

Community Outreach Kickoff Summaries

Boulder Creek and South Boulder Creek – Meeting held Jan. 8, 2014, approximately 80 attendees

Key issues Discussed

- **Roads & Access** – Damaged roads. The Oil & Gas company access roads acted like dams
- **Public Sewer** – Damaged (City of Boulder)
- **Private Wells** – Low water levels in wells

Valmont Road Area

Issues	Discussion Summary
Debris	<p>Debris in this area is made up of many fallen trees. During the flooding, debris that had been washed downstream caused damage to areas near the church on 61st Street and damaged the City of Boulder’s sewer-line.</p> <p>There is still a lot of natural woody material and downed trees accumulated near the tree farm and throughout the adjacent Boulder County Open Space. These trees need to be removed.</p>
Health & Safety	<p>The City of Boulder’s sewer line had been damaged in the vicinity 61st Street. It had broken and sent raw sewage downstream of this area contaminating the creek.</p>
Septic & Water Quality	<p>Wells are now at a lower level than in the past. The quantity of water is approximately 10-15 feet less than it has been in the past. Residents are concerned there will not be enough water when it will be needed.</p> <p>The tree nursery has lost its water source and needs water to continue to operate.</p>
Banks & Alignment	<p>In the area west of 61st Street and north of Valmont Road, creek left its original alignment and flowed into the ponds north of it. It broke through into the Boulder County Open Space ponds and then back into the creek’s path in the northeast area of the ponds. This left the creek with little to no water within its original creek bed; it currently holds a trickle of water.</p> <p>Land along the creek has been eroded and banks need to be stabilized.</p>
Agency Coordination & Information	<p>City of Boulder & Boulder County Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resident stated that in 1983 a master plan had been created for the area when the realignment occurred of Pearl Parkway and Valmont Road. He stated that in that plan there were provisions for flood drainage underneath Valmont Road that had never been implemented. He suggested the county review that planning document to identify the drainage needs that had been identified for implementation and consider implementing the infrastructure. • A resident stated that the City of Boulder is designating a conveyance zone that would affect properties in the 5700 block of Valmont. These are Boulder County properties and the resident expressed some concern about the City enacting this zone upon unincorporated County properties.

Gapter, Cherryvale and Old Tale Roads

Issues	Discussion Summary
Actions Planned or Taken	<p>Flood recovery and future flood mitigation efforts have been undertaken on residents’ private property, recovery actions such as pumping water out of homes, removing debris. One resident stated that she had used a backhoe to divert water during the flood and to create a diversion to protect against future flooding.</p>
Flooding	<p>South Boulder Creek was not the primary cause; most flooding was due to ditch failures, including breaches of Wellman, East Boulder and Empire Ditches. Some cause was attributed to ditch companies not maintaining their ditches by leaving woody and construction (e.g., pallets, concrete) debris in the ditches. This debris is believed to have exacerbated flooding and diverting water flows. Residents also stated that head gates were left open by accident or design. Residents questioned how water got into the ditches and why gates were opened.</p> <p>Water flowed down the east side of Cherryvale Road and then onto Simmons Drive. This was believed to be due to failures along the Enterprise and East Boulder ditches.</p> <p>Sombrero Marsh flooding needs to be addressed. Residents stated that the marsh is intended to be a natural buffer against flooding. However, the marsh’s capacity has been reduced over the years, primarily by school district development.</p>
Debris	<p>Debris along South Boulder Creek has affected the creek channel width in various areas throughout this segment.</p> <p>Debris material is variable; piles are huge. It seems like there are some very large trees in the creek still along with a lot of bankside debris.</p> <p>Are the ditch companies required to remove the debris they generate from clearing projects?</p>
Agency Coordination & Information	<p>Residents wanted to know what the City of Boulder is doing to the creek and how it will affect ditches and South Boulder Creek neighbors.</p> <p>Baseline Reservoir – Residents are concerned because the banks are eroding. Residents noted that plastic sheeting is being applied to banks that have been compromised. Residents want to ensure the reservoir is secure and will not fail in future floods.</p> <p>Spring runoff – Residents feel that if the previous concerns noted above are not dealt with, the area may see additional impacts during spring runoff.</p>
Upstream/Downstream Impacts	<p>Residents asked about how and where water can be funneled in future floods. Specifically, residents requested if it is possible to move water to Arapahoe Road?</p> <p>What are ditch companies going to do operationally to help prevent the possibility of future floods?</p>

One resident requested data on peak height of the water during the flood.

