



COLORADO

**Colorado Water
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

Basin Education Action Plan

Combined South Platte and Metro Roundtables

- **Background:** To inform the Colorado Water Plan the South Platte and Metro Roundtables chose to combine their efforts to create a South Platte Basin Implementation Plan (SPBIP) and to carry out Public Education Participation and Outreach (PEPO) efforts in accordance with a combined Education Action Plan (EAP). The combined South Platte and Metro Roundtables Education Action Plan proposes pooling their PEPO budgets for a total of \$50,000. In creating this Scope of Work it is “(understood) that the PEPO Liaison’s duty is first and foremost to educate the roundtable and assist the flow of information between the roundtable, the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) and the CWCB. Additionally, the PEPO liaison coordinates with the basin roundtable to develop potential communications strategies, plans and programs that support outreach and education in the basin.” (Public Education, Participation and Outreach (PEPO) Liaison Scope of Work (Rec’d 2/23/21 from Sam Stein, Program Manager, Water Supply Planning, CWCB)

1. Basin Educational Vision/Goals:

- Please include how Basin EAP will help achieve goals in the CO Water Plan to inform/educate Coloradans?
- How many people do you estimate your engagement efforts will reach?

The South Platte basin is home to nearly 3.5 million residents. This number is projected to reach 6 million by 2050. The economic activity within the South Platte Basin contributes significantly to Colorado’s GDP. We are home to Colorado State University, University of Colorado, Metropolitan State University, Colorado School of Mines, Colorado College and the Colorado Community College system. Numerous cultural and non-governmental organizations including nature, history and science museums, art and culture venues, professional associations and recreational resources provide opportunities to reach thousands of interested citizens. Northern Water, Denver Water, Aurora Water and other local municipal water providers have newsletter, outreach programs, and press releases to inform a large segment of Coloradans and visitors. We will coordinate with existing organizations to provide and promote a calendar of opportunities to reach an estimated 80,000 people in 2022/2023 using a variety of existing resources:

www.southplattebasin.com

Colorado Watershed Assembly Organizational Network and Inflow Newsletter

[A River Shaped by Use](#) (video promotion)

Water '22 Support

Water Education Colorado Publications

Colorado Foundation for Agriculture Publications

Colorado Water Wise

Poudre River Learning Center

South Platte River Urban Waters Partnership

South Platte Basin Implementation Fact Sheet

Republican River Fact Sheet

South Platte River Basin Water Facts

South Platte Basin Bandanna

Colorado Farm Show

Poudre Runs Through It

South Platte Forum

Upper South Platte Watershed Association (association of northern front range Conservation Districts)

Other trade and educational organizations, trade shows, workshops and classroom invitations

Please note that in 2021 social media messages were crafted (LLYLI) and scheduled resulting in a small increase in Facebook and Instagram following. WSRF grant administration for the Metro RT was added to the website resulting in a 300% increase in website traffic. WSRF grant application management is not in place for the South Platte RT. Going forward we would suggest a re-evaluation of social media and website promotions. We will continue to be patient and keep the content flowing.

We have updated the website to a new platform which will allow for easier updates.

The video [A River Shaped by Use](#) is complete and has been approved by both Roundtables and the CWCB. We will continue to promote the video through our community networks.

2. How is the Basin structured to implement the EAP?

- How will programs be assessed/monitored?
- What are the key metrics that you use to track engagement?

As of June 1, 2023 the Education Committee of the South Platte and Metro Roundtables is made up of the following individuals:

Casey Davenhill, Education Liaison, Metro Roundtable

Hope Bartlett, Bob Peters and Lauren Pulver of the Metro Roundtable as well as Bruce Gerk, Joel Schneekloth Lynda James, Garrett Varra and Joe Frank, of the South Platte Roundtable.

The Education Committee meets regularly to review progress on the EAP and to provide guidance and feedback on PEPO efforts. The Education Liaison is part of the Executive Committee to coordinate with the Roundtable meeting agenda setting process and inform Roundtable discussion. The South Platte and Metro Basin Roundtables will facilitate discussions within and between Basins on water management and to encourage locally driven collaborative solutions to supply challenges.

Implementation of the EAP relies on identifying a clear message. Meetings held over the past four years have led to agreement on the message that, in order to address the current and future water supply needs in the South Platte Basin, four key elements of the Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) need to be advanced:

- 1) a high success rate of currently planned identified projects and processes (IPPs) in the basin,
- 2) the ongoing leadership and advancement of conservation and reuse to efficiently use current and future water supplies in the basin,
- 3) the development of Alternative Transfer Methods (ATMs) as an alternative to the permanent purchase and dry up of irrigated agriculture in the basin, and
- 4) the continued investigation, preservation and development of new Colorado River Basin supplies.

