garita Wilderness at an elevation of 12,240 feet and generally flows in a northwesterly direction until it terminates at the confluence with Cebolla Creek at an elevation of 8,900 feet. Of the 3.5 mile segment addressed by this report, approximately 50% of the segment is located on federal lands. Spring Creek is located within Hinsdale County and has a total drainage area of approximately 36.4 square miles.

The subject of this report is a segment of Spring Creek beginning at the Headgate of Creede Trail Ditch and extending downstream to the confluence with Cebolla Creek. The proposed segment is located approximately 12 miles southeast of the town of Powderhorn. Staff has received only one recommendation for this segment, from the BLM. The recommendation for this segment is discussed below.

Instream Flow Recommendation

The BLM is recommending 5.0 cfs (April 1 – September 30), 3.3 cfs (October 1 – November 15) and 2.0 cfs (November 16 – March 31) based on their data collection efforts and staff's water availability analyses.

Land Status Review

Upper Terminus	Lower Terminus	Total Length (miles)	Land Ownership	
			% Private	% Public
Headgate of Creede Trail Ditch	Confluence w/ Cebolla Creek	3.25	50%	50%

50% of the public lands are managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the remaining 50% are managed by the BLM.

Biological Data

This segment of Spring Creek is a moderate gradient stream, with moderate substrate size. The creek is sometimes confined by a narrow canyon, but in other locations the creek supports extensive wetland communities on the valley floor because of extensive beaver activity. The riparian community is in good condition and is composed primarily of willow, alder, and spruce. The creek provides good pool habitat for overwintering, and riffles for spawning do not appear to be a limiting factor for the fish population. Fishery surveys indicate that the creek supports a self-sustaining population of brown trout and brook trout. A population estimate indicates a fish population with high biomass and specimens over 12 inches in length. It is also possible that the fish population in Cebolla Creek makes use of Spring Creek for spawning purposes.

Field Survey Data

BLM staff used the R2Cross methodology to quantify the amount of water required to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree. The R2Cross method requires that stream discharge and channel profile data be collected in a riffle stream habitat type. Riffles are most easily visualized, as the stream habitat types that would dry up first should streamflow cease. This type of hydraulic data collection consists of setting up a transect, surveying the stream channel geometry, and measuring the stream discharge.

Biological Flow Recommendation

The CWCBC staff relied upon the biological expertise of the cooperating agencies to interpret output from the R2Cross data collected to develop the initial, biologic instream flow recommendation. This initial recommendation is designed to address the unique biologic requirements of each stream without regard to water availability. Three instream flow hydraulic parameters, average depth, percent wetted perimeter, and average velocity are used to develop biologic instream flow recommendations. The CDOW has determined that maintaining these three hydraulic parameters at adequate levels across riffle habitat types, aquatic habitat in pools and runs will also be maintained for most life stages of fish and aquatic invertebrates (Nehring 1979; Espegren 1996).

For this segment of stream, two data sets were collected with the results shown in Table 1 below. Table 1 shows who collected the data (Party), the date the data was collected (Date), the measured discharge at the time of the survey (Q), the accuracy range of the predicted flows based on Manning's Equation (240% and 40% of Q), the summer flow recommendation based on meeting 3 of 3 hydraulic criteria and the winter flow recommendation based upon 2 of 3 hydraulic criteria. It is believed that recommendations that fall outside of the accuracy range of the model, over 250% of the measured discharge or under 40% of the measured discharge may not give an accurate estimate of the necessary instream flow required.

Table 1: Data

Party	Date	Q	250%-40%	Summer (3/3)	Winter (2/3)
BLM	10/10/2008	5.36	2.1 – 13.4	5.50	2.12
BLM	10/10/2008	5.11	2.0 – 12.8	4.63	Out of range

The summer flow recommendation, which met 3 of 3 criteria and is within the accuracy range of the R2CROSS model is 5.0 cfs. The summer flow recommendation was derived by averaging

the results of the data sets. The fall flow recommendation was reduced to 3.3 cfs due to water availability constraints. The winter flow amount, which meets 2 of 3 criteria, is 2.0 cfs.

