



SOUTH PLATTE RIVER URBAN WATERS PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

MARCH 25, 2026



**SOUTH PLATTE RIVER URBAN WATERS
PARTNERSHIP (SPRUWP) BACKGROUND**

URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

The Urban Waters Partnership:

- **Reconnects urban communities with their waterways** by improving coordination among federal agencies
- Collaborates with community-led revitalization efforts to **improve our Nation's water systems and promote their economic, environmental, and social benefits**



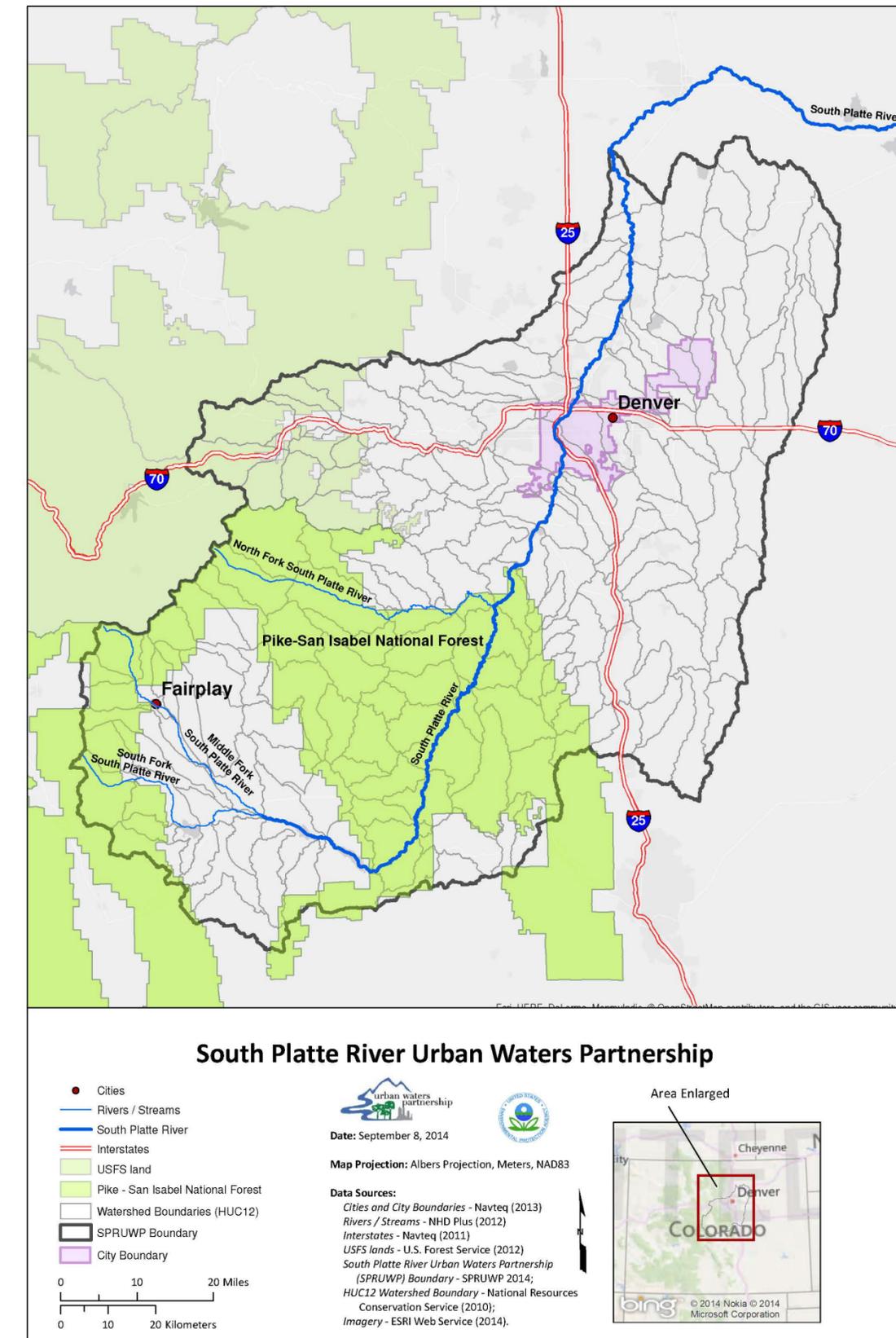
URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP



- 21 Urban Waters Locations
- Benefits:
 - Learning opportunities with Urban Waters Network partners and peers
 - Access to resources and materials
 - Access to competitive grant funding