Eldorado Spring and Marshall Road

Issues

Discussion Summary

Flooding

Many of the significant issues in this area revolved around irrigation ditches and the physical/hydrological system and infrastructure. Residents believe some of this infrastructure may have affected the flooding and residents would like it addressed before spring run-off.

- Significant concern was expressed about what happened with Dowdy Draw during the flood, and how flows of the ditches affected the flooding. Some residents reported that the ditch was closed during the Wednesday night/Thursday rains, and then the ditch was opened and the water levels decreased. Residents would like to know how this can be mitigated and managed in future.
- Flooding came in pulses.
- The railroad trusses failed.
- Residents do not think any of Denver Water's facilities failed.
- During the flooding, the FRICO ditch gate was closed at South Boulder Creek. That ditch caused sheet flows and lots of debris was deposited into it. There were huge waterfalls falling into the ditch.
- Water couldn't make its way to the creek along Eldorado Springs Drive.
- Some of the ditches washed out. What responsibility and liability do the ditch companies have to maintain their ditches so they don't wash out or back up and result in this level of flooding?
- A resident emailed the water commissioner during the flood and learned that Davidson Ditch and another were closed. How did they impact what happened?
- There was flooding on Eldorado Spring Drive from noon to 8:00 p.m. It took the ditch companies a while to react.
- Many residents wanted to know how ditches should operate during a storm event. Should they be closed or open?
- The ditch side walls were collapsing, so ditch maintenance is a real concern.
- The water in the ditches was overwhelmed by water coming from Dowdy Draw.
- There is still a significant amount of water along Eldorado Springs Drive and the Prado "loop." Residents report very high water tables.
- Most in this area have shallow wells (e.g., 17 ft.) and septic fields that

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	were inundated.
Debris	There is a lot of debris that is still in residents' yards. Residents were unsure what to do about it or how to address it.
Roads & Access	<p>The culvert crossing Highway 93 (noted on maps) was too small to allow water to flow across the highway; it backed up. Many residents agreed there is a significant need to address this and work with CDOT to do so.</p> <p>Some residents noted small culverts in front of their homes backed up. It wasn't clear who they are to contact or who is responsible when these culverts back up or fail. Some culverts are too small to take all the water that occurred during the flood.</p> <p>One of the reasons the ditch was overwhelmed was because the natural drainage of Dowdy Draw was interrupted by the road. Can this be addressed through providing large culverts?</p> <p>Residents expressed the need of a culvert under Eldorado Springs Drive. Currently, even low levels of precipitation cause small trickles that can overwhelm the area.</p>
Agency Coordination & Information	<p>Many residents' basements are still flooded and people are actively using sump pumps to remove water – there is a need to coordinate and manage this on a neighborhood scale. Some people are pumping the water into each other's lots rather than diverting the water out of the area.</p> <p>Residents would like the county to take a role in <i>facilitating</i> a coordinated effort amongst the residents. People seem to be inclined to work on mitigation efforts together on a community scale, particularly since these are private properties. They would like the county to convene a meeting and/or process to help coordinate this. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents expressed a need to do something collectively to direct flood water so it doesn't all end up on one property. • Residents would like to be engaged to determine how to develop a coordinated plan. They asked about what Boulder County's role could be and what residents' roles and responsibilities are? • How can residents create awareness about what to do with water expelled by sump pumps so that they aren't impacting their neighbors' properties? <p>Residents felt it would not be beneficial to channelize Boulder Creek.</p> <p>Some residents felt that because they are somewhat isolated they need help organizing. They would like follow up from the county if some assistance can be provided for doing so.</p> <p>Gross Reservoir: It is going to be expanded. Denver Water will need to increase the holding strength of the walls so it doesn't crack or get breached in some other way. This was a big concern.</p>
Upstream/Downstream Impacts	Some damage that occurred to properties happened from City Open Space. Residents expressed a need for the county and the city to work with residents

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to determine how to address the damage that has occurred.

