

Upper Lefthand – Meeting held Dec. 17, 2014, approximately 100 attendees

Key Issues Discussed

- **Creek Flow** – Ice blockage issues which residents perceive as eminent flood danger
- **Access** – Temporary personal property bridges have been built. There are perceived culvert issues. There is impeded fire road access at Nugget Hill Road.
- **Debris** – Debris is significant and widespread
- **Banks & Alignment** – Alignment has changes and there are new channels

Suggestions for Boulder County communications

Conduct neighborhood specific forums to engage residents and listen to ideas.

- Provide a way to address resident needs on a day to day basis. Make the FRPIC office a welcoming and understanding environment with empathetic and reconciliatory staff members. It should promote a sense of healing.
- Provide immediate responses to property owners.
- The Boulder County Flood Recovery website needs to have a very intuitive lay out to be effective; it has posed some navigational challenges.
- People “want it all on one handout” – having to go to multiple places and websites to get the initial information they need about where to start doesn’t work. Jamestown has a committee who is figuring out what has to be done first and is helping their community with that; the County should already have this available.

Jamestown and James Canyon

Issues	Discussion Summary
Perceived imminent dangers/concerns	Ice blockage -At the James Canyon and Lefthand Canyon intersection there is a giant sheet of ice that has formed that is not typically there. Many yards in Jamestown are sheets of ice. A large waterfall had formed upstream from 725 James Canyon Dr. and there is a considerable amount of debris made up of large trees and housing materials in the ice.
Actions Taken or Planned	Temporary foot bridges have been built to provide accesses to properties. Residents noted that in recent days the county has begun small scale debris removal.
Access & Roads	Handmade footbridges have been built temporarily to provide residents access to their properties. These will likely cause problems during spring runoff. There is a lack of culverts available to provide for sufficient water flow. How will traffic be managed during the road reconstruction period in James Canyon during February and March?

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	<p>How will traffic be controlled in relation to the condition of the road? What will speeds be?</p>
Banks & Creek Alignment	<p>The way the creek moved this time is the way it did in 1969 during the flood. The lower bridge is not functional. In a lot of places the creek went through properties instead of around them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Castle Gulch area turned into a roaring river. It is still running now and will not be able to withstand spring runoff.• The creek is above where it used to be in Jamestown proper in elevation and flow.• During the flood major mudslides occurred that moved boulders. Banks that used to be there are gone. There are major elevation drops up to 15 feet. The magnitude is overwhelming.
Debris	<p>Debris is everywhere throughout this segment. The magnitude is overwhelming. Residents need assistance with large-scale debris removal. Ward Street above Jamestown is all timber fall and log jams that will eventually turn into a dam and a lake.</p> <p>The debris at Gold Lake, by the road where the stream crosses, is a major concern.</p> <p>There are major debris jams near the Peak to Peak highway. Several trees continue to fall and more are still going to fall. Some trees are not dead but are at risk of falling because of weakened root systems. Many trees are missing bark and will likely die.</p>
Agency Coordination & Information	<p>Many residents are not living in Jamestown at this time and are concerned about how the county will contact them and keep them informed.</p> <p>Funding: It is concerning that there is no available funding to address issues on National Forest Service land.</p>
Upstream/Downstream Impacts	<p>Concerns were raised about the timing and amounts of water released from the St. Vrain and Lefthand Water Supply Company's reservoir upstream from Jamestown and James Canyon into James Creek. The reservoir in question is Lake Isabelle, west of Brainard Lake in Indian Peaks Wilderness. Regulating the releases to account for real time downstream hydrologic conditions would be preferable. The company's Board of Directors realizes that at high stream flows/flooding conditions, these calls or the need to let water downstream in order to create storage to avoid overtopping the reservoir can have significant impacts on others along the creek.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The possibility of resolving these competing interests will be complex given Colorado water law and the company's obligations. However, it would be worthwhile sitting down together to discuss the issues, constraints and possible options for reducing or minimizing the problems. Further conversation about this should go forward.• It is anticipated that the Castle Gulch area will not be able to withstand spring runoff.

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Agency Coordination & Communication	<p>Most residents have joined the Jamestown task force. That group is very organized and is currently determining how to engage in the greater recovery process. The Jamestown group is meeting frequently and has been engaged with many different parties such as FEMA, the Boulder County Land Use Department, engineering groups and planners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boulder County is assigning a case person to this group. • Residents in this area are working with Jamestown to determine what permits are needed to be obtained. • There is a lot of confusion about how residents should proceed to conduct recovery work. There are many questions that exist out there and many residents aren't sure where to go for answers.
Upstream/Downstream Impacts	Residents in the area are concerned about easements and draining of the creek

Valley Lane, Sixmile Creek

Issues	Discussion Summary
Access & Roads	Almost everyone has lost bridges on Valley Lane.
Debris	Most property owners have had to dig silt out of their yards that has been up to 5 feet deep.
Banks & Alignment	Sixmile Creek has risen up to 2 feet; its alignment has cut new paths by about 10 feet to the left or right from where it was in various places. Sixmile Creek was 2 feet wide and is now up to 70 feet wide in some places.

North 81st and Oxford Road – Lefthand Creek

Issues	Discussion Summary
Perceived imminent dangers/concerns	Creek is flowing within a few feet of the highest levels that residents in this area have ever seen. It is currently flowing at unusually high levels that are normally only seen during spring runoff.
Flooding	One resident reported that he had his property surveyed and the creek levels exceeded the 500 year flood level at every point on his property. The creek overtopped the road and exceeded it by 16 to 18 inches.
Property Damage	Farms in this area lost all their top soil. The fields in this area are like quicksand. Residents have not been able to walk on the terrain without sinking until recently because the below freezing temperatures helped to firm up the

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ground.

