APPLE VALLEY RIVER RESTORATION
COMMUNITY MEETING
12/1/2025, 5:00 – 7:00 PM
Lyons Fire Station

Participants:

The Watershed Center (TWC)
- Deb Hummel
- Kara Brunngraber

Private Property Owners
- Harvey Gates
- Jerry and Sherry Dust
- Ken Singer and Sandy Spellman
- Mike ___

Boulder County POS
- David Hirt
- Carrie Cimo

SVLH Water Conservancy District
- Jenny McCartney

St. Vrain Anglers (and Board Member)
- Tyler Scott

Left Hand Excavating (LHE)
- Scott Aschenbrenner
- Rebecca Orozco

Biohabitats
- Mike Lighthiser
- Caroline Hildebrand
- Sydney Salzwedel

Introduction and Project Summary:

Deb (TWC) presented a slide deck (refer to PDF of the Powerpoint file). It covered the following items:

- Team introductions
- Role of TWC, LHE/design-build team, property owners, and stakeholders
- Project goals and approach (including opportunities/constraints figure)
- Communication principles
- Project process and schedule
  - Opportunities for input and critical junctures, participation agreements, and critical junctures

Regarding the opportunities/constraints figure, there was some confusion on the light blue hatching – Mike L. explained that it indicated existing low areas, not proposed grading areas.
An open discussion followed the presentation, followed by a breakout activity. Discussion topics are listed below.

Discussion items:

- There were questions regarding the frequency of flooding – it was noted by the design/build team that it is uncertain at this point since feasibility needs to be analyzed as part of design, but aiming for about once every couple of years
- Harvey noted a concern with the potential to change the approved floodplain during this project, other neighbors agreed with this concern. It was noted by the attendees that if there is a change in the floodplain then it may affect their insurance coverage and costs. Mike L. explained that the project is restricted from increasing flood levels and will have to go through the County's permitting process, which will include hydraulic modeling.
- Attendees mentioned that the existing area has a lot of wildlife activity and asked what wildlife would benefit from this project. Deb H. talked about off-channel fish habitat.
- Dusts mentioned that they intend to keep their property wild and have no intention of changing that. They were concerned about deer and elk habitat and would like to see it supported/ not negatively impacted. They also mentioned that they were open to revegetation work and seeding as long as it would improve habitat for their valued wildlife.
- Dust's raised concern about flooding preventing access to their property, which was discussed further after the presentation was over – see notes further below.
- Question about existing 100-year floodplain – would it change? Would it increase? (Spellman/Singer property is now outside of floodplain). Mike L. explained that the project will be required to not raise levels and that the County will be reviewing the project to ensure no-rise.
- Jenny M. asked about retention of water and 72-hr limit. Deb H. explained that water would only be on site during high flow ("free water") condition.
- Prebles Jumping Mouse, which was identified as a species that could benefit from the project, became a discussion topic. Landowners (particularly Mike _ and Harvey G.) talked about how restrictions have been placed on landowners from the County on expanding building or other improvements due to potential mouse populations on their properties. There seemed to be an overall sentiment among the property

owners that improving mice habitat was not seen as a benefit due to the County's species requirements.

- Property owners mentioned that there were cultural artifacts and fire rings present on site, but that the flood may have flushed it away. Deb explained that a cultural resources assessment will be part of the project.
- Regarding the historical site, Jenny asked Mike about expected SHPO processing time, Mike noted that it is hard to say how long it will take since we are not sure where exactly the historical artifacts are. Deb noted that we will continue to be cognizant as we progress through the project.

Break out:

Meeting participants had the opportunity to review large aerial imagery maps of the project area provided by Boulder County. They were asked to leave comments on the map using sticky notes as well as discuss any issues or values with the project team.

- There was also open discussion about concerns

At one of the tables, the focus was on the Dust's access. Scott A. and Kara B., who were at this table with the Dust's, provided the following summary:

- The Dust's pointed out their access location to their property within the project area and mentioned that they would like to maintain access to their property with a 4-wheel drive vehicle
- The Dust's mentioned an old pond that used to be present on the floodplain before the 2013 flood, they noted that it was spring fed.

Additional Notes and Comments:

- Flow channel designed to not allow for high velocity flows during runoff events and normal flood events.
- Designed to not create a rise, that could affect flood insurance requirements.
- Dust's are concerned about retaining the existing wildlife habitat (Deer, Elk, and such).
- Dust's are ok with additional native shrubs and trees being planted.

At the other table, the discussion focused on the overall history of the site and observations of the property owners:

- Harvey G. had been recording flow data available online due to his interest in water rights on North St. Vrain Creek.

- There was more discussion about historic fire rings.
- Jenny M. talked about looking into the property north of Gates (Rooney) for possible water storage and that it could get very wet.
- Fish kill from the spill resulted in a lot of die off
- The previous item led to a discussion about old abandoned wooden water lines that ran under the ground on that side of the creek (west or downstream right side). Jenny thought they could be historic remnants of the Sosey or Dave Miller ditches. On Mike's old property, his leach field was once flooded out due to the Rooney's (to the north) flood irrigating their property.
- Spellman/Singer talked about valuing how wildlife uses the property
- Fish use would be seasonal
- Beavers came up; Mike talked about how they take down trees
- Mosquitos came up; Ken S. said that they weren't that bad and that the swallows and bats help keep mosquitos in check
- Golden eagles were present nearby (across the road to the east) the previous year but not this year

The Water shed Center also provided a Project Questionnaire for community members to fill out. The questions were the following:

- What are your priorities or concerns about restoration in this area
- Can you please provide information on any utilities we should be aware of – septic systems, irrigation systems, electric lines, etc.?
- Do you have upcoming plans for your property in or near the project area that we should be aware of?
- What opportunities do you see for improving resilience of river, safety, and habitat in this reach?
- Are there considerations you would like to include in the design such as specific planting areas, installation of specific features, or other considerations?

Deb wrapped up the meeting with a brief explanation that the 10% designs are expected to be completed in January of 2026, and that property owners will be contacted in the coming weeks by TWC to schedule a design meeting. She also mentioned that surrounding neighbors are welcome to reach out with any questions/concerns and can be as involved as they want to be.

Meeting adjourned around 6:30 pm.