Hydrologic Data and Analysis

After receiving the cooperating agency's biologic recommendation, the CWCB staff conducted an evaluation of the stream hydrology to determine if water was physically available for an instream flow appropriation. This evaluation was done through a computation that is, in essence, a "water balance". In concept a "water balance" computation can be viewed as an accounting exercise. When done in its most rigorous form, the water balance parses precipitation into all the avenues water pursues after it is deposited as rain, snow, or ice. In other words, given a specified amount of water deposition (input), the balance tries to account for all water depletions (losses) until a selected end point is reached. Water losses include depletions due to evaporation and transpiration, deliveries into ground water storage, temporary surface storage, incorporations into plant and animal tissue and so forth. These losses are individually or collectively subtracted from the input to reveal the net amount of stream runoff as represented by the discharge measured by stream gages. Of course, the measured stream flow need not be the end point of interest; indeed, when looking at issues of water use to extinction stream flow measurements may only describe intermediate steps in the complex accounting process that is a water balance carried out to a net value of zero.

In its analysis, CWCB staff has attempted to use this idea of balancing inputs and losses to determine if water is available for the recommended Instream Flow Appropriation. Of course, this analysis must be a practical exercise rather than a lengthy, and costly, scientific investigation. As a result, staff has simplified the process by lumping together some variables and employing certain rational and scientifically supportable assumptions. The process may be described through the following description of the steps used to complete the evaluation for this particular stream.

The first step required in determining water availability is a determination of the hydrologic regime at the Lower Terminus (LT) of the recommended ISF reach. In the best case this means looking at the data from a gage at the LT. Further, this data, in the best case, has been collected for a long period of time (the longer the better) including wet and dry periods. In the case of **Spring Creek** no such gage is available at the LT. In fact, there is no gage on Spring Creek. It is thus necessary to describe the normal flow regime at Spring Creek above the LT through a "representative" gage station. The gage station selected for this purpose was COCHETOPA CREEK BELOW ROCK CREEK NR PARLIN, CO. (USGS 09118450); it has a period of record (POR) of 28 years collected between 1981 and 2009. The gage is at an elevation of 8,470 ft above mean sea level (amsl) and has a drainage area of 334 mi². The hydrograph (plot of discharge over time) produced from this gage includes the consumptive uses and out-of-basin transfers of several diversions. However, the existence of these diversions does not preclude use of the data from the gage. To make the measured data transferable to Spring Creek above the LT, the consumptive portions of these diversions were added back to the measured hydrograph. The resulting "adjusted" hydrograph could then be used on Spring Creek above the LT by multiplying the "adjusted" gage discharge values by an area ratio; specifically, the area of Spring Creek above the LT (36.4 mi²) to Cochetopa Creek Near Parlin, CO (334 mi²). The resulting proportioned hydrograph was itself "adjusted" (decreased) to reflect the consumptive irrigation

depletions upstream of the LT. The final hydrograph thus represents a distribution of flow over time that has been reduced to reflect existing human uses.

{The Following discussion is based upon the US Geological Survey's *Techniques of Water-Resources Investigations Series, Book 4: Hydrologic Analysis and Interpretation, Chapter A3: Statistical Methods in Water Resources* (Chapter 3: Describing Uncertainty) by D.R. Helsel and R. M. Hirsch. This technical reference provides the scientific background and guidance important to the systematic interpretation of hydrologic data. The document is available online and is a valuable aid to understanding and interpreting the analyses described here.}

The next step in producing a representation of the discharge at Spring Creek is to compute the Geometric Mean of the area-prorated “adjusted” data values from the Cochetopa Creek below Rock Creek Near Parlin, CO hydrograph. This step is of value because of the inherent statistical weaknesses found in any collection of data intended to measure natural stream discharge. Without getting into the details of statistical theory, it is worth noting that a set of discharge measurements is inherently inaccurate, no matter how well collected, due to the difficulties attendant to data collection, especially hydrologic data. To give deference to this fact and to increase the value of the hydrograph product of this analysis, the Geometric Means of the data were computed and plotted along with the 95% Confidence Intervals about the data. The resultant hydrograph, including recommended Instream Flow values, is displayed in Figure 1 with the data displayed in Table 2.