People reported that sheets of water came off County Open Space into this neighborhood. People were very concerned about these sheet flow problems and what will be done to address future storm water management by Boulder County.

Kenosha Road and Erie

Issues	Discussion Summary
Actions Planned or Taken	<p>Residents are considering raising their houses on stilts.</p> <p>Post-flood - A berm was made with soil on the Bailey Pond (this was drawn on a map).</p>
Flooding	<p>Kenosha Road near the bridge (11638-11900 Kenosha Rd.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water came into the neighborhood from both north and south. Residents on the north side of Kenosha are one foot higher than those on the south; they watched the water filling houses on the south side from the north side. One resident who has lived there her whole life and has seen several floods has never seen the water come from the south before this flood. • Kenosha Road has been repaved over time and is now at a very high elevation, the road acted as a dam that diverted the water into the neighborhood, the neighbors feel that if the road was still lower, as it was historically, fewer homes would have been flooded. Something needs to be done to moderate this issue. • The gravel mines have been mined very close to Boulder Creek and are lower than the creek; thus Kenosha Rd. acted like a dam and diverted water into the neighborhood. <p>Near Jasper Road and 109th</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No flooding in their homes, just completely surrounding them. • A resident who lives at Kenosha Farms says that 10 days after the flood there was just as much water flowing through the breach on 109th as well as under the bridge on 109th • Two ditches on either side of Jasper Rd. collided and blasted the culvert. The road breaching just north of Jasper and 109th probably saved properties from being damaged. • There was very little water in the Boulder and Weld County/Martha Matthews Ditch (noted on a map).
Debris	<p>Kenosha Road near the bridge (11638-11900 Kenosha Rd.)</p> <p>There is a huge amount of debris on the adjacent Alexander Dawson and Doniphan Parks and Open Space properties. Many trees and bushes are in the creek corridor and the creek bed has become very shallow because of</p>

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overgrowth.

The new bridge on N. 115th doesn't wash out anymore and no debris was stopped like it used to be. Debris kept going downstream and is now in people's yards as well as on County Open Space.

Roads & Access

Near Jasper Road and 109th

- The 109th Street bridge survived but roads were breached.
- One suggestion was to get rid of the bridge on 109th Street to make 109th Street unpassable just north of Jasper Road. This road is not necessary for access and doing so would open up the stream corridor.
- Oil and gas roads and gates act like dams; there should be more regulation about how those are built given the effects they have upon water flows.

Agency Coordination & Information

Kenosha Road near the bridge (11638-11900 Kenosha Rd.)

- Residents would like to see berms to divert water out of the neighborhood but not to channelize the water and negatively affect people downstream.
- Residents are wondering if the county plans to do anything else with the creek alignment and mitigation work.
- Culverts and lowering of Kenosha Rd. as well as dredging the stream could help mitigate flooding in the spring because of run-off. Currently spring run-off will come into the properties.
- Some neighbors want Parks and Open Space to berm and channelize the creek. However, it was pointed out that this could make the situation worse.
- If the water could have run along the road and gotten to the channel on the Bailey-Kenosha Ponds property the neighbors along Kenosha Rd. could have potentially avoided flooding.

Near Jasper Road and 109th

New Floodplain Mapping: Gravel companies created the mines that caused some flooding and now may influence how the new floodway/floodplain designations are determined. This could force people to leave their homes that become classified in these new floodplains. This doesn't seem fair.

Upstream/Downstream Impacts

Kenosha Road near the bridge (11638-11900 Kenosha Rd.)

Residents fear spring run-off will re-inundate properties. The gravel mines are still draining water from the flood, the path of least resistance if high flows are to be re-experienced is directly into the neighborhood.

Near Jasper Road and 109th

Residents would like the creek bed cleaned out and berms built before the spring to prevent further damage. This should be done because currently lesser amounts of water are eliciting similar flooding affects in because everything has been compromised.