

Upper South Platte River Watershed

The Upper South Platte River Watershed totals 8,106,960 acres.

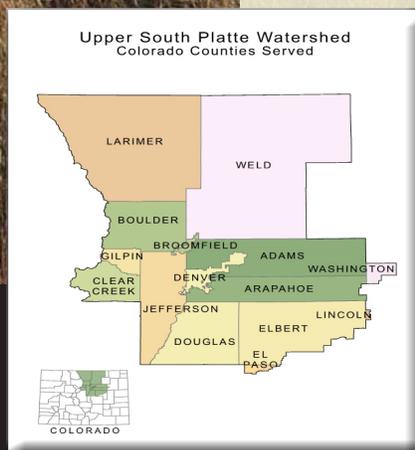
It includes all and/or parts of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, Elbert, Gilpin, Jefferson, Larimer, and Weld Counties.

NRCS natural resource specialists are staffed at the Metro, Brighton, Byers, Fort Collins, Franktown, Greeley, and Kiowa USDA Field Service Centers to assist residents.

NRCS Vision
**Productive Lands -
Healthy Environment**

NRCS Mission
**Helping People
Help the Land**

www.co.nrcs.usda.gov



Resources at work from October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011

The Colorado Watershed Approach

Instead of the traditional statewide approach in addressing priority resource issues like soil erosion, water quality, grazing lands, wildlife, and animal waste, NRCS looks to Colorado's ten watersheds to identify their particular local resource needs and priorities.

Watershed work groups meet annually to determine which natural resource concerns are most prevalent in their communities.