Figure 1

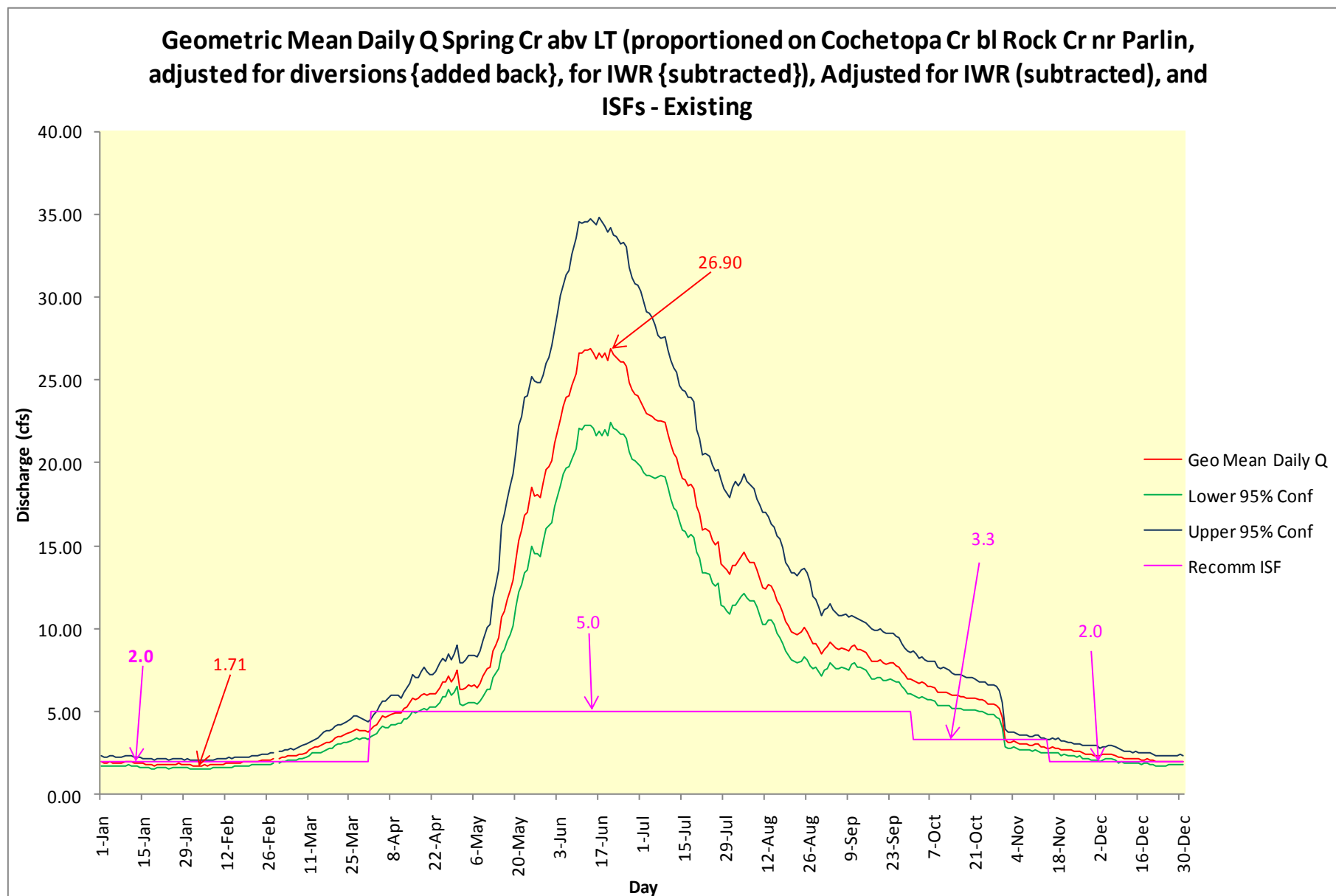


Table 2. Geometric Mean Discharge and Recommended Instream Flows			
Date	Existing ISF	Recommended ISF	Proportioned Adjusted GM (abv gage) Adj (-) for Irr & OoB from Spring Cr abv LT
1-Jan		2.0	1.94
2-Jan		2.0	1.89
3-Jan		2.0	1.89
4-Jan		2.0	1.92
5-Jan		2.0	1.91
6-Jan		2.0	1.90
7-Jan		2.0	1.88
8-Jan		2.0	1.88
9-Jan		2.0	1.92
10-Jan		2.0	1.99
11-Jan		2.0	1.96
12-Jan		2.0	1.88
13-Jan		2.0	1.87
14-Jan		2.0	1.83
15-Jan		2.0	1.83
16-Jan		2.0	1.81
17-Jan		2.0	1.77
18-Jan		2.0	1.75
19-Jan		2.0	1.72
20-Jan		2.0	1.77
21-Jan		2.0	1.78
22-Jan		2.0	1.78
23-Jan		2.0	1.78
24-Jan		2.0	1.74
25-Jan		2.0	1.78
26-Jan		2.0	1.81
27-Jan		2.0	1.84
28-Jan		2.0	1.81
29-Jan		2.0	1.77
30-Jan		2.0	1.78
31-Jan		2.0	1.75
1-Feb		2.0	1.72
2-Feb		2.0	1.72
3-Feb		2.0	1.71
4-Feb		2.0	1.71
5-Feb		2.0	1.73
6-Feb		2.0	1.72
7-Feb		2.0	1.74
8-Feb		2.0	1.76
9-Feb		2.0	1.78
10-Feb		2.0	1.77
11-Feb		2.0	1.80
12-Feb		2.0	1.84
13-Feb		2.0	1.85

