



COLORADO

**Colorado Water
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Kevin Houck, Section Chief, Watershed Protection and Flood Mitigation Section
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DATE: November 15-16, 2017 Board Meeting

AGENDA ITEM: 7a. 2018 Projects Bill
Non-Reimbursable Project Investments
(10) Chatfield Downstream Channel Improvement Project - Continuation

Introduction

Senate Bill 79-537 the CWCB appropriated \$2.5M in state funds that was matched with federal funds for an estimated \$4.05M to carry out Chatfield Downstream Channel Improvement Project. The funds were used to purchase land parcels in the river and on the banks to about 100 feet out of banks of the South Platte River. We also partnered on the Corps designed and built flood control features. Predominantly the river was straighten and lined with rip rap to accommodate the max 5,000 CFS release out of Chatfield. The total reach owned by the CWCB is four miles of river features from Mineral Avenue to the confluence of Bear Creek.

This federally constructed and now a state owned flood control channel project that was turned over to the CWCB in 1990. It is a State owned liability and asset tied to the flood operations at Chatfield. The Project is annually inspected by the Flood Readiness Branch of the Corps of Engineers. Inspection reports are generated that create maintenance and repair obligations for the CWCB. Failure to complete inspection items does not help maintain good standing in public works inspection program and in time could impact floodplain maps for Littleton, Englewood, and Sheridan. This also has implications to our relationship with the Corps around the Reservoir Reallocation Project. There are authorizations for expenditures for Chatfield but they are for purchasing storage space and implementation of the Reservoir Reallocation Project. This request is specific to maintaining the channel below the dam and is separate.

The funding in this original 1979 Chatfield authorization has dwindled down to about \$80,000 and there was \$50,000 in contracted vegetation removal projects for 2017 leaving the fund balance at \$30,000. Funding in this account is used by staff to honor contractual obligations with the Corps for river maintenance below the dam. Given the investment in the Chatfield Reallocation Project it is important to continue to remove vegetation and seek a minimally satisfactory rating in the public works inspection program.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board request the General Assembly to appropriate \$200,000 from the Construction Fund to the Department of Natural Resources for use by the CWCB for the continuation of the Chatfield Downstream Channel Improvement Project.





The Chatfield Downstream Channel Improvement Project is a Construction Fund Authorization back from 1979. The Corps and the CWCB each put in \$2.5M to purchase land, straighten the South Platte River and line the river with rip rap up to accommodate a max 5,000 CFS release out of Chatfield. The project was constructed and finished in 1990. An O&M manual officially turned over the Project to the CWCB. It is now a state owned flood control project.

Two agreements were signed by the Corps and CWCB in 1977 and 1980 for this Project. The second agreement gives the Corps the right to inspect the flood project yearly and write public works inspection reports. The annual public works inspection reports are graded as satisfactory, minimally satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. The goal is to maintain a minimally satisfactory rating to not impact floodplain maps for Sheridan, Englewood, and Littleton by addressing inspection report items. There also could be impacts to our relations with the Corps around the Chatfield Reservoir Reallocation Project if ratings are unsatisfactory for several years.

The CWCB seeks to have stable river banks and keep enough vegetation out of the channel close to the water level as to not impede flood conveyance. There has been significant funding spent in this reach that is Mineral Avenue to Hampden Avenue by various interests in recent years. Projects of the South Platte Working Group have substantially improved the river corridor for recreation and aesthetics. River Run alone was a \$5M river surfing wave and winner of a GoCo Starburst award for use of public funds. The communities in this reach have engaged values of the Water Plan and seek to balance flood control, water supply, environmental and recreation objectives. Together as the South Platte Working group we are doing these projects with many completed and many more planned. The pictures at right show before and after vegetation removal work that was completed in 2007. The goal here is to do a little work every year, keep a natural as possible looking river, but also control the in-river vegetation on the sand bars and on the banks below the rip rap.

When it comes to flood control project maintenance and repair activities there is not appropriate external grant program for this project. The staff request is for some funding to honor contractual obligations with the Corps of Engineers. Based on the significant investment the CWCB has made at the reservoir it makes sense to

maintain a minimally satisfactory rating through the Army Corps of Engineers.



Pictured left is River Run constructed in August 2016. It is a CWCB, UDFCD, and South Platte Working Group legacy project. It is Denver's first free standing river surfing wave. River Run is a winner of the GoCo Starburst award for excellent use of public Scratch lottery funds.

There are many wonderful projects coming on line in the South Platte in this reach that seek to balance the competing values. The CWCB role in these projects is partnership in recreation and environmental projects. But contractually we must provide leadership, implementation, and partnership with the Corps of Engineers for the flood control project aspect of this river reach.



PROJECT DETAILS

Project Cost: \$275,000 (matching will be sought from UDFCD)

NRI Funding Request: \$200,000

Funding Source: Construction Fund

Project Type: Data and Modeling Upgrades

Type of Grantee: Funding for Partnerships

LOCATION

Benefits: South Platte Basin

Water Source: Various

Drainage Basin: All Basins