

# Stream Management Plan Grantee Project Summary

## Blue River Integrated Water Management Plan (Phase I)

### Geographic Description:

Colorado River Basin:  
Blue River

### Size:

65 river miles

### Project Homepage:

<https://blueriverwatershed.org>

### Primary Contact:

Richard Van Gytenbeek  
Trout Unlimited  
r.vangytenbeek@tu.org

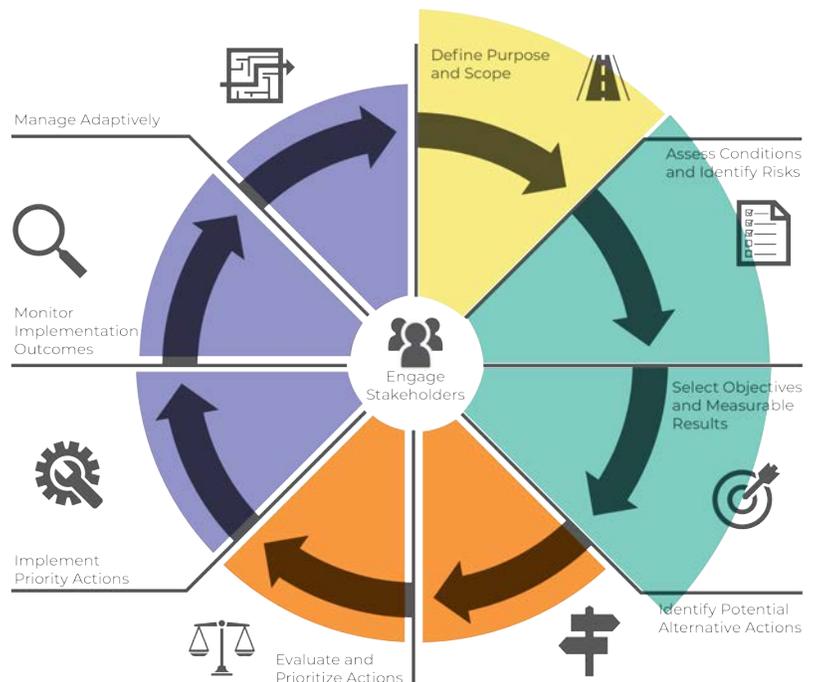
### Project Timeline



### Stakeholder Groups Involved in Planning Process

●	Agricultural producers
●	Riparian landowners
●	Aquatic and riparian science
●	Environmental advocacy
●	Water and sewer utilities (local and Front Range)
●	Recreation & tourism
●	Local government & land use planners
●	Industry & land development
●	Local, state and federal government agencies

### Current Planning Phase



## Project Goals

- To better understand the potential causes of the declining fishery and determine whether and how the fishery can be improved
- To engage a diverse range of stakeholders through a community-driven process
- To compile and analyze existing data, research and studies
- To formulate goals and objectives, identify “real time” projects and innovative water management techniques that will form the foundation for Phase Two, which ultimately is intended to guide future water management decisions

