

Stream Management Plan Grantee Project Summary

Eagle River Community Water Plan

Geographic Description:

Colorado River Basin:
Eagle River Watershed

Size:

970 square miles

Project Homepage:

www.erwc.org/research/ercwp/

Primary Contact:

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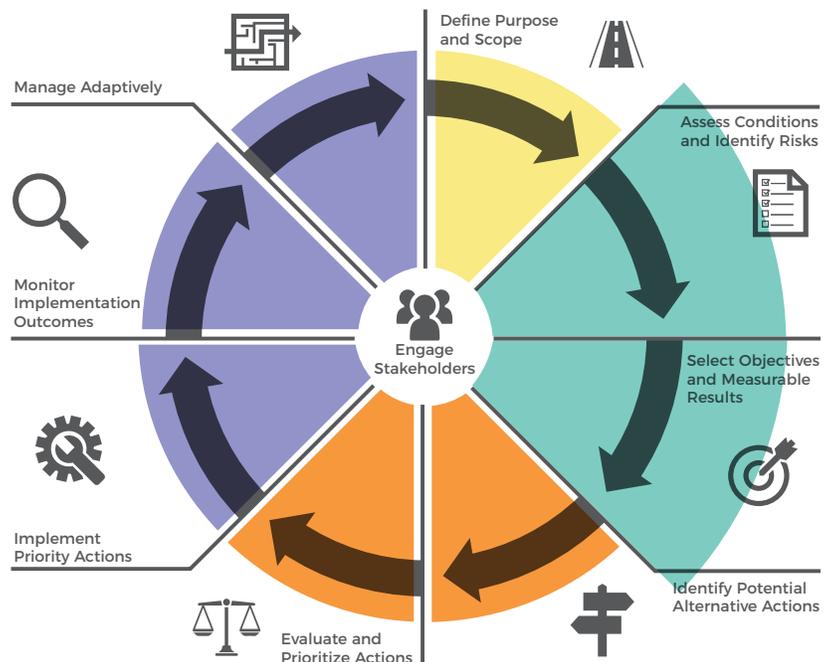
Project Timeline



Stakeholder Groups Involved in Planning Process

●	Agricultural producers
	Riparian landowners
●	Aquatic and riparian science
●	Environmental advocacy
●	Utilities or other water management
●	Recreation & tourism
●	Local government & land use planners
●	State and federal agencies

Current Planning Phase



Project Goals

- Complete assessment of ecosystem condition, future flow needs, and recreational use preferences
- Agree upon planning goals to meet environmental and recreational gaps at a reach level
- Identify and implement projects and processes that may help meet the diversity of use needs present in the basin
- Implement a community engagement plan to elevate understanding of river health

Overview

Geography:

The Eagle River watershed covers a drainage area of approximately 970 square miles and has an average annual water discharge (water yield) of 415,000 acre-feet. Approximately 98% of the watershed land area is located in Eagle County. About 75% percent of the land in the watershed is public land managed by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

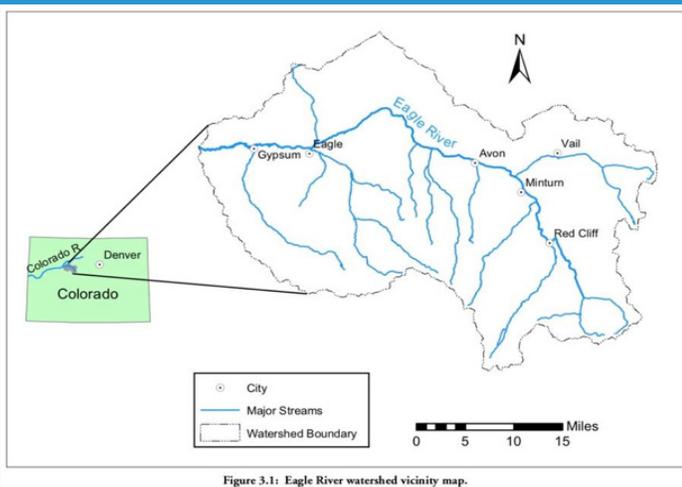


Figure 3.1: Eagle River watershed vicinity map.

Users:

Water is removed from the natural channels of the Eagle River in varying amounts at different times of the year to support agriculture, domestic uses, and recreation (e.g., snowmaking)—as

well as through a transbasin diversion. The water left in natural channels supports fishing, boating, and other recreational uses, which contribute to the quality of local lifestyles and the success of the local economy, requiring healthy aquatic ecosystems and some semblance of natural flow regimes in stream channels throughout the year.