14-Feb	2.0	1.84
15-Feb	2.0	1.86
16-Feb	2.0	1.89
17-Feb	2.0	1.89
18-Feb	2.0	1.91
19-Feb	2.0	1.92
20-Feb	2.0	1.92
21-Feb	2.0	1.96
22-Feb	2.0	1.96
23-Feb	2.0	1.99
24-Feb	2.0	2.01
25-Feb	2.0	2.00
26-Feb	2.0	2.02
27-Feb	2.0	2.07
28-Feb	2.0	2.10
29-Feb	2.0	
1-Mar	2.0	2.15
2-Mar	2.0	2.21
3-Mar	2.0	2.21
4-Mar	2.0	2.29
5-Mar	2.0	2.30
6-Mar	2.0	2.27
7-Mar	2.0	2.34
8-Mar	2.0	2.40
9-Mar	2.0	2.42
10-Mar	2.0	2.52
11-Mar	2.0	2.63
12-Mar	2.0	2.77
13-Mar	2.0	2.84
14-Mar	2.0	2.87
15-Mar	2.0	2.92
16-Mar	2.0	2.99
17-Mar	2.0	3.13
18-Mar	2.0	3.16
19-Mar	2.0	3.20
20-Mar	2.0	3.37
21-Mar	2.0	3.45
22-Mar	2.0	3.48
23-Mar	2.0	3.56
24-Mar	2.0	3.61
25-Mar	2.0	3.73
26-Mar	2.0	3.86
27-Mar	2.0	3.89
28-Mar	2.0	3.83
29-Mar	2.0	3.86
30-Mar	2.0	3.79
31-Mar	2.0	3.75
1-Apr	5.0	3.88
2-Apr	5.0	4.05

3-Apr	5.0	4.15
4-Apr	5.0	4.46
5-Apr	5.0	4.69
6-Apr	5.0	4.60
7-Apr	5.0	4.69
8-Apr	5.0	4.83
9-Apr	5.0	4.90
10-Apr	5.0	4.92
11-Apr	5.0	4.88
12-Apr	5.0	5.16
13-Apr	5.0	5.25
14-Apr	5.0	5.49
15-Apr	5.0	5.80
16-Apr	5.0	5.71
17-Apr	5.0	5.76
18-Apr	5.0	5.93
19-Apr	5.0	6.05
20-Apr	5.0	5.95
21-Apr	5.0	6.02
22-Apr	5.0	6.03
23-Apr	5.0	6.08
24-Apr	5.0	6.44
25-Apr	5.0	6.75
26-Apr	5.0	6.72
27-Apr	5.0	7.10
28-Apr	5.0	6.76
29-Apr	5.0	7.00
30-Apr	5.0	7.46
1-May	5.0	6.35
2-May	5.0	6.28
3-May	5.0	6.41
4-May	5.0	6.57
5-May	5.0	6.54
6-May	5.0	6.57
7-May	5.0	6.44
8-May	5.0	6.66
9-May	5.0	7.08
10-May	5.0	7.60
11-May	5.0	7.67
12-May	5.0	8.59
13-May	5.0	8.95
14-May	5.0	9.41
15-May	5.0	10.70
16-May	5.0	11.07
17-May	5.0	11.76
18-May	5.0	12.26
19-May	5.0	12.89
20-May	5.0	14.20
21-May	5.0	15.34