Lefthand Canyon

Lefthand Canyon	
Perceived imminent dangers/concerns	Several imminent threats exist including large boulders above roads and homes. In one case, a home that sits on a ledge above another home, has experienced erosion of its foundation and could fall with further erosion or spring runoff.
Actions Taken or Planned in the Near-term	Recovery and rebuilding activities to date include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many property owners have dug out 3 to 4 feet of sediment around homes. • Roads have been dug out and re-graded. • Some footbridges have been built to access homes.
Access & Roads	Culverts are believed to be too small to handle the run off. Many continue to be blocked by debris. Nugget Hill Road is a steep, narrow, one-way road. It was used as a fire road. However, because there is no longer an exit point and there is not space to turn around, trucks (including emergency and construction vehicles) cannot use the road. It is important for the residents that this road be repaired and become useable again.
Debris	Much debris remains both in and out of the creek. It has diverted flows, dammed up culverts and channels, and damaged properties and structures.
Agency Coordination & Communication:	Residents have repaired many impacts from the flood such as removing debris, repairing buildings, and building temporary access roads and bridges. However, some residents are now at a point that in order to continue rebuilding they will need permits that are beyond the scope of emergency response permitting. Residents seek to understand (1) what options they have in recovery and rebuilding and (2) what timeline they can expect regarding permitting. One property owner repaired a road that serviced that property and Boulder County Open Space. The resident requires the road to access their property. Additionally, it is the only access for the County Open Space. The resident would like to understand how to coordinate with the County Parks and Open Space Department to share costs as they share the road.
Banks & Alignment	Creek channel banks have been eroded, and are not able to contain spring runoff
Upstream/Downstream Impacts	Spring runoff is a concern that correlates to flood-related issues such as debris, culverts, erosion, and imminent threat.

General Comments across Upper Lefthand Neighborhoods

Issues	Discussion Summary
Actions Taken or Planned in the Near-term	Some residents feel their properties are in eminent danger and are taking immediate actions. Others are wary of outside contractors and are taking matters into their own hands.
Debris	<p>There are huge debris piles throughout the creek segment made up of woody materials, septic systems and household items. Some owners and contractors are doing work to move the sedimentary debris on their own properties because addressing the issues before spring runoff is critical, even though that might cause liability issues for them – they simply can’t wait any longer. In some areas where the road has been rebuilt there has been a complete scouring of debris. This has caused concern because of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural features made up of logs and rocks can help to filter the creek and direct water flow. • The creek used to have drops and pools creating transitional areas that made for great wildlife habitat. The clearing of debris has removed logs and rocks, eliminating these habitat areas. • Residents are worried that the excessive removal of debris will create a fast and furious chute-like effect during spring runoff. Residents expressed concern that this will also further scour the landscape. What they’re seeing is contoured lines and channels that run straight. Some want more of a natural meandering path for the water and some of the debris left in planned locations where it can help slow runoff (e.g., large boulders could be used to create capture pools).
Banks & Alignment	Natural sand bars have formed throughout lower Lefthand Canyon. Some of these have diverted the natural flow of the creek and in other spots have slowed it down.
Right of Entry Forms	Many neighbors refused to sign it because of the wording and will not allow Boulder County to access their properties. Many residents feel compelled to make repairs and mitigations themselves rather than sign the forms.
Agency Coordination & Communication	<p>Boulder County should coordinate with FEMA, CDOT and other agencies to focus their actions beyond “temporary emergency repair” and consider long term sustainability of the creek and canyon’s natural environment. The FEMA contractor’s mitigation measures to scour the creek of all debris seem excessive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some individuals in this group believed that the perception exists that Boulder County has a “horrible” reputation with residents because of the difficulty with approvals and permits, to the point where some people won’t even consider calling the county to ask for help or permission to rebuild. Some felt this has got to be changed, and now is the time for the county to take advantage of an opportunity to turn the tide on its reputation, because the people who are staffing the

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flood recovery efforts are top-tier, compassionate, knowledgeable and helpful, all things the county would do well to observe in changing the way it does business.

- It was stated that some property owners do not feel comfortable contacting Boulder County's Flood Recovery Permitting and Information Center or getting involved in the permitting process because they are concerned that their property may become condemned.
- Residents encouraged taking proactive measures to make other residents feel comfortable to participate in the Creek Planning Initiative. One suggestion included creating a welcoming and understanding atmosphere at the FRPIC office in addition to always providing immediate responses.
- There are many rumors and misperceptions that exist throughout the county; it was suggested that Boulder County be proactive to issue periodic press releases to clarify misperceptions and provide accurate information.
- Residents believe the ditch companies will do quick and cheap repair jobs and leave piles of debris for property owners to clean up.

Upstream/Downstream Impacts

Lefthand Creek is flowing within a few feet of the highest levels that residents in this area have ever seen. It is currently flowing at unusually high levels that are normally only seen during spring runoff. The resident that attended the meeting reported that he had his property surveyed and the creek levels exceeded the 500 year flood level at every point on his property. The creek overtopped the road and exceeded it by 16 to 18 inches.

- Farms in this area lost all their top soil. The fields in this area are like quicksand. Residents have not been able to walk on the terrain without sinking until recently because the below freezing temperatures helped to firm up the ground.
- There used to be 10 inch trout in the creek throughout this area but there is so much silt in it now that there are no fish and its elevation is 4 feet higher from bank to bank.
- There is an opportunity to create something special at Buckingham Park with a nice habitat.