Need for planning:

The Eagle River Watershed Council has initiated the Eagle River Community Water Plan to develop proactive water management recommendations that anticipate changes to local hydrology and water demand. Some of the threats to water supply in the Eagle River watershed include:

- Population growth and increasing municipal demand for water in Eagle County
- Climate change
- Projects related to the Eagle River MOU, an intergovernmental agreement for developing municipal water supplies in the upper Eagle River watershed.

Approach

In the fall of 2017, Eagle River Watershed Council (ERWC) partnered with River Network to begin engaging stakeholders to build support for an integrated water management plan for the watershed and better understand their concerns, constraints and individual objectives. With funding from CWCB and others, ERWC partnered with Peak Facilitation (stakeholder process consultant) and Lotic Hydrological (technical consultant) to work with stakeholders to further refine the scope of work with local stakeholders. ERWC drew heavily upon the Colorado Basin Integrated Water Management Framework to design its process.



Key stakeholders involved in the Eagle River Community Water Plan include major water rights owners, environmental interest groups, recreational user groups, agricultural user groups, local government, and state/federal agencies. The Advisory Committee's role will be to provide input on the goals, technical methodologies, and identification of high-priority planning issues and project/management options. The Advisory Committee supported ERWC in

developing a Community Engagement plan, outlining specific expectations and timelines for public outreach and stakeholder meetings.

After the scope of work was finalized in June 2018, Lotic Hydrological began working with the advisory group to assess conditions and identify risks, including the following subtasks:

- Review existing data and Information
- Characterize hydrological regimes
- Classify fluvial geomorphological forms and processes
- Characterize water quality
- Characterize ecological integrity
- Characterize ecosystem services delivery
- Develop conceptual models

Drawing upon the conceptual models, Lotic will begin working with stakeholders to prioritize river reaches, set management objectives, and identify potential alternative management scenarios to achieve local goals.

Upon completion of the assessments, Peak Facilitation will assemble the stakeholders with the greatest ability to control outcomes and implement actions to collaboratively prioritize and implement projects.

Variables and Inventory Assessment Level

Depending on the purpose and scope determined by local stakeholders, assessments employ different methodologies to evaluate a suite of specific parameters related to stream health and ecosystem goods and services. The comprehensiveness of the data is will vary depending on what is needed to answer core questions addressed by the SMP, ranging from less precise (general, often anecdotal or third-party information) to more precise (data-driven, quantitative metrics). The Eagle River Community Water Plan is assessing the following variables to evaluate watershed health and delivery of ecosystem services.

	Variable	Assessment Level
Ecological Integrity:		
●	Existing Flow Regime	More Precise
●	Future Flow Regime	Moderate
●	Sediment Regime	Less Precise
●	Water Quality	More Precise
●	Network Connectivity	Moderate
●	Floodplain Hydrology	Moderate
●	Riparian Vegetation	Moderate
●	Stream Corridor Dynamics	Moderate
●	Structural Complexity	Moderate
●	Aquatic Biota	Moderate
Regulating and Maintenance:		
●	Flood Regulation	More Precise
●	Groundwater Recharge	Less Precise
●	Erosion Control	Less Precise
●	Pest Regulation	Less Precise
●	Regulatory Compliance	More Precise
Provisioning:		
●	Agricultural Production	More Precise
●	Drinking Water Supply	More Precise
	Industrial Processing	
	Hydropower Production	
Cultural:		
●	Aesthetics and Intrinsic Values	Moderate
●	Symbolic/Emblematic Species	Moderate
●	Boating Recreation	More Precise
●	Angling Recreation	Moderate

Budget

Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match
CWCB Watershed Restoration Fund	\$181,445 cash
Water Supply Reserve Fund Colorado Basin Account	\$75,000 cash
Homestake Water Project Partners	\$20,000 cash
Eagle Park Reservoir Company	\$15,000 cash, \$15,000 in-kind
Vail Resorts	\$15,000 cash
Colorado River District	\$11,000 cash
Climax Mine	\$10,000 cash
Eagle County	\$10,000 cash
Town of Vail	\$10,000 cash
Town of Avon	\$10,000 cash
Town of Gypsum	\$5,000 cash
Town of Minturn	\$500 cash
Eagle River Watershed Council	\$12,000 in-kind
Total	\$389,945

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