

9. Water Quality Management Associations and Watershed-Based Groups

This section discusses wastewater operating agencies, management agencies/associations, and watershed groups/organizations in the Upper South Platte and South Platte Watersheds.

9.1. Wastewater Operating Agencies

The following organizations are recognized as wastewater operating agencies within the South Platte/Upper South Platte Watershed. These agencies are responsible for controlling all aspects of the collection, treatment, and discharge of sewage or any industrial concerns within their company's sphere of operation. Each of these operating agencies is discussed in further detail in Section 6.3, South Platte and Upper South Platte Point Source Dischargers.

- Alma Sanitation District/Town of Alma
- Fairplay Sanitation District/Town of Fairplay
- Florissant Water and Sanitation District
- Bailey Water and Sanitation District
- Will-O-Wisp
- City of Woodland Park

9.2. Management Agencies/Associations

A management agency currently does not exist but is recommended to be formed for the South Platte/Upper South Platte Watershed. The management agency should cover the boundaries of the South Platte/Upper South Platte within Park and Teller counties.

9.2.1. Teller and Park Counties

Teller and Park counties have their own individual environmental health departments that process septic system permits and regulate water quality, solid waste, and other environmental health concerns.

9.2.2. Chatfield Basin Authority

The Chatfield Basin Authority is the water quality management agency for Chatfield Basin. The Chatfield Reservoir watershed, although not located in Park County, is downstream of the Upper South Platte River Watershed. The authority developed a phosphorus load allocation system for wastewater treatment plants and nonpoint sources within the Chatfield basin.

Sources of phosphorus upstream of Strontia Springs Reservoir were identified as base-load or background sources and are included in this allocation. As stated in the Chatfield Reservoir Control Regulation (Regulation #73, effective 3/30/2009), of the total annual 59,000-pound phosphorus load for Chatfield Reservoir, the Upper South Platte River Watershed is allocated a total of 17,930 pounds per year. This allocation accounts for all point and nonpoint sources combined, including the 88 pounds per year that originates in Summit County and is discharged into the Roberts Tunnel.

9.3. Watershed Groups/Organizations

9.3.1. Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP)

The Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP) was formed in 1998 to serve as a forum for stakeholder discussions and recommendations regarding water quality and aquatic habitat issues in the watershed. CUSP is active in water quality concerns and protection strategies but has only an advisory role with no regulatory authority.

The mission of the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP) is to protect the water quality and environmental health of the Upper South Platte Watershed, through the cooperative efforts of watershed stakeholders, with emphasis on community values and economic sustainability.

CUSP was formed in 1998 as a response to the Buffalo Creek fire and the devastating flooding that followed. CUSP works with federal, state, non-profit and private partners to provide essential services such as project planning, implementation and monitoring within the watershed.

CUSP is active in water quality concerns and protection strategies but has only an advisory role with no regulatory authority. CUSP has been involved in coordinating post fire recovery efforts in areas such as the 2002 Hayman Fire, the 2012 Waldo Canyon Fire and other smaller fires throughout the watershed. CUSP has received the prestigious National Fire Plan 2003 Award for their work and have been recognized for “excellence in rehabilitation and restoration as well as their excellence in community assistance.” As of 2020, CUSP has 14 full time employees and shares several employees with Coalitions and Collaboratives.

CUSP advisory Board is comprised of individuals from county governments, nonprofit organizations, water conservancy districts, city utility agencies and interested private individuals with no affiliation. The main function of CUSP, as outlined in their Memorandum of

Understanding, is to:

1. Protect water quality in the Upper South Platte River and its tributaries to support beneficial uses, which could include drinking water supply and cold-water fisheries
2. Sustain the productivity and diversity of the ecological systems within the watershed
3. Address water quality impacts related to water quantity management
4. Manage nonpoint pollutant sources including grazing, forestry, transportation corridors, mining, erosion, and septic systems
5. Minimize impacts of disastrous events, such as the Buffalo Creek Fire

CUSP updated its 10-year strategic plan in 2016. CUSP crews are involved in pre-fire forestry mitigation, post fire recovery, river/stream restoration, water quality monitoring, sediment control projects, trail work, environmental education, invasive species control and eradication and forest ecological restoration. More information can be found at: www.cusp.ws

9.4. Other Groups

9.4.1. Water Conservancy Districts

The Headwaters Authority of the South Platte now exists as a joint organization between CCWCD and USPWCD. Their website can be found at: <http://haspwater.com/> The Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District (USPWCD) and the Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District (CCWCD) are water districts servicing Park County and portions of Teller, Douglas, Jefferson and Clear Creek counties. The two districts joined together to form the Headwater Authority of the South Platte (HASP). HASP operates a water rights enterprise through which it makes augmentation water available for sale to customers throughout the Districts' service areas. HASP has two programs - a current water sales program and the Blanket Augmentation Plan.