Programs will be created to promote those four key elements and will be monitored to assess their performance.

Key metrics will include attendance and participation at events, meetings and field trips. We will also enhance our website analytics to determine the volume, duration and areas of interest of visitors to www.southplattebasin.com.

The Education Liaison is also an active member of the Water Supply Reserve Fund Needs Committee (WSRF). The WSRF Guidelines and process information are updated regularly and made available on the website www.southplattebasin.com. By engaging with the WSRF Needs Committee the Liaison is able to help the WSRF Coordinator, the Roundtable Chair and CWCB to ensure all grant needs are understood. In 2021 we completed the project to locate and identify previously funded WSRF projects on the website with approximate locations noted on an accurate map of the South Platte Basin. Project reports are linked to the map as Project Reports are available.

3. Critical issues currently in the basin that need to be addressed over the EAP planning period?

- Where possible, please reference your BIP and/or specific IPPs.
- How would you design your programs to target these issues?

The Basin Implementation Plan Update identified 'Challenges' the South Platte Basin faces in the future: Primary challenges center around water scarcity due to growth, stressing already over-allocated water resources.

Looking forward it is important to stress achievements and success stories that have been accomplished since the Roundtables were created by HOUSE BILL 05-1177 in 2005.


The BIP Update identified 12 Goals, with associated objectives, which will guide our PEPO strategy going forward.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Key projects and efforts demonstrate successes in meeting basin goals and water needs:

- Aquifer Storage and Recovery
- Charlie Meyers State Wildlife Area Habitat Enhancement Project
- Chatfield Reservoir Reallocation
- Direct Potable Reuse Demonstration
- Environmental Water Needs and Concerns
- Protecting the Future of Agriculture
- Greeley Municipal Water Conservation
- Protection and Enhancement of Forest and Watershed Health
- Resource Central – Conservation Made Easy
- South Platte Regional Opportunities Water Group Feasibility Study
- Stakeholder Understanding in Water Supply Planning

The basin has **GOALS** centered around:

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- ✓ Encouraging project implementation
 - ✓ Maximizing development of native supplies while supporting cooperative outside supply options
 - ✓ Maintaining and improving municipal and industrial conservation and efficiency
 - ✓ Maintaining and promoting reuse
 - ✓ Protecting irrigated agriculture
 - ✓ Protecting and enhancing watershed function and environmental and recreational attributes
 - ✓ Using scenario planning to manage uncertainty of future water needs
 - ✓ Broadening communications, outreach, and education
 - ✓ Improving efficiency and effectiveness of water project permitting

Goals identified in the BIP update are:

Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) has engaged Water Education Colorado (WECO) to develop Water '22, an awareness project with statewide application. Our Education Liaison has worked closely with WECO on Water '22 to develop consistent and locally relevant messaging reflecting the diversity of interests in the northern front range and northeastern Colorado.

Further, the Metro and South Platte Basin Roundtable PEPO Committees endorse the concept that coordination among all Basin Roundtable PEPO Liaisons can improve outcomes for the entire state and to "...promote well-informed community discourse and decision making regarding balanced water solutions."¹

4. Identify the audience the EAP will be targeting:

Our communications strategy has identified these categories of stakeholders as our principal targeted audiences:

Academic – Post-secondary educators and students at institutions listed in Section 1.

Agriculture – Trade organizations, Conservation Districts FFA, CFA and CAWA

Environment and Recreation – County Recreation and Open Space districts, Ducks Unlimited, Elk Foundation, Trout Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Poudre Learning Center

Roundtables – Members, web presence, CWCB and PEPO liaison

¹South Platte Regional Water Development Concept Pre-Feasibility Study, Section 1)h.

It is worth repeating that the Metro and South Platte Basin is home to Northern Water, Denver Water, Aurora Water and other significant water suppliers who have their own outreach efforts which could leverage the Basin Implementation Plan and Colorado Water Plan messages. We expect the SWEAP effort to result in specific messages which can be shared with the many community organizations that engage the public on a regular basis.

5. The PEPO Budget is organized into the following categories

- Committee coordination, organization, facilitation, and documentation
- Communication including website maintenance/design and social media
- Outreach with written materials and participation with community events
- Administration and reporting

Please see 'Background' section of the EAP which identifies additional funding for this EAP

Revised 04/28/23