22-May	5.0	15.93
23-May	5.0	16.86
24-May	5.0	16.99
25-May	5.0	18.51
26-May	5.0	18.02
27-May	5.0	18.05
28-May	5.0	17.87
29-May	5.0	18.82
30-May	5.0	19.56
31-May	5.0	19.78
1-Jun	5.0	20.17
2-Jun	5.0	21.19
3-Jun	5.0	21.92
4-Jun	5.0	22.66
5-Jun	5.0	23.43
6-Jun	5.0	23.95
7-Jun	5.0	24.03
8-Jun	5.0	24.63
9-Jun	5.0	25.41
10-Jun	5.0	26.67
11-Jun	5.0	26.58
12-Jun	5.0	26.77
13-Jun	5.0	26.78
14-Jun	5.0	26.87
15-Jun	5.0	26.63
16-Jun	5.0	26.28
17-Jun	5.0	26.60
18-Jun	5.0	26.36
19-Jun	5.0	26.59
20-Jun	5.0	26.17
21-Jun	5.0	26.90
22-Jun	5.0	26.51
23-Jun	5.0	26.37
24-Jun	5.0	26.08
25-Jun	5.0	26.08
26-Jun	5.0	25.78
27-Jun	5.0	24.86
28-Jun	5.0	24.36
29-Jun	5.0	24.15
30-Jun	5.0	24.00
1-Jul	5.0	23.69
2-Jul	5.0	23.29
3-Jul	5.0	22.99
4-Jul	5.0	22.93
5-Jul	5.0	22.81
6-Jul	5.0	22.61
7-Jul	5.0	22.51
8-Jul	5.0	22.55
9-Jul	5.0	22.47

10-Jul	5.0	21.74
11-Jul	5.0	21.09
12-Jul	5.0	20.53
13-Jul	5.0	20.29
14-Jul	5.0	19.61
15-Jul	5.0	19.09
16-Jul	5.0	18.95
17-Jul	5.0	18.62
18-Jul	5.0	18.71
19-Jul	5.0	18.47
20-Jul	5.0	17.34
21-Jul	5.0	16.95
22-Jul	5.0	15.96
23-Jul	5.0	16.04
24-Jul	5.0	15.89
25-Jul	5.0	15.29
26-Jul	5.0	15.07
27-Jul	5.0	15.20
28-Jul	5.0	13.90
29-Jul	5.0	13.73
30-Jul	5.0	13.49
31-Jul	5.0	13.22
1-Aug	5.0	13.76
2-Aug	5.0	13.84
3-Aug	5.0	14.08
4-Aug	5.0	14.31
5-Aug	5.0	14.61
6-Aug	5.0	14.25
7-Aug	5.0	14.02
8-Aug	5.0	13.97
9-Aug	5.0	13.58
10-Aug	5.0	13.03
11-Aug	5.0	12.44
12-Aug	5.0	12.38
13-Aug	5.0	12.61
14-Aug	5.0	12.53
15-Aug	5.0	12.23
16-Aug	5.0	11.69
17-Aug	5.0	11.41
18-Aug	5.0	10.97
19-Aug	5.0	10.37
20-Aug	5.0	10.12
21-Aug	5.0	9.77
22-Aug	5.0	9.71
23-Aug	5.0	9.64
24-Aug	5.0	9.76
25-Aug	5.0	10.02
26-Aug	5.0	9.80
27-Aug	5.0	9.41

28-Aug	5.0	9.08
29-Aug	5.0	9.12
30-Aug	5.0	8.79
31-Aug	5.0	8.43
1-Sep	5.0	8.77
2-Sep	5.0	8.87
3-Sep	5.0	9.21
4-Sep	5.0	8.97
5-Sep	5.0	8.79
6-Sep	5.0	8.76
7-Sep	5.0	8.80
8-Sep	5.0	8.71
9-Sep	5.0	8.63
10-Sep	5.0	8.91
11-Sep	5.0	8.96
12-Sep	5.0	8.76
13-Sep	5.0	8.73
14-Sep	5.0	8.62
15-Sep	5.0	8.53
16-Sep	5.0	8.31
17-Sep	5.0	7.99
18-Sep	5.0	8.00
19-Sep	5.0	8.04
20-Sep	5.0	8.07
21-Sep	5.0	7.92
22-Sep	5.0	7.84
23-Sep	5.0	7.95
24-Sep	5.0	7.89
25-Sep	5.0	7.78
26-Sep	5.0	7.69
27-Sep	5.0	7.42
28-Sep	5.0	7.21
29-Sep	5.0	6.98
30-Sep	5.0	6.93
1-Oct	3.3	6.88
2-Oct	3.3	6.78
3-Oct	3.3	6.66
4-Oct	3.3	6.73
5-Oct	3.3	6.65
6-Oct	3.3	6.52
7-Oct	3.3	6.50
8-Oct	3.3	6.45
9-Oct	3.3	6.16
10-Oct	3.3	6.15
11-Oct	3.3	6.18
12-Oct	3.3	6.13
13-Oct	3.3	6.08
14-Oct	3.3	5.93
15-Oct	3.3	5.95