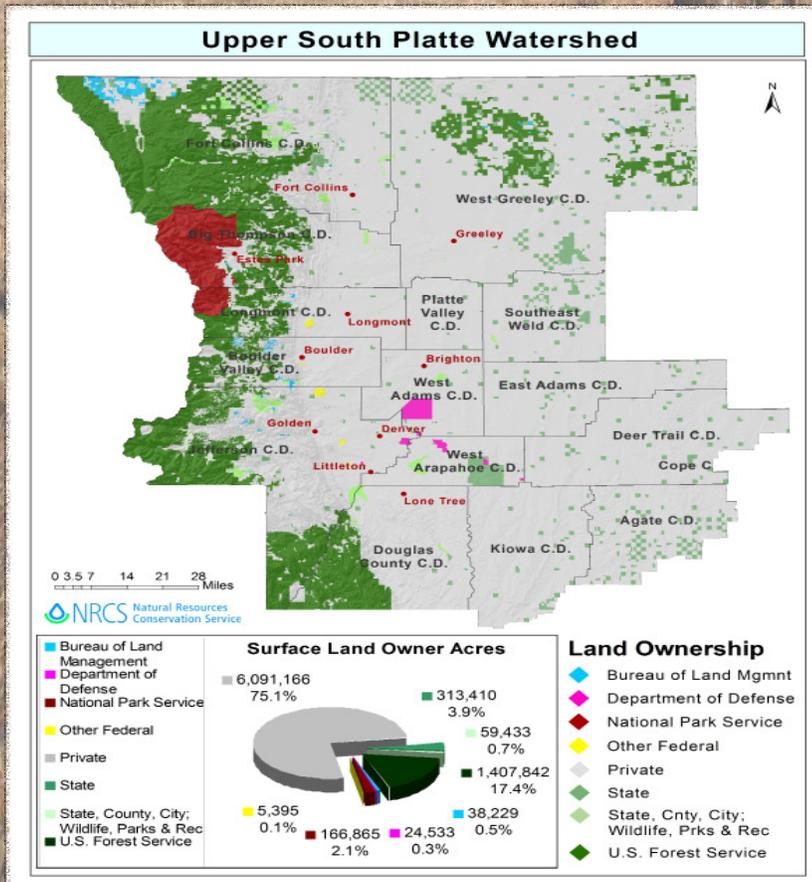
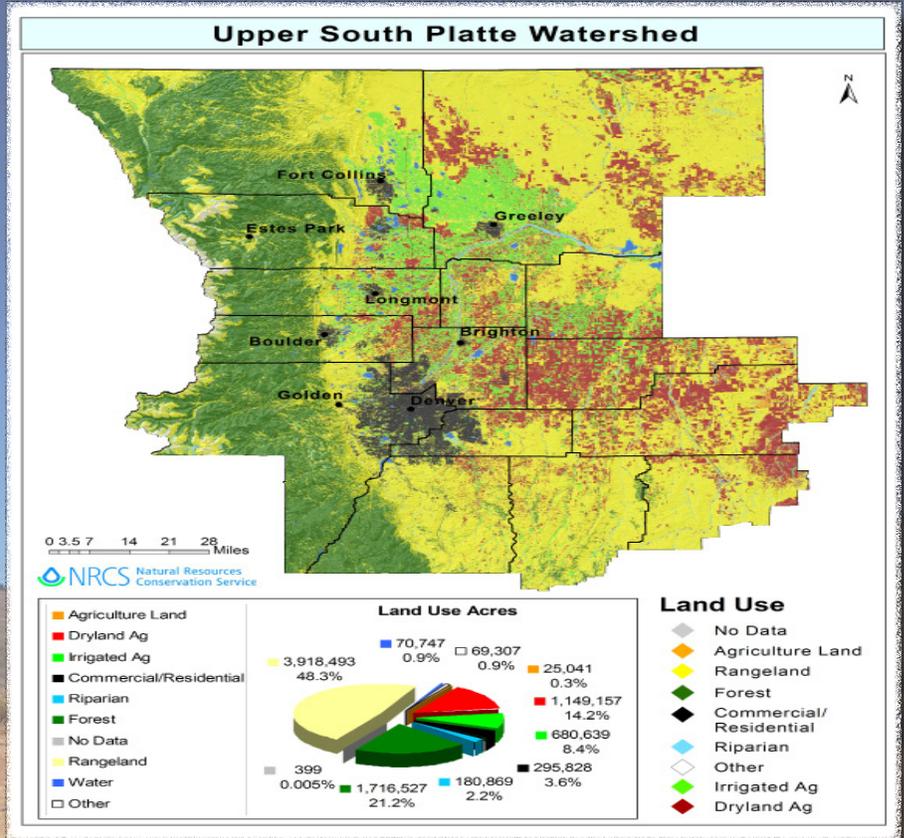
In turn, Colorado NRCS focuses its resources on addressing those concerns. Colorado's local conservation districts provide leadership in this effort to foster increased decision making at the local level.

High Priority Resource Concerns in the Upper South Platte River Watershed

- Water Quality
- Erosion
- Water Quantity
- Rangeland Health
- Integrated Pest Management

*Helping People
Help the Land*

Watershed Profile



Fiscal Year 2011 Environmental Quality Incentives Program Summary

Upper South Platte River	Applications Received	Contracts Approved	Dollars Approved	Acres Treated
Upper South Platte - All Lands/Wildlife	1	1	\$8,397	50
Upper South Platte - Cropland/Soil Management	9	7	\$210,238	6,382
Upper South Platte - Cropland/Water Quality/Quantity	65	15	\$1,321,622	2,346
Upper South Platte - Forestry	3	2	\$21,900	12
Upper South Platte - Grazingland	18	15	\$378,807	10,908
CPP - Forest Restoration	4	4	\$158,890	125
EQIP Air Quality - North Front Range	57	42	\$1,887,814	15,765
Organic-Certified	6	3	\$14,942	49
Organic-Transition	4	2	\$26,148	29
Planning - General	10	3	\$27,640	758
CO Seasonal High Tunnels Pilot	13	11	\$64,023	3.5
Totals	190	105	\$4,120,421	36,426

Farm Bill Program Activities Summary Upper South Platte River

NRCS Program	Applications Received	Contracts Approved	Dollars Approved	Acres Treated
Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)	5	3	\$135,415	19
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	18	10	\$254,111	24,431
Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP)	1	1	\$1,582,560	153