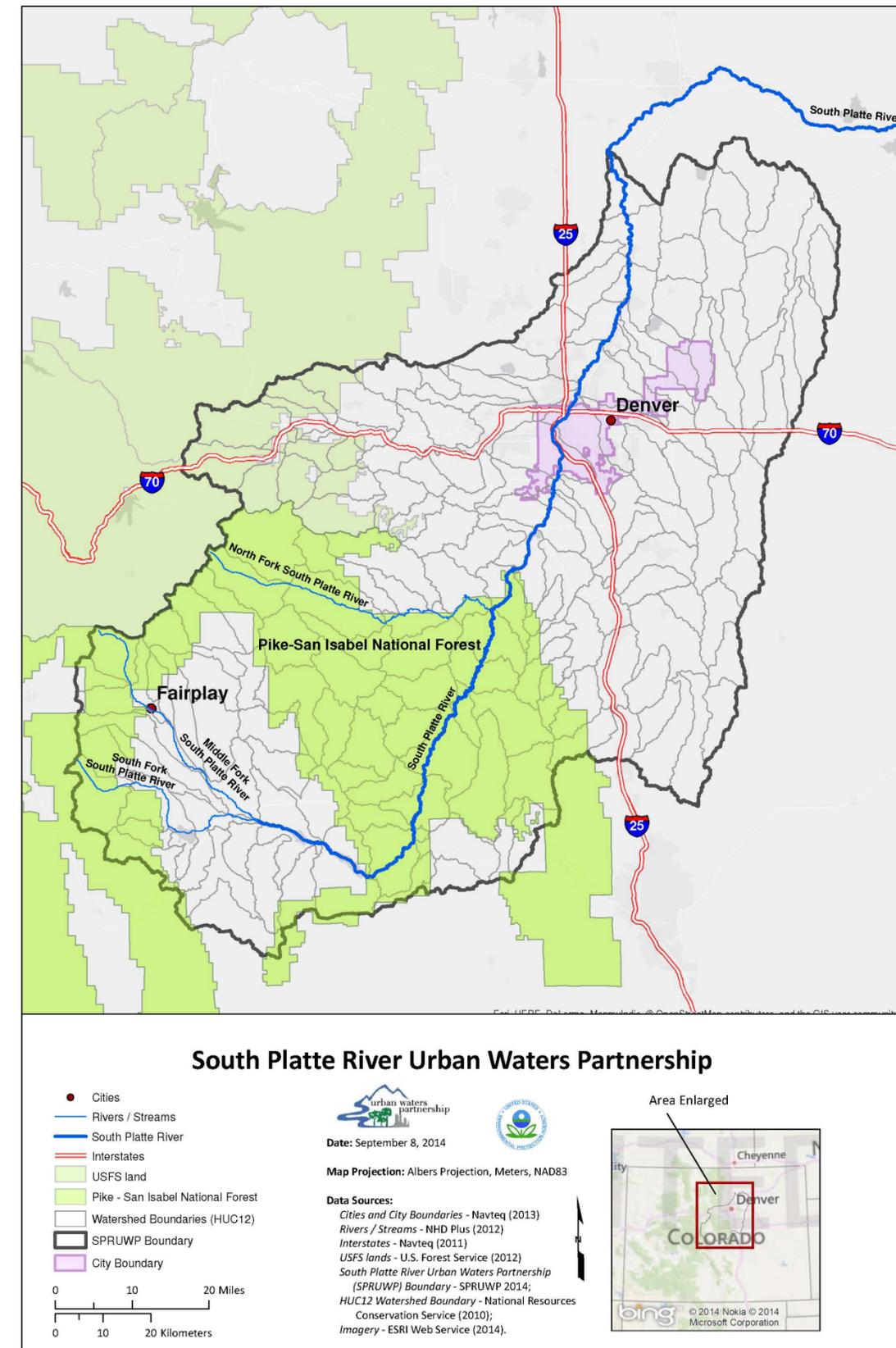
SPRUWP AT A GLANCE

- Created in 2011
- Geographic boundary encompasses 6,600 square miles
- Over 100 partner groups involved
 - Federal and state entities
 - Local municipalities and water providers
 - Nonprofits
 - Community-based organizations
 - Academic institutions and research entities



SPRUWP MISSION

To collaborate across jurisdictions and disciplines to engage communities and protect and restore the South Platte Watershed, from the headwaters to the Denver Metropolitan Area.



SPRUWP GOALS



Collaborate, educate, and engage



Connect people with water



Protect and restore through leveraging resources



Communicate achievements and share technical information

SPRUWP IMPACTS

The SPRUWP adds value in the following ways:

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- **Collaborative Culture:** SPRUWP fosters a culture of collaboration within the watershed, emphasizing the importance and value of working together to develop effective solutions.

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- **Collaborative Culture:** SPRUWP fosters a culture of collaboration within the watershed, emphasizing the importance and value of working together to develop effective solutions.
- **Partner Cultural Awareness:** SPRUWP brings together partners from a wide variety of backgrounds to build understanding and learn from each other's unique perspectives, skill sets, and expertise.