16-Oct	3.3	5.95
17-Oct	3.3	5.91
18-Oct	3.3	5.85
19-Oct	3.3	5.82
20-Oct	3.3	5.81
21-Oct	3.3	5.81
22-Oct	3.3	5.76
23-Oct	3.3	5.67
24-Oct	3.3	5.66
25-Oct	3.3	5.60
26-Oct	3.3	5.47
27-Oct	3.3	5.44
28-Oct	3.3	5.46
29-Oct	3.3	5.32
30-Oct	3.3	5.15
31-Oct	3.3	4.59
1-Nov	3.3	3.26
2-Nov	3.3	3.10
3-Nov	3.3	3.14
4-Nov	3.3	3.19
5-Nov	3.3	3.13
6-Nov	3.3	3.03
7-Nov	3.3	3.02
8-Nov	3.3	3.01
9-Nov	3.3	2.98
10-Nov	3.3	2.95
11-Nov	3.3	2.98
12-Nov	3.3	2.99
13-Nov	3.3	2.84
14-Nov	3.3	2.86
15-Nov	3.3	2.78
16-Nov	2.0	2.79
17-Nov	2.0	2.82
18-Nov	2.0	2.80
19-Nov	2.0	2.80
20-Nov	2.0	2.66
21-Nov	2.0	2.70
22-Nov	2.0	2.66
23-Nov	2.0	2.63
24-Nov	2.0	2.58
25-Nov	2.0	2.57
26-Nov	2.0	2.60
27-Nov	2.0	2.48
28-Nov	2.0	2.44
29-Nov	2.0	2.41
30-Nov	2.0	2.41
1-Dec	2.0	2.35
2-Dec	2.0	2.35
3-Dec	2.0	2.29

4-Dec	2.0	2.36
5-Dec	2.0	2.40
6-Dec	2.0	2.40
7-Dec	2.0	2.41
8-Dec	2.0	2.34
9-Dec	2.0	2.21
10-Dec	2.0	2.20
11-Dec	2.0	2.14
12-Dec	2.0	2.16
13-Dec	2.0	2.12
14-Dec	2.0	2.12
15-Dec	2.0	2.11
16-Dec	2.0	2.13
17-Dec	2.0	2.06
18-Dec	2.0	2.08
19-Dec	2.0	2.09
20-Dec	2.0	2.05
21-Dec	2.0	2.04
22-Dec	2.0	1.92
23-Dec	2.0	1.91
24-Dec	2.0	1.92
25-Dec	2.0	1.92
26-Dec	2.0	1.97
27-Dec	2.0	2.00
28-Dec	2.0	1.97
29-Dec	2.0	1.98
30-Dec	2.0	2.00
31-Dec	2.0	1.96

Existing Water Right Information

Staff has analyzed the water rights tabulation and contacted the Division Engineer Office (DEO) to identify any potential water availability problems. There are seven decreed surface diversion within this reach of stream: Creede Trail Irrigation Ditch (9.5 cfs, 1906 appropriation), Caldwell Ditch (2.0 cfs, 1960 appropriation), A Doering Spring Creek Ditch (7.5 cfs, 1900 appropriation), Cliff Irrigation Ditch No. 2 (4.5 cfs, 1898/1915/1925 appropriation), Cliff Irrigation Ditch (10.0 cfs, 1898 appropriation), Bear Creek Ditch (0.90 cfs, 1910 appropriation) and Lower Spring Creek Irrigation Ditch (5.0 cfs, 1915 appropriation). Staff has determined that water is available for appropriation on Spring Creek, between the headgate of Creede Trail Ditch and the confluence with Cebolla Creek, to preserve the natural environment to a reasonable degree without limiting or foreclosing the exercise of valid existing water rights.