## Overview

### Geography:

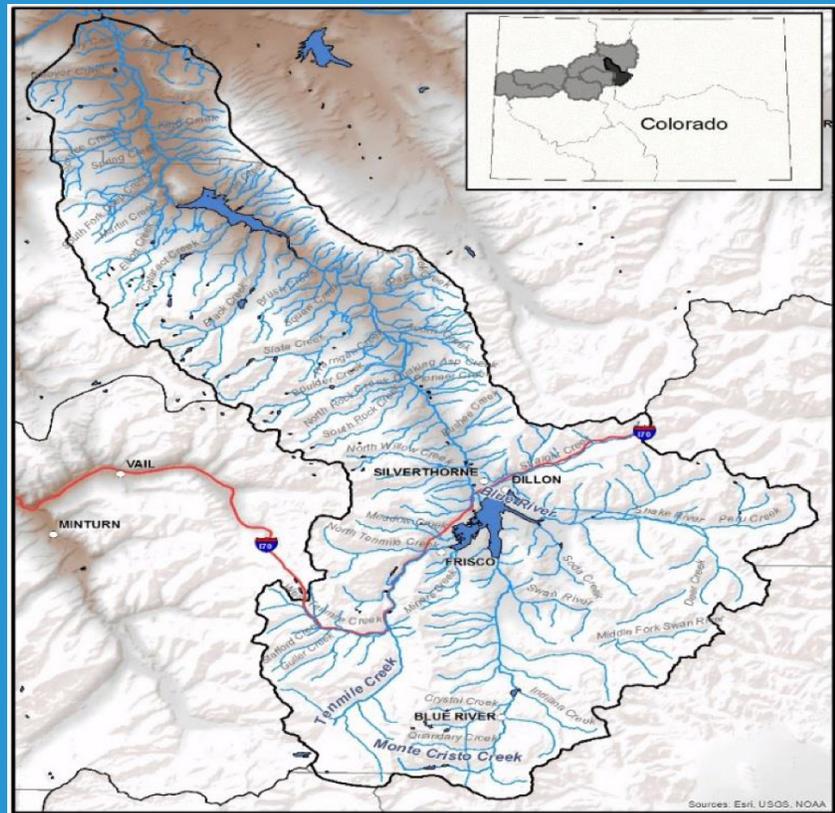
The Blue River is in the central Rocky Mountains, west of the Continental Divide. It drains an area of about 680 square miles covering all of Summit County and portions of Grand and Lake counties. The watershed drains northward from Quandary Peak to the Blue River’s confluence with the Colorado River south of Kremmling.

### Need for planning:

The Blue River Basin currently supplies consumptive uses, enables recreation and sustains a high mountain riverine environment. To maintain this balance, consumptive and non-consumptive water users must now join forces and collaboratively plan for the Blue River Basin’s future.

The Blue River Trout Fishery is in decline. That decline resulted in the recent removal of “Gold Medal Fishery” status by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. A group of stakeholders, the Blue River Enhancement Workgroup (BREW), formed to assess the decline but hasn’t yet determined the cause. This integrated water management plan (IWMP) will define the causes of the declining fishery or provide the most probable factors as well as possible remedies.

In addition, the IWMP aims to enable consumptive and non-consumptive water users to understand and quantify current and future use and integrate those uses for the maximum benefit of all users while protecting the existing water resource.



## Approach

---

Trout Unlimited and the Blue River Watershed group are working together on this basin-wide IWMP and collectively staffing the work. The plan will be completed in two phases—Phase One is currently underway and will be comprised of four main tasks. Those tasks include:

### **1. Stakeholder outreach and the formation of an advisory team:**

The advisory committee will guide and inform the identification of concerns and important issues, goals and objectives, analyses and studies, framework for long-term monitoring and the development of a community driven plan. In addition to the advisory committee, three community outreach meetings will be held in the late-summer and fall of 2019 to gather input from additional stakeholders and the wider public.

**2. Determination of the causes of the declining fishery:** While some studies have already been conducted prior to IWMP work, many studies

