

Lyons Board of Trustees Meeting

21 April 2016

Watershed Board Update

Lyons Watershed Advisory Board (WAB):

1. **Seven members:** Matt Rooney and Sally Collins (co-chairs); David Batts, Monica Berreman, Jeff Crane, Richard “Hoss” Dean, and Scott Shipley.
2. **Formed post flood;** originally the River Task Force
3. **Mission Statement:** To protect, restore and enhance the sustainability, flood resiliency, and ecological integrity of the St Vrain River system in the Lyons watershed planning area¹.
4. Currently involved with the town’s restoration efforts and with St. Vrain River Coalition

Things for the BOT to Consider with River Restoration :

1. River restoration through town is a complex task that has to manage multiple objectives including public safety, recreation (kayaking, tubing, swimming, and fishing), and providing functional habitat.
2. Successful restoration is complex; with different requirements to meet the different objectives. (see Stream Function Pyramid)

Larger Completed Projects:

1. **North Fork St. Vrain- Meadow Park:**

- River restoration complete
- Primarily a recreational focus; restored drop structures which are designed to be fish friendly, but unproven as of yet
- Some ecological elements incorporated, but not very functional (e.g., high root wads)

2. **North St. Vrain from Meadow Park to McConnell Ponds:**

- River restoration just finished
- New overflow channel to relieve high flows near clarifier and WWTP. Will be replanted with riparian vegetation, but no water source. WWTP currently discharges to the St. Vrain directly; could point of discharge be changed to outflow channel?
- Restoration had an ecological focus, but compromised in places for efficiency, safety, and recreation

3. **LWB Recommendations for Completed Projects :**

- Monitor project sites; Partner with LHS River Watch Program
- Partner with groups (e.g. Lyons Leo Club) for volunteer restoration projects (e.g., invertebrate reintroduction)

¹ Lyons watershed planning area is defined as the North and South St. Vrain River watersheds upstream of the Highway 66 bridge.

- Recommend letting the system settle for a couple of years before making improvements (there will be a lot of activity upstream over the next couple of years)
- Use any available money for additional reveg.
- Obtain funds for future work to refine and adjust the project features.

WAB Recommendations for Upcoming Large Projects and Future Considerations

1. South St. Vrain in Bohn Park and Upstream to Old South St. Vrain Road Bridge

- WAB recommends an emphasis on natural/ecological design for a Gold Medal fisheries (economic driver)
- WAB recommends using the Stacey Parcel and other 404 buyouts as possible ways to connect river to the floodplain for flood mitigation
- CPW Fishing is Fun Grant (April 2015) - \$93,000; status unknown; CPW frustrated
- Partner with St. Vrain Coalition for the restoration from Bohn Park upstream to bridge

2. South St. Vrain Upstream of Lyons

- Boulder County conducting 30% restoration design
- Lyons needs to actively participate
- Old mine and Halls Ranch Meadow can provide flood mitigation in the future

3. St. Vrain at Black Bear Hole and CDOT ROW

- CDOT looking to harden bank to protect roadway (e.g., sheet piles with rip-rap)
- Lyons needs to provide input to help guide CDOT's plans (e.g., vegetation vs rip-rap)
- Kayak course; complaints to the WAB that it is incompatible with fishing, has extended the diversion, and is an eye-sore for entry into town.
- Highland ditch has significant public safety and fish issues that need attention

4. North St. Vrain in Apple Valley

- St. Vrain River Coalition is beginning a planning process; Lyons needs to actively participate
- Longmont water line constrains restoration options

Requests to the BOT and Opportunities to do Better:

1. Request to continue outreach and promote education:
 - Continue outreach and educating staff and public about river restoration
 - Public wants better information on river activities; such as seed mixes used, designs that are fish viable/focused, etc.
2. Request to improve water quality and riparian habitat:
 - Change point of discharge for WWTP into new overflow channel for riparian habitat and water quality.
 - Storm drains should include some pretreatment before entering river; such not piping all the way to river, but instead discharge away from the river and letting it flow to the river.
3. Request to adopt more ecological and riverine functions in restoration projects (fear not woody debris and other natural elements)
 - Promote Gold Medal fisheries in Bohn Park and upstream.
4. Request for update on the Fishing for Fun Grant
5. Request for input on decision making process permanent kayak course and compatibility with other uses

6. Request that the Watershed Advisory Board be consulted to provide expertise and input; we are happy to attend meetings with town staff and contractors to provide our perspectives
7. Request continuing a partnership between Town and ditch company to fix Highland ditch