Farm Bill Program Activities Statewide Summary

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Contracts: 789

Acres: 335,000

Financial Assistance: \$26 Million

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program

Contracts: 19

Acres: 3,461

Financial Assistance: \$1 Million

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

Contracts: 12

Acres: 15,656

Financial Assistance: \$421,303

Grasslands Reserve Program

Easements: 3

Acres: 6,185

Financial Assistance: \$1.2 Million

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

Properties/Entities: 33

Acres: 9,467

Financial Assistance: \$8.4 Million

Wetlands Reserve Program

Easements: 2

Acres: 463

Financial Assistance: \$1.4 Million

Conservation Stewardship Program

Applications: 331

Acres: 800,859

Financial Assistance: \$7.8 Million

Disclaimer: All data was retrieved from Protracts and funding manager's records for easements on October 4, 2011.

2011 Conservation Success:

Protecting Sage Grouse Habitat

Issue:

Protecting strutting grounds and other habitat for the Gunnison and Greater Sage-grouse

What NRCS CO is Doing:

The only two places in the world the Gunnison Sage-grouse can be found are on the Western slope of Colorado and in a small portion of Southeastern Utah. Colorado, however, hosts the largest population of the species. The protection of sage-grouse habitat has been one of NRCS in Colorado's highest priorities for nearly a decade. The state hosts two species in the Sage-grouse family, including the Gunnison as well as the Greater.

Over the past 10 years, the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife (CDPW) placed the sage-grouse on its "species of concern list," and as a result, NRCS strengthened its partnerships with the agency to help support efforts to conserve sage-grouse habitat. NRCS has not only partnered with CDPW, but also Partners in Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Wild Turkey Federation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), local Conservation Districts, landowners and numerous other stakeholders to map and enhance habitat as well as conserve it through easements.



Escape ramp installed in watering tank to assist sage grouse out of structure.

NRCS conservation efforts to improve habitat for sage-grouse include the use and implementation of prescribed grazing systems, range planting, brush/pinon-juniper management, cross fencing and fence marking. NRCS efforts in 2010 and 2011 alone saw the treatment of nearly 40,000 acres.

Program(s) used: EQIP, WHIP, FRPP, GRP

Natural Resource Benefits and Impacts

In 2011, conservation practices were applied by farmers and ranchers in Colorado through various NRCS programs. Conservation practices work to improve farmland, soil, water quality, air, plants, forestland, and wildlife habitat.

Through practices such as nutrient management, landowners were able to improve soil quality and plant health; and through irrigation water management, they were able to improve water quality delivery, thereby improving crop production on their working lands.

Many Farm Bill conservation practices apply to rangelands, such as prescribed grazing. Through installation of water developments, pasture division fences, wells and water pipelines, these practices focus on maintaining, enhancing, and restoring needed plant communities and habitat conditions.

Throughout fiscal year 2011, landowners worked with NRCS staff to develop a good, sound conservation plan to identify and address natural resource concerns on their land.

Conservation Program Descriptions

Environmental Quality Incentives

Program (EQIP) provides a voluntary conservation program for farmers, ranchers and owners of private, non-industrial forest land that promotes agricultural production, forest management and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible producers install or implement conservation practices on eligible agricultural land.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program offering cost-share incentives to landowners to voluntarily develop and improve wildlife habitat on private lands.

Agricultural Water Enhancement

Program (AWEP) A voluntary conservation initiative that provides financial and

technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement agricultural water enhancement activities on agricultural land for the purposes of conserving surface and ground water and improving water quality.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program to restore former wetlands, re-establish native wetland wildlife habitat and retire marginal land from agricultural production.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance grasslands on their property.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The Conservation Stewardship Program

(CSP) is a voluntary conservation program that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by undertaking additional conservation activities; and improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) is a voluntary program that helps landowners keep their productive farm and ranch land in agriculture. USDA provides matching funds to state, local, or tribal government entities and nongovernmental organizations with existing farm and ranch lands protection programs to purchase conservation easements.