

Jefferson Watershed Restoration Plan 2010

The following are the priority resource issues identified by the JRWC based on the completed assessments by agencies organizations and local group in the Jefferson River Watershed area.

- Jefferson River main stem base flows and quality maintenance and restoration
- Riparian Restoration
- Noxious Weed Control
- Flood plain planning
- Conifer encroachment
- Fisheries enhancement
- Irrigation water management
- Prescribed grazing systems
- Sediment loading due to gully and rill erosion along interstate 90 and unpaved roads
- Sediment problems associated with irrigation return-flow sites
- Protection and maintenance of the local agricultural economy
- Periodically evaluate the Drought Management Plan
- Ground-water characterization and management

Previous Meeting Discussions:

December:

- Connections between upland and wetland projects
- Irrigation efficiencies, applications and conservation
- Local water rights workshop, practices
- Groundwater study and applications for the future
- Ditch operation, flow trends, and usage

January:

Livestock & agriculture:

- Increasing amount of water to crops to increase return flows

Increasing fire potential:

- Public health and exposure in the wildland urban interface
- Decreasing moisture in wood, fuel moisture monitoring (available data)

Economic vulnerability:

- Fisheries recreation.
- Camping along river and access to land to utilize.

Social relations:

- Subdivisions and irrigation allotments

Lack of inflow controls to the Jefferson:

- Storage of water and losing water to upper users with water rights taking water before it makes its way to our valley and other operators.

Ecological resilience:

- Range conditions & forage health
- Drought letters get sent out based NRCS soils data

Water temperature vulnerability:

- Flows were sustained this last year, while temperature was increased
- Drought detrimental to water quality (temperature)

Weed issues:

- Timing and intensity of precipitation drives increases
- Cheatgrass

Ecological response from sedimentation

Groundwater:

- Boulder River Study and Jefferson River Studies and models
- Whitehall model used subdivision and densities of those subdivisions pumping from shallow vs deep aquifers.
- Consumption from subdivisions equate to a very small CFS
- Irrigation water recharging groundwater recharging springs to Jefferson River/Slough
- Using pivot to set on more water to create storage, biodegradable canals

Other conversation:

- Recent die offs of cottonwoods from lack of flood response
- Fencing for beaver in area for cottonwoods
- Pivot and flood irrigation applications
- Tree uptake, pines dying off from beetle kill, leaving water in soil
- Changes in land use type
- Temperature reduction projects on tributary streams
- Water storage reservoirs- releasing from bottom instead of top to release cold water.
- High sediment loads end up in low velocity areas (Jefferson Slough)