CWCB Staff's Instream Flow Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board form its intent to appropriate on the following stream reach:

Segment: Headgate of Creede Trail Ditch to Confluence with Cebolla Creek

Upper Terminus: HEADGATE OF CREEDE TRAIL DITCH

(Latitude 38° 03' 53.67"N) (Longitude 107° 00' 9.77"W)

UTM North: 4214910.45 UTM East: 324313.50

SW NE S36 T44N R3W NMPM

1620' West of the East Section Line; 1870' South of the North Section Line

Lower Terminus: CONFLUENCE WITH CEBOLLA CREEK

(Latitude 38° 05' 46.88"N) (Longitude 107° 02' 7.72"W)

UTM North: 4218462.52 UTM East: 321515.50

NE NE S1 T44N R2W NMPM

350' West of the East Section Line; 1100' South of the North Section Line

Watershed: Upper Gunnison (HUC#: 14020002)

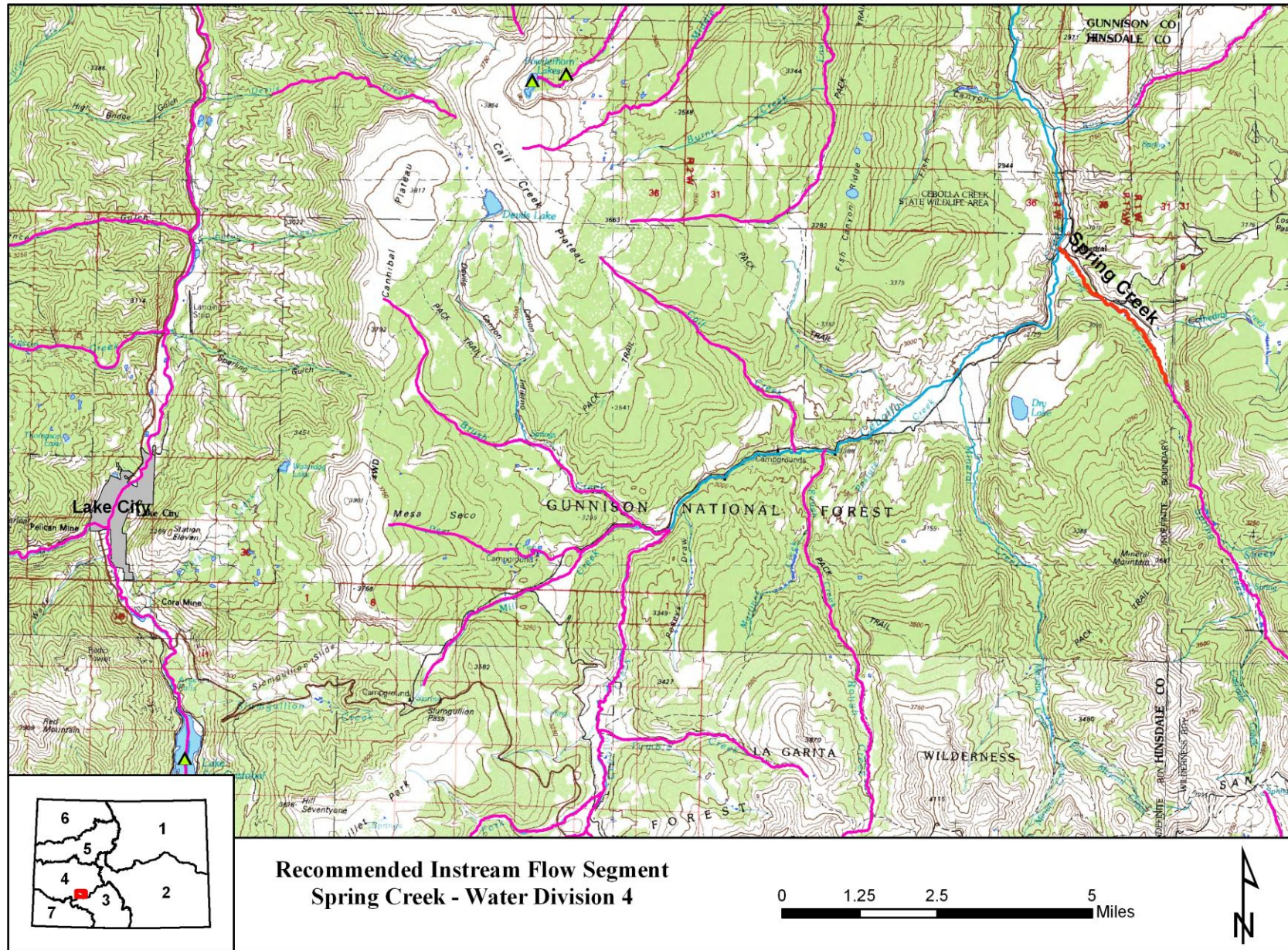
Counties: Hinsdale

Length: 3.25 miles

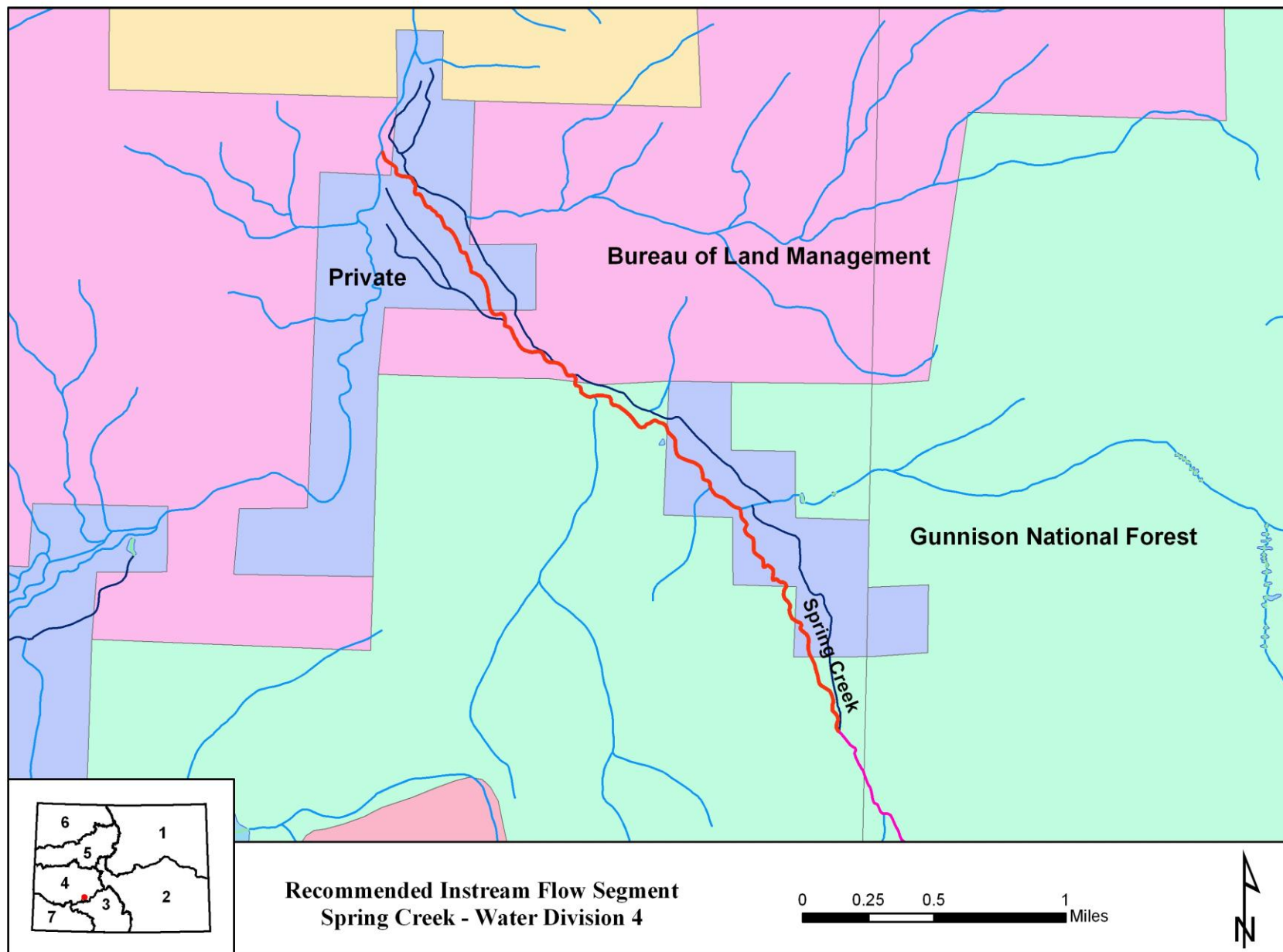
USGS Quad(s): Mineral Mountain

Flow Recommendation: 5.0 cfs (April 1 – September 30)
3.3 cfs (October 1 – November 15)
2.0 cfs (November 16 – March 31)

Vicinity Map



Land Use Map



Topographic and Water Rights Map

