

# Fountain Creek Watershed

Flood Control & Greenway District

## FACT SHEET

### Recreation & Aesthetics



#### ABOUT THE FOUNTAIN CREEK WATERSHED

A watershed is a region that drains into a river, river system or other common body of water. The Fountain Creek Watershed is located along the central front range of Colorado. It is a 927-square-mile area of land and water that drains to the Arkansas River at Pueblo and, ultimately, to the Gulf of Mexico. The watershed's boundaries are defined by the shape of the land – Palmer Divide to the north, Pikes Peak to the west, and a minor divide 20 miles east of Colorado Springs. Why is watershed protection important? Improving our waterways helps with water quality, stormwater management, flood prevention, creating recreational opportunities and nature habitat for wildlife.

#### WHEN IT COMES TO RECREATION IN OUR WATERSHED, WE HAVE A VISION

Do you enjoy birdwatching or fishing along our region's waterways? Do you hike, run, or ride your bike on greenway trails or along bubbling streams in the foothills? Wherever you go, you probably soak in the beauty. Here in Colorado, outdoor recreation and enjoying the aesthetics of our environment go hand-in-hand.

That's why a key goal of the Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control & Greenway District is to expand recreational opportunities. In fact, the Fountain Creek Vision Task Force developed this vision: "We expect residents and visitors to engage in all types of outdoor recreational activities that foster healthy lifestyles and greater quality of life. ... We envision new open space parks and other green areas throughout the watershed."

In its *Strategic Plan for the Fountain Creek Watershed*, the Task Force brainstormed long-term goals for new recreational opportunities such as:

- Creating new trails along Fountain Creek that link to the Front Range Trail – What started as an idea is well on its way to becoming a reality, thanks to leadership efforts by the Fountain Creek Watershed District.
- Enhancing birding areas along Fountain Creek – Improving wetland/riparian habitat will enhance birding and general wildlife viewing.
- Creating a Fountain Creek Eco-Fit Education Park – This potential demonstration project would showcase innovative creek design practices while offering beauty, education, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities.



## EVERYTHING HINGES ON IMPROVING FOUNTAIN CREEK'S STABILITY & WATER QUALITY

The Fountain Creek Watershed District was created to fund and manage capital improvements necessary to tackle four challenging tasks:

1. Prevent and mitigate flooding, erosion, and sedimentation.
2. Address water quality issues and improve water quality.
3. Restore and preserve wetlands and riparian zones.
4. Develop recreational opportunities including parks, trails, and open spaces.

Notice that that these four tasks go hand-in hand – you can't have one without the other! In fact, the original Task Force recognized that addressing flooding, stability, and water quality are key steps to accomplishing long-term recreational goals. Today, the District Board, Technical Advisory Committee, and Citizens Advisory Group carry these goals forward. However, major flood events could destroy wetlands and newly built trails and facilities.

In its *Strategic Plan*, the Task Force noted: "Recreational plans need to be coordinated with efforts to improve the stability and water quality of Fountain Creek." To accomplish these goals, the Fountain Creek Watershed District collaborates with other agencies, organizations, and citizens to tackle these challenging issues.

These efforts will directly result in a watershed we can all use – and a watershed we can all enjoy from an aesthetics point of view. Tremendous strides have been made toward improving the aesthetics of our watershed including litter clean up during annual Creek Week activities. A few ideas and opportunities to continue enhancing our watershed's aesthetics include better signage, improved trail connectivity, and more pet waste disposal stations. Also, imagine multiple benches sprinkled along our trail systems, inviting you to sit down, watch wildlife, and enjoy our region's aesthetics!

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Would you take advantage of new recreational opportunities in the Fountain Creek Watershed? Most likely, your answer is YES! As a bonus, when we actively engage with our creek system we establish appreciation, understanding, and connection with our waterways. We value our creeks and recognize that they are worth protecting.



## DISTRICT CONTACTS

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** Technical experts who provide recommendations to the Board on public policy or expenditure of funds for the benefit of the watershed and to carry on other investigations. (Learn more: [www.fountain-crk.org/about/technical-advisory-committee](http://www.fountain-crk.org/about/technical-advisory-committee)).

**Citizen's Advisory Group (CAG):** Citizens representing various interests within the watershed who offer advice to the Board on managing the watershed. (Learn more: [www.fountain-crk.org/about/citizens-advisory-group](http://www.fountain-crk.org/about/citizens-advisory-group)).

**District Board:** Representatives from Pueblo County, El Paso County, City of Pueblo, City of Colorado Springs, City of Fountain, and others as defined by statute. (Learn more: [www.fountain-crk.org/about/district-board](http://www.fountain-crk.org/about/district-board)).

For more information about the statutory authority and purpose of the Fountain Creek Watershed, Flood Control and Greenway District, see Colorado Revised Statute 32-11.5. You can also visit [www.Fountain-Crk.org](http://www.Fountain-Crk.org) or call 719-447-5012.