



October 20, 2023

Pueblo County Commissioners
215 W. 10th Street
Pueblo, CO 81003

Re: Highway 47 Project

Greetings Commissioners,

As you are aware, because of the spring and summer rains and debris flows, the Highway 47 project in Pueblo sustained a significant amount of damage. Several meetings have been held to discuss this matter with representatives from the Fountain Creek Watershed District (including District staff and Board members), the Monetary Mitigation Fund Advisory Committee, Pueblo County Commissioners, Pueblo Board of Water Works, City of Pueblo, Colorado Springs Utilities, Colorado Department of Transportation, and others.

Based on these discussions, the District has been seeking potential repair funding outside of the Monetary Mitigation Fund. As part of this effort, the District has met with the Army Corps of Engineers, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pueblo County, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, Colorado Department of Transportation, and the Pueblo Board of Water Works. Unfortunately, discussions with these potential partner agencies have not resulted in identifying possible alternative funding sources.

In addition to those efforts, the Watershed District also conducted an alternatives analysis of potential solutions for the repairs to protect the over \$6 million investment of the original Highway 47 project. The Monetary Mitigation Fund Advisory Committee received a presentation on the alternatives analysis and has recommended the District pursue Alternative 5, which entails repairing the damage to the Highway 47 project while constructing the Eagleridge project immediately upstream in 2023-24. This approach would allow for efficiency and cost savings and would be an opportunity for a more complete stabilization of the entire stretch of Fountain Creek through the two adjacent project areas. The estimated cost for the Alternative 5 repairs is \$2.7 million, which would increase the Eagleridge approved project cost from \$4.3 million to \$7 million.

The District currently does not have dedicated funds for emergency repairs or project maintenance; however, we are working to establish a program beginning in 2024 to help meet these needs. Unfortunately, that funding source will not be available to implement repairs in a timely manner to protect the initial investment of the Highway 47 project.

Based on the need to repair the Highway 47 project as soon as possible, the cost-savings opportunity of coordinating those repairs with the Eagleridge project, and the inability to identify alternative funding sources, the Watershed District requests the Pueblo Board of County Commissioners provide its consent to the use of \$2.7 million of Monetary Mitigation Funds for this additional work on the Highway 47 project. This is the most responsible and prudent path forward and best helps protect Fountain Creek in Pueblo.

I'm happy to discuss this further if you have questions. Many thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alli Schuch, Executive Director
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