ST. VRAIN WATERSHED MASTER PLAN

WHAT HAPPENED IN JULY & WHAT'S NEXT

Thank you for your interest in the St. Vrain Watershed Master Plan. We want to provide you with an update about the master plan activities that occurred in July and let you know what to expect as we continue to move forward.

FIELD ASSESSMENTS AND GEOMORPHOLOGY ANALYSIS

Field Assessments Are Now Complete

Our project team has been busy doing work out in the field. Due to high water levels during spring run-off our ecological and flood risk field assessments took a little longer than expected. However the work is now complete!

What do you learn by conducting an ecological field assessment?

The ecological assessment provides an initial evaluation of the overall condition of the St. Vrain, its riparian zones, and in-stream habitats. It is a tool for conservation planning, identifying stream restoration goals and objectives, and understanding trends in stream and riparian conditions through time.

What do you learn by conducting a flood risk field assessment?

The flood risk assessment provides an understanding of structures and infrastructure that are at risk of being damaged during various flood events. Typically, flood risk assessments are performed using the 100-year floodplain boundary.

What will be done with the results of the assessments?

For the St. Vrain Master Plan the results will be used to identify critical riparian ecosystem elements that are damaged or absent from the creek system, as well as to identify highly degraded areas. The ecological and flood risk assessments will help us develop alternatives that restore flood conveyance or effectively direct water while balancing the natural characteristics of the St. Vrain with existing infrastructure to promote the long-term health of the watershed.

The initial findings from the ecological risk assessments provided ecological scores for the reaches within the Saint Vrain Watershed. The ecological score reflects the quality of stream features such as channel stability, water quantity, water quality, vegetation, and in-stream habitat. Results showed that:

- The St. Vrain's ecosystem received fair to good scores throughout the lower reaches of the creek with some small sections receiving poor scores.
- The North and Middle St. Vrain received fair to good ecosystem scores.
- The South St. Vrain has a variety of ecological conditions from good to poor which will need to be addressed.

Ecosystem scores are taken into context with other considerations as we move forward to develop the appropriate restoration strategies for the creek.

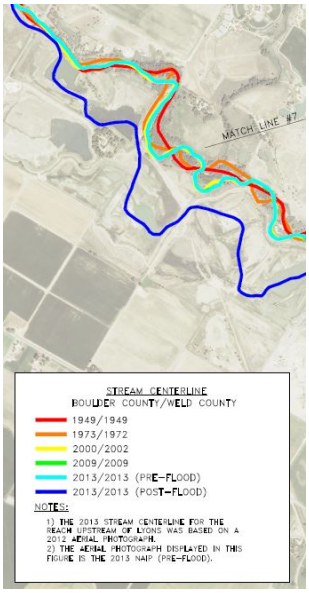
The initial findings from the flood risk assessments have helped to confirm and provide an inventory of what we already know; that several locations within the communities of Longmont and Lyons were severely flooded during the September 2013 event. One goal of the master plan is to develop appropriate solutions to minimize flood risks to these areas. Additionally, solutions should positively manage risk throughout the entire St. Vrain Creek watershed be consistent with other study goals.

Why were the assessments important to be conducted?

Field assessments provide the valuable technical data and other information about the impacts that occurred in the St. Vrain watershed from the September 2013 flood and assist with developing appropriate restoration strategies that will be identified through the planning process.

