

LARIMER COUNTY

River Bluffs Restoration and Resiliency Plan

Larimer County, Colorado



In 2004, as part of an effort to protect natural and cultural resources, the Larimer County Natural Resources Department purchased a 160-acre property now known as River Bluffs Open Space.

Past channelization and road building had left this 0.75-mile reach of the Cache la Poudre River disconnected from its floodplain and remnant oxbow channel wetland. During high flows in 2013, when discharge

Resiliency study helps municipality restore function and resilience along Colorado's Cache la Poudre River.

exceeded 7,000 cfs, the river was unable to spread throughout the floodplain, causing damage to the river channel.

Biohabitats assisted Larimer County in securing funding and then, working with Anderson Consulting Engineers, helped conduct a study to explore the feasibility of restoring the channelized reach to a more natural condition and reconnecting it to its floodplain. The feasibility study included groundwater monitoring, evaluation of geomorphic characteristics, and assessment of hydraulic data. Biohabitats delineated wetlands and assessed vegetation to better understand the structure of the existing riparian community and potential

improvement, and also conducted a review of potential permitting requirements.

After collecting this baseline information, the project team outlined site constraints and restoration opportunities, which resulted in a final document that presented an analysis of potential restoration and resiliency improvements, including conceptual drawings and cost/benefit analysis. The entire project process included meetings and input from a Technical Advisory Committee.

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