

Fountain Creek ILF Program – Standing Meeting Notes

Date: 06/02/2026

Location: Microsoft Teams

Time: 11:00 AM

Attendees:

- Lucy Harrington, GEI Consultants
- Shai Kamin, GEI Consultants
- Alli Schuch, Fountain Creek Watershed District
- Mark Shea, Colorado Springs Utilities
- Macie Wagner, Fountain Creek Watershed District (River Corps)
- Stephane Atencio, Fountain Creek Watershed District General Counsel
- Will Vogl, El Paso County Conservation District
- Wendy Petit, Pueblo County
- Erin Powers, City of Colorado Springs
- Steve Rodriguez, Fountain Creek Watershed District
- Terry Hart, FCWD Board Member
- Jeff Rice, El Paso County Engineering
- Tamara Estes, FCWD Board Member/City of Fountain

Agenda:

1. Introductions of those present (if needed)
 - a. *Introductions of all present were conducted.*
2. Board Meeting Updates
 - a. Steve Atencio noted that he would wait to bring forward additional questions and answers from FCWD board members to a later time; there are several items that are not yet resolved and therefore should wait for discussion until there is movement. Some of these topics include:
 - i. What is the liability for FCWD member organizations
 - ii. Pro forma and credit pricing: specifically, the board is concerned about the Pro forma being developed for a bank vs. an ILF (funding upfront, immediately available).
 1. GEI stated that a new pro forma had been developed to more accurately address this model but we are holding back until we get construction costing information from sub-committee members to be more efficient.
 - iii. He will provide more information after the board meeting in June and can report back to the sub-committee at the July meeting.
3. Construction Costing Update
 - a. Steve R mentioned 6-18 percent increase in construction costs recently.
4. Pro formas

- a. Mark Shea stated that the development of a more specific budget would be helpful to develop to better understand the anticipated “burn rate” of fees over time.
 - i. GEI will develop this and distribute to ILF Sub-committee members to weigh in via their experience.
 - ii. Steve R stated he would like to start spending funds Y1 of collecting to maximize the amount of time available to find land, contractors, and develop a design (all three years for implementation).
 - iii. Lucy (GEI) acknowledged the value of maximizing timelines, however that comes with a risk of starting to spend funds before the FCWD knows exactly how much they have in the bank. Given mitigation requirements/accounting by USACE in the region has been historically inadequate (*per FOIA data collected from USACE in 2025) compared to the rest of the U.S., it is hard to determine currently what that collection rate will be. This is another good reason to re-evaluate credit pricing, budget burn rates, and credit sales rates on a quarterly basis.
- b. Mark stated that he would prefer to not count on pro formas that had to rely on market returns. Would prefer to set credit pricing based on “straight math”.
 - i. GEI will adjust the pro forma accordingly. However, Lucy reminded the sub-committee that we need to be careful not to exceed what the market is willing to pay so that the ILF is not undercut by mitigation bankers or PRM pricing.

5. Project Risk

- a. Concerns were expressed by subcommittee members regarding the risk of doing a project in the main channel of Fountain Creek. It was re-emphasized that projects may occur in the floodplain of Fountain Creek or in smaller tributaries to minimize failure.
 - i. Erin Powers asked for clarification on the purpose of emphasizing wetland restoration versus main channel in terms of a primary goal of the FCWD to provide stabilization.
 - ii. Alli reminded members of the original objectives that were reviewed by the subcommittee and incorporated into the Draft Instrument to broaden the program objectives to provide restoration to the watershed, vs. strictly bank stabilization to the channel.
- b. GEI will reach out to mitigation bankers to see if CapEx costs for design and construction can be shared with the ILF subcommittee.
- c. HOMEWORK: The next meeting will focus in large part on identifying construction costs based on recent experiences of member organizations. GEI will distribute a template worksheet for organizations to update CapEx numbers developed by the subcommittee a year ago. We will review the consolidated spreadsheet at the next subcommittee meeting.
- d. GEI will send out a budgeting sheet to all member organizations to fill in their anticipated burn rate on CapEx.

6. Next steps - *Due to limited time, this agenda item was not discussed.*

- a. Continuing project identification
 - i. Development of project selection criteria
 - ii. Identify willing landowners for initial projects

- iii. Ongoing discussions regarding undecreed ponds
 - b. Future meetings
 - i. Future ILF Subcommittee meetings through December 2026
 - c. Outreach to landowners and partner groups.
 - i. Op Ed in newspaper?
 - d. FCWD dashboard