The Geomorphology Analysis is Nearing Completion

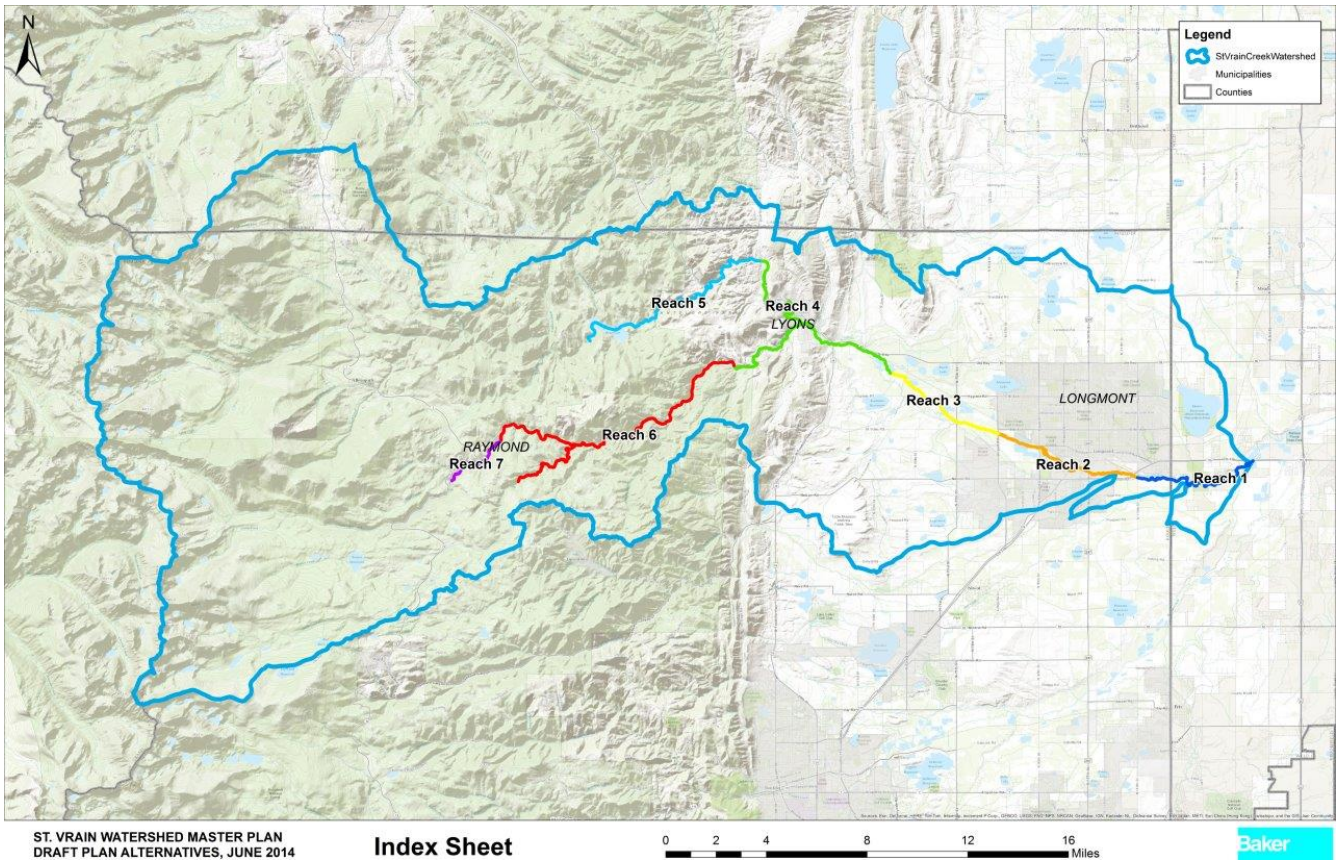
What is Geomorphology? Geomorphology is the scientific study of landforms and different processes that shape them. In the case of the St. Vrain Creek, the flood water moved a lot of sediment, which changed the characteristics of the watershed. The geomorphology analysis tells us what the river bed looked like before the floods and what it looks like now.



Why is it important to do this analysis?

The analysis evaluates the natural behavior of a stream, its current post-flood condition, and what changes may be anticipated in the future due to changes in runoff, sediment movement and changes in the physical characteristics of the watershed. This will allow us to shape solutions that work with the behavior of the St. Vrain in a way that compliments the overall setting of it in the watershed.

Since the June public meetings, we have been collecting data that help us understand the physical processes that shape the St. Vrain's channels while considering the different landforms, geologic features, and climatic settings in which the St. Vrain exists. Understanding what factors shape the St. Vrain in its current state allows us to propose solutions that work with the natural processes in the watershed. Balancing the natural tendencies of the stream with existing infrastructure and understanding the associated flood risk is critical to the long-term recovery of the watershed.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Draft Plan Alternatives Are Being Developed and Your Input Is Needed

We are currently preparing a draft of the St. Vrain Master Plan, which will include different alternatives to share with you for review and input. These alternatives- or options- will be organized by stream reach, as there are different types of conditions and decisions that need to be made in different areas along the St. Vrain Creek. When we present the draft plan alternatives, we will also share our ecological, flood, and geomorphic analyses results with you.

Because high water levels during spring run-off delayed our ability to conduct field assessments, releasing the draft master plan and draft alternatives will be delayed by a month. We originally planned to share draft alternatives for each reach of the St. Vrain with you in August. We now anticipate that we will be ready to present the draft alternatives to you in September. This shift in schedule means that the final master plan will now be complete by the end of October.

We will begin scheduling the workshops in your communities and neighborhoods in the coming weeks to present and review draft alternatives with you, so that you can have a say in what gets carried forward into the final master plan. We will notify you about the release of draft plan alternatives and upcoming meetings.

Continue to Stay Connected to the St. Vrain Master Plan

To get any of your questions answered about the St. Vrain Master Plan or to provide the Project Team with input, please continue to use any of the following methods:

Call Us! The project team can be reached at (720) 407-4786

Email Us! Send an email to stvrainmasterplan@projects.mbakercorp.com

Visit the Website! The St. Vrain Master Plan Website address is http://tiny.cc/stvraincreek

Upcoming St. Vrain Creek Coalition Meetings

Residents and members of the public are always encouraged to attend the St. Vrain Creek Coalition Meetings. A schedule of the meetings with times, dates and locations can be found by clicking here: https://projects.mbakercorp.com/stvraincreekmp/Public%20Documents/St.%20Vrain%20Creek%20Coalition/SVCC%20Meeting%20Schedule.pdf

Newly Released - Boulder County's Comprehensive Creek Planning Initiative Video

Boulder County's Comprehensive Creek Planning Initiative (CCP) is moving long-term creek recovery efforts forward by initiating master planning processes throughout the county such as this one for the St. Vrain Creek.

To hear more about how master plans will assist in rebuilding efforts by providing post-flood analysis of flows, facilitating key decisions about creek alignment, identifying flood risk mitigation and stream restoration projects, and determining how to restore the ecological functions of the creeks, click here: **http://youtu.be/tu1sOBXJt5c**