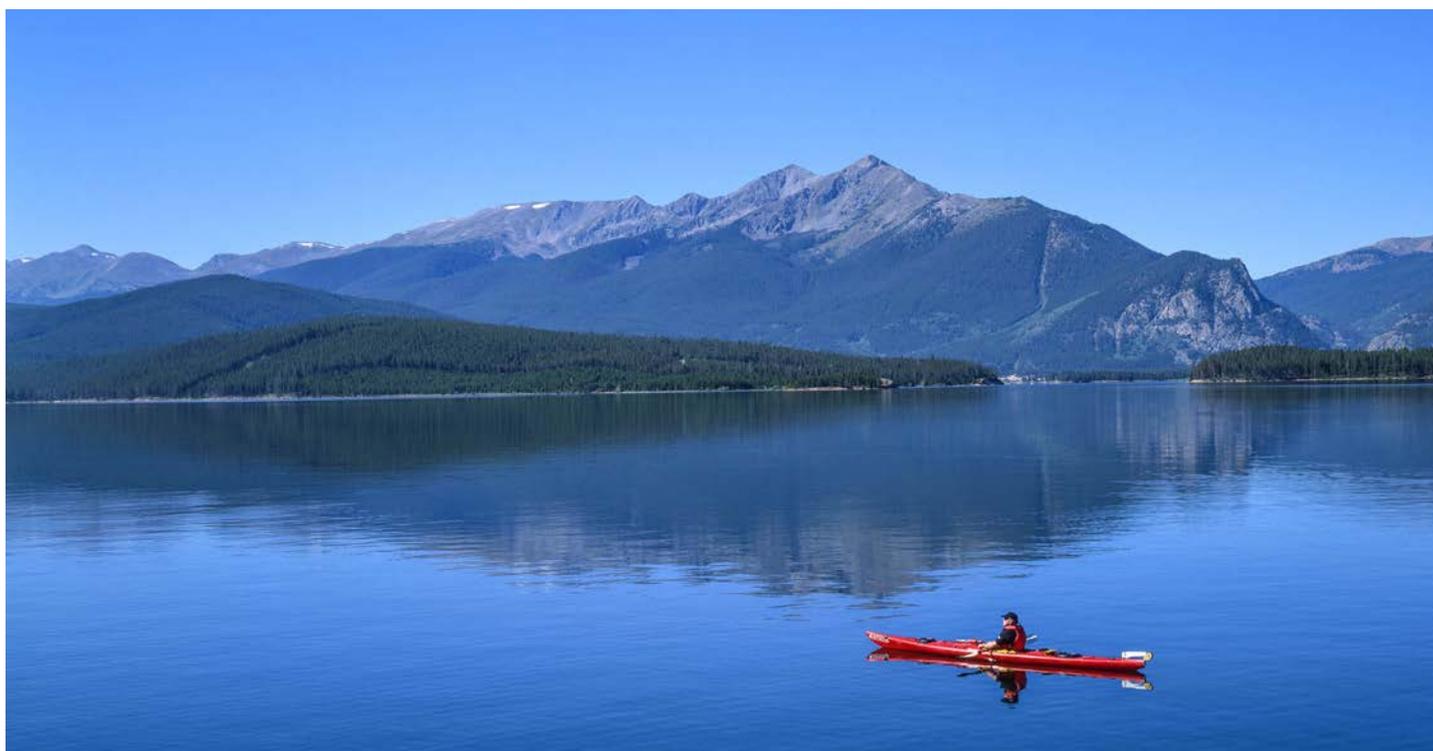
will be continued for multiple years to guide the efforts of the Blue River Enhancement Workgroup and the implementation of a plan to mitigate the causes of the declining fishery.

### **3. Compilation and analysis of existing data-information-studies:**

Data collection and review efforts will include collecting and reviewing existing available studies, restoration efforts, data, and anecdotal information. It will also mean summarizing water operations and diversions for local and major water users, creating an inventory of recreational uses, meeting with producers and assessing use and conditions of agricultural irrigation infrastructure, and identifying critical needs for additional assessments.

### **4. The development of “next steps” focusing on launching the Blue River IWMP-Phase Two goals and objectives:**

These goals and objectives will likely include multi-use projects and innovative water management techniques.



## Budget

Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match
CWCB Watershed Restoration Fund	\$126,819 cash
CWCB Colorado Water Plan Eng./Innov.	\$16,000 cash
CWCB Colorado Water Plan Env./Rec.	\$30,000 cash
CWCB CO Basin Roundtable WSRF Basin Funds	\$17,110 cash
Town of Silverthorne	\$15,000 cash
Blue Valley Ranch	\$12,000 cash
Summit County	\$2,500 cash
Summit County Water Quality Committee	\$2,500 cash
Trout Unlimited-Blue River Watershed Group staff time for administration and outreach	\$31,710 in-kind
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$253,639</b>



Photo credits by page: (1) Adam Baker, Creative Commons; (2) Richard Strauss (3,4) John Fielder