SPRUWP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

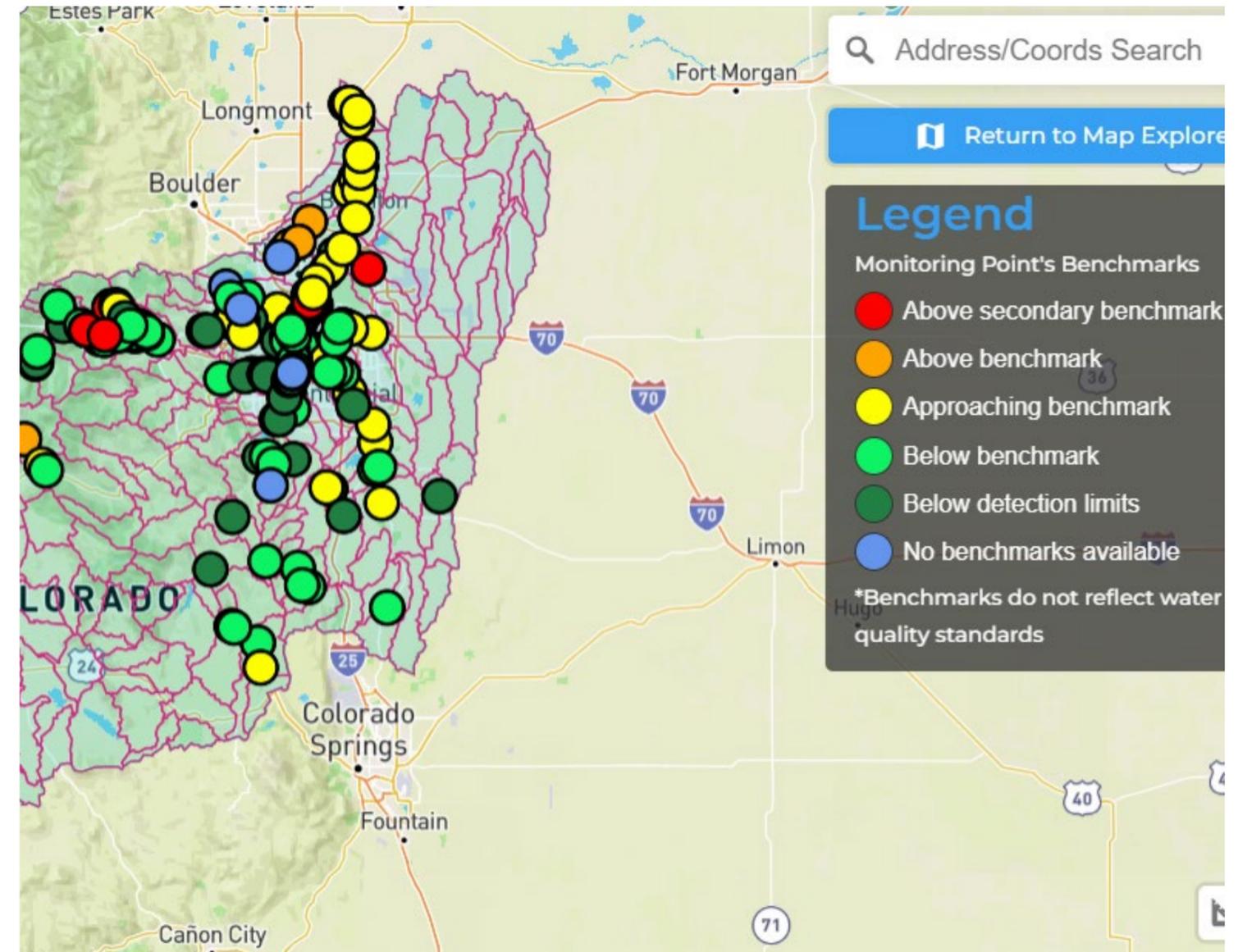
SPRUWP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- South Platte River Water Quality Assessment Tool
- USGS Water Quality Studies
- Field Tours & Workshops
- Grants & Funding



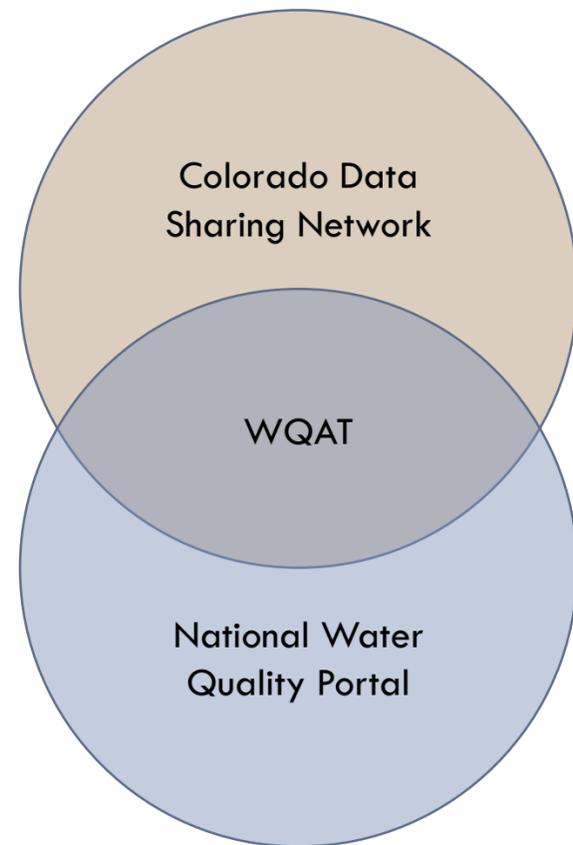
WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (WQAT) OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

- Help scientists, officials, and educators review and assess water quality data
- Allow members of the public to conveniently and easily track water quality data
- Provide an interactive way to view water quality data to further understand pollution and strategies to improve water quality

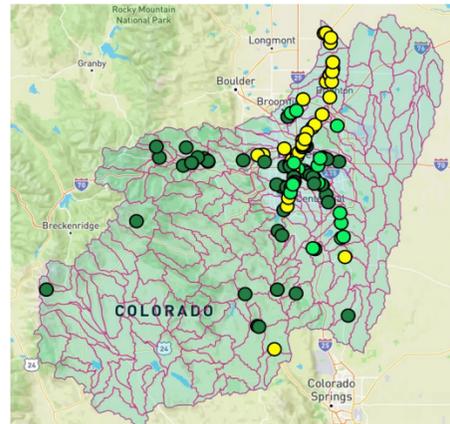


WQAT HIGHLIGHTS

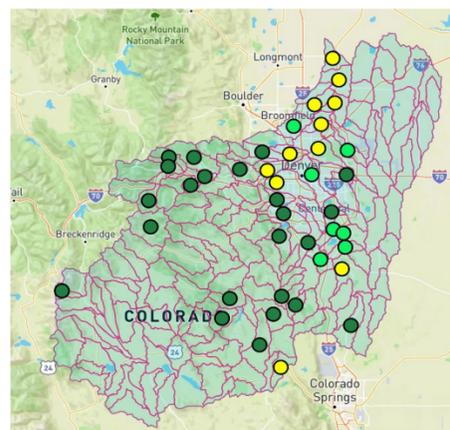
Dynamically integrates new data from 16 partner organizations



Map versus watershed data explorer views

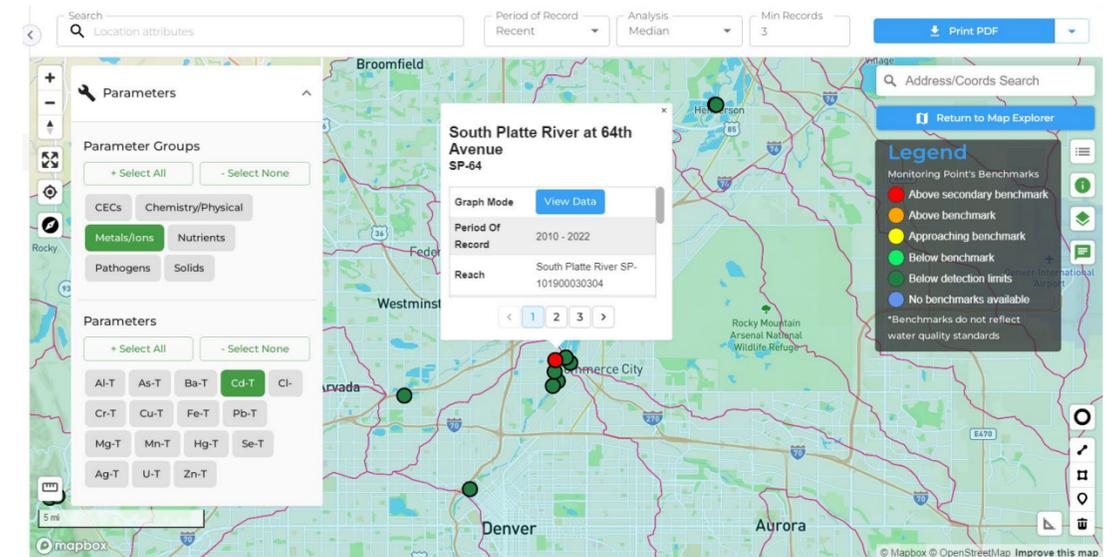


Map Explorer Tool



Watershed Explorer Tool

Easy to visualize hotspots



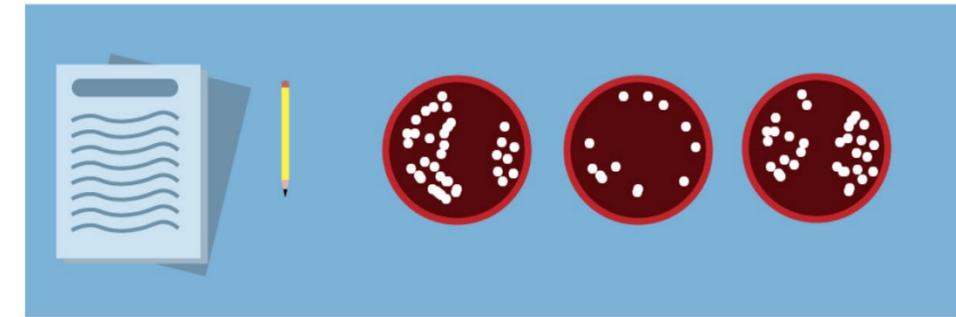
WQAT HIGHLIGHTS

Data visualizations provide insight into water quality trends



Storylines provide background on water quality parameters

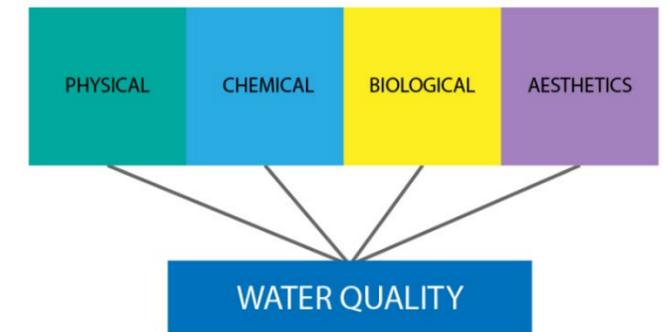
E. coli Storyline



Don't know much about *E. coli*? The storyline is the perfect place to start. Learn not only what *E. coli* are, but additionally what can be done to reduce its pollutant load in the South Platte River and its tributaries.

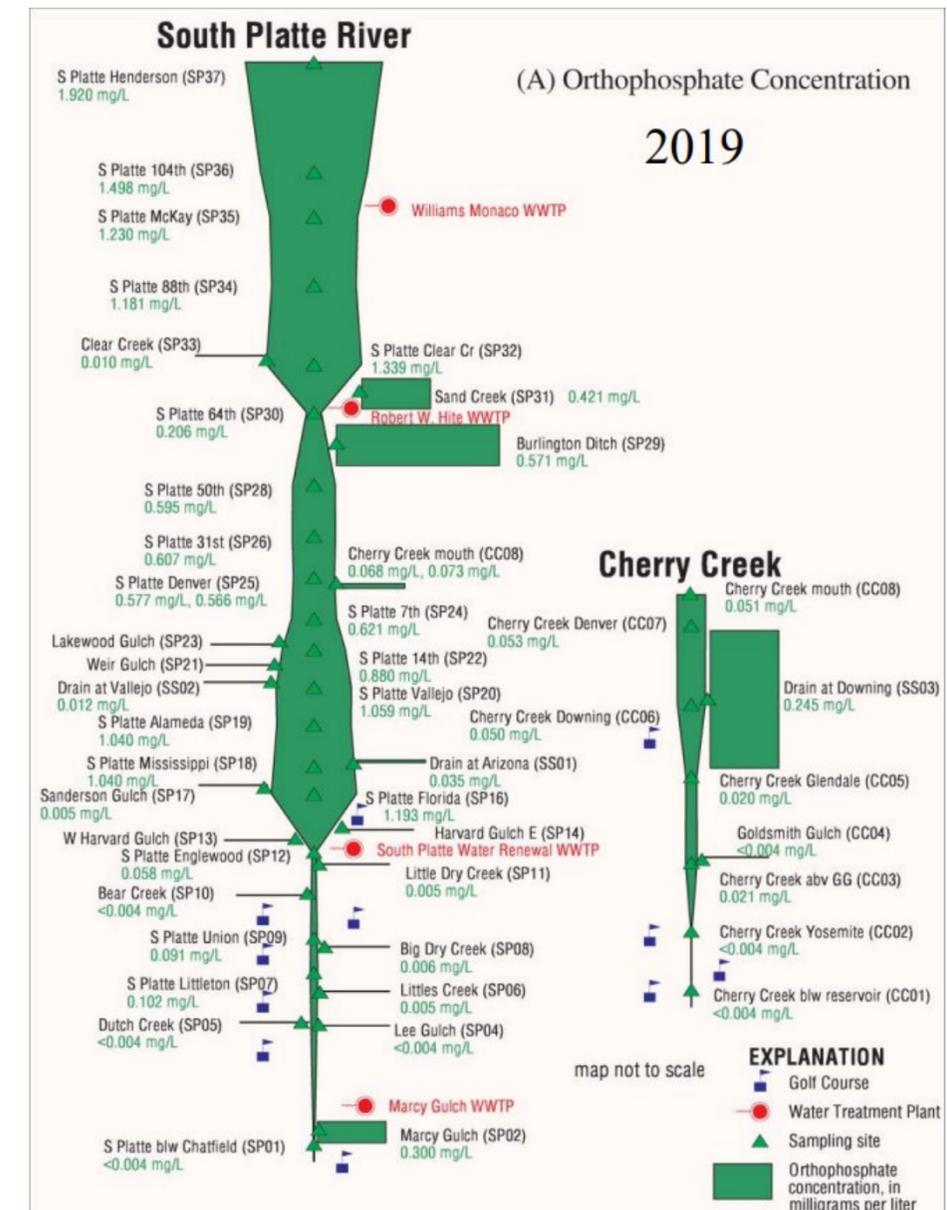


Example of a multi-parameter monitor used to record in-situ water-quality measurements.

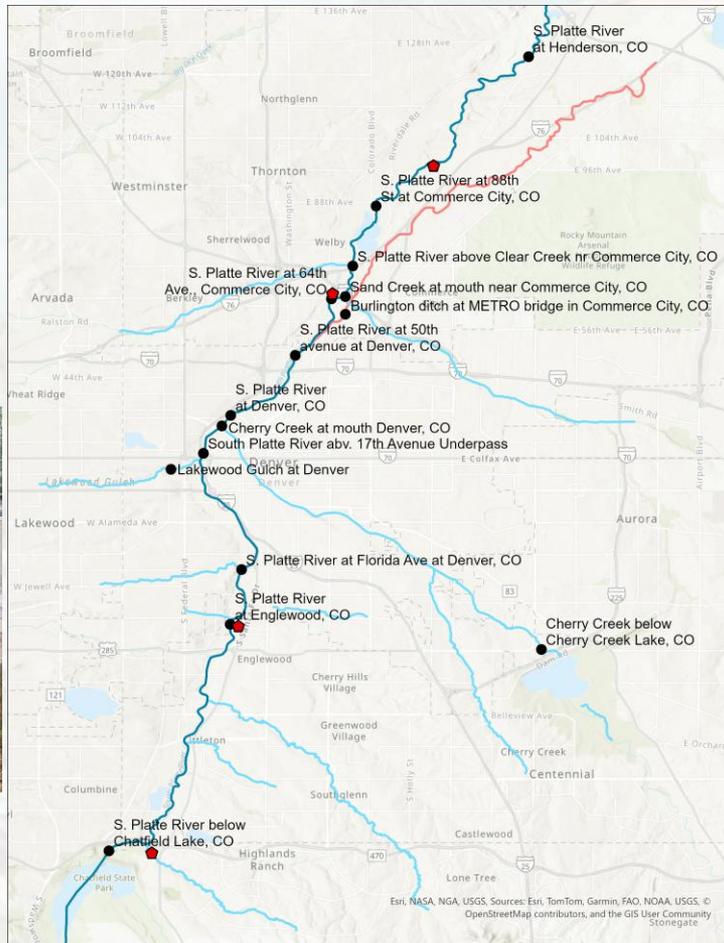
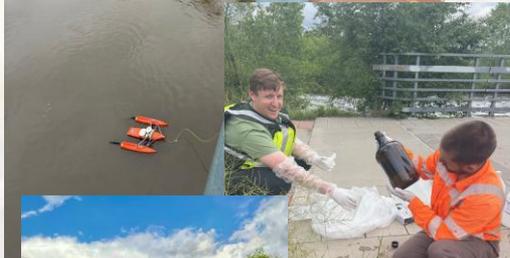


US Geological Survey Water Quality Studies

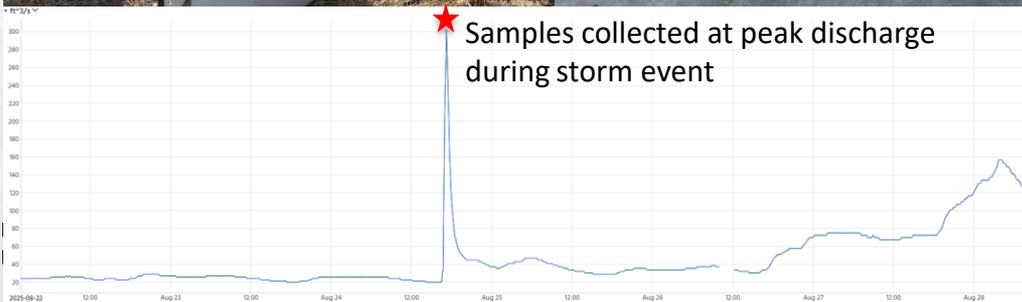
- Two studies funded using USGS Cooperative Matching Funds
- 2020 South Platte River Longitudinal Study
- 2025-2026 Follow-Up South Platte River Synoptic Study
- Expands scope and parameters of original 2020 study



"High" Flow Synoptic - May

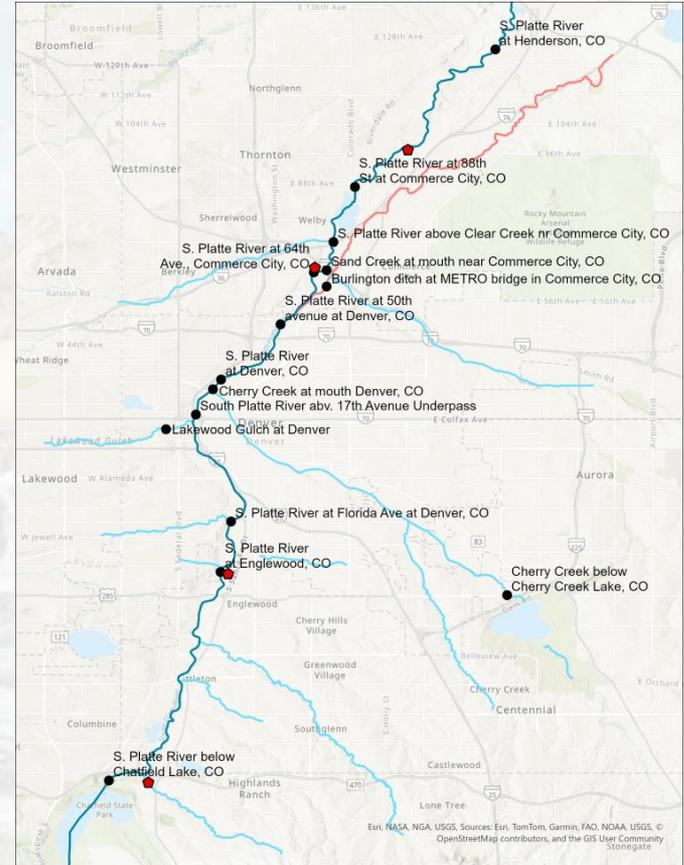


Event Flow Synoptic – August

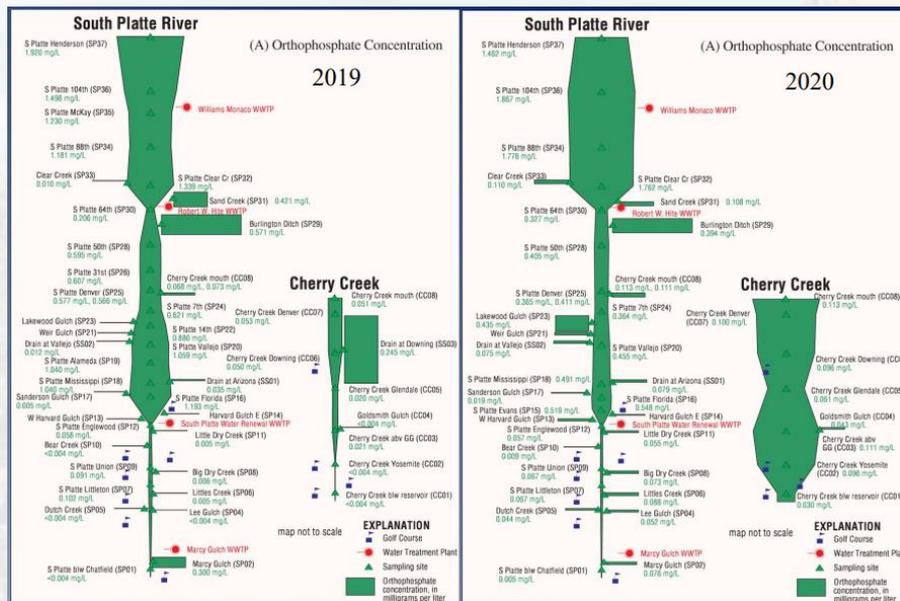
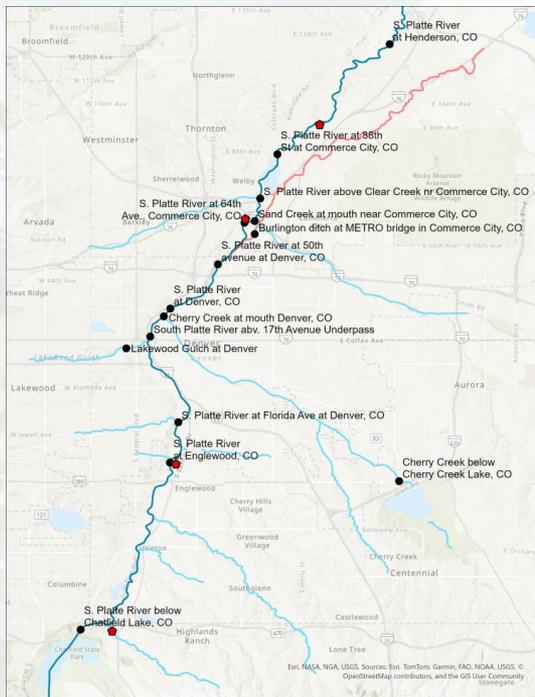


Low Flow Synoptic – September 2026

- 15 sites to be sampled (same as high-flow synoptic sites)
- Collaborative effort with USGS and other South Platte River stakeholders



Deliverables: Interactive Web App and Data Release



[Rocky Mountain Regional Snowpack Chemistry Map | U.S. Geological Survey](#)

WORKSHOPS & FIELD TOURS

- Funding Workshop
- Water Equity & Community Change Workshop
- Green Infrastructure Workshop
- Collaborative Projects Workshop
- Lower Bear Creek Field Tour
- Binney Treatment Plant Tour
- CSU Spur Tour



GRANTS & FUNDING

Urban Waters Small Grants

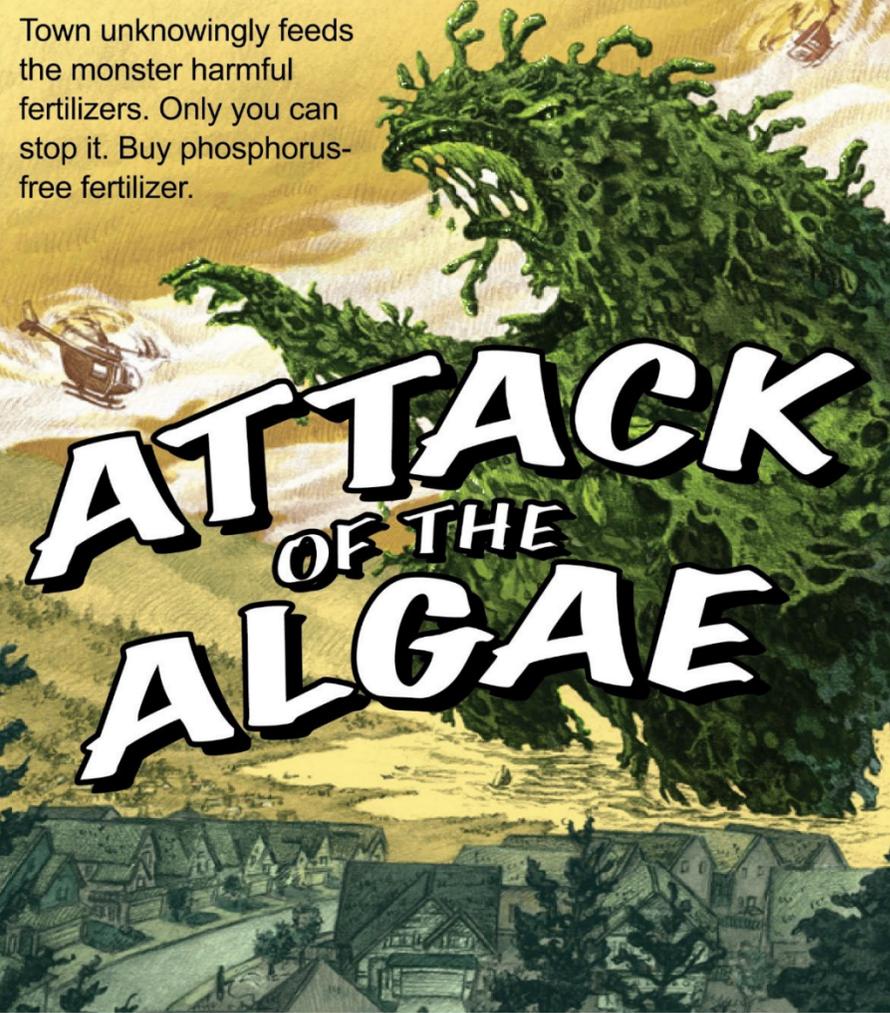
- Lower Bear Creek: Youth Leadership to Solve the Pollution Problem (2016)
- Heron Pond Regional Open Space Master Plan along the South Platte River (2016)
- Keep It Clean-Neighborhood Environmental Trios (KIC-NET) outdoor classroom (2014)
- H2Only stormwater messaging campaign (2012 & 2021)

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Five Star & Urban Waters Grants

- Resident-Driven Solutions to Lower Bear Creek Water Quality Impairment (2023)
- Sand Creek Urban Greenway Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality Community Stewardship (2022)
- Youth Engagement in Lower Bear Creek Watershed (2021)
- Improve the water quality and riparian habitat of Bear Creek in Denver, CO (2018)
- And more!

GRANTS & FUNDING

Town unknowingly feeds the monster harmful fertilizers. Only you can stop it. Buy phosphorus-free fertilizer.



ATTACK OF THE ALGAE

Rainwater can quickly wash phosphorus from fertilizer into our water system. Phosphorus is like junk food for algae, causing it to grow out of control, turning our waters green, lowering water quality and even killing fish. Use phosphorus-free lawn fertilizers to keep it clean.



Pick up after your dog.

Storm drains feed local streams and rivers, which end up in our lakes and reservoirs. So please. **Pick up after your pets, and help keep bodies of water as places to fish, swim, and enjoy.**





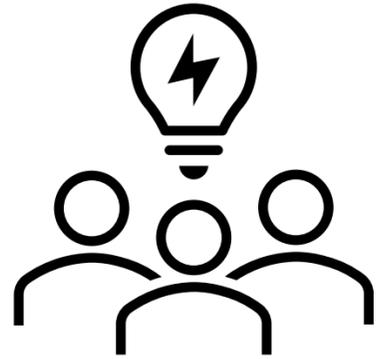
SPRUWP 2026 & BEYOND

SPRUWP Challenges & Opportunities

- Funding challenges in 2025
- Partners stepped up to provide funding to sustain operations in 2026
- Continue exploring options for funding in 2027



SPRUWP 2026 Work Plan



Host the **Collaborative Projects Workshop** at the beginning of the year for partners to share what projects, activities, and events they are focused on in 2026

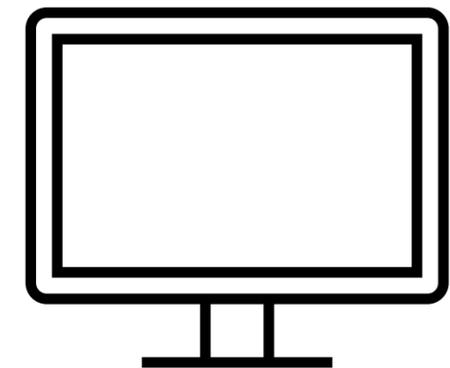
SPRUWP 2026 Work Plan



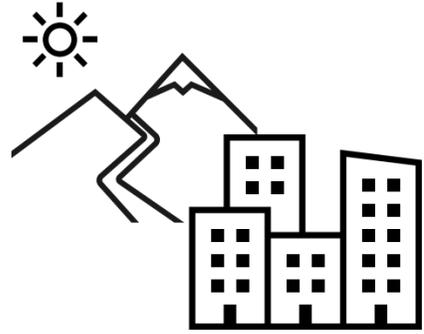
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Build and maintain a **partnership directory and database** of projects and events to:

- Track projects and initiatives across the watershed
- Facilitate connections among partners to better leverage grant and funding opportunities

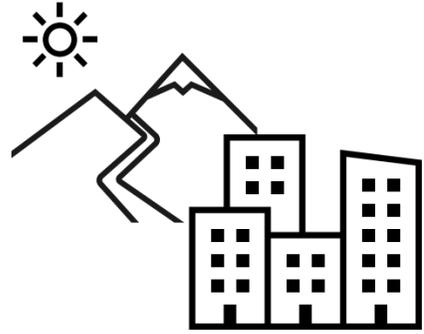


SPRUWP 2026 Work Plan



Host two **field tours/events** on topics and projects of interest within the watershed

SPRUWP 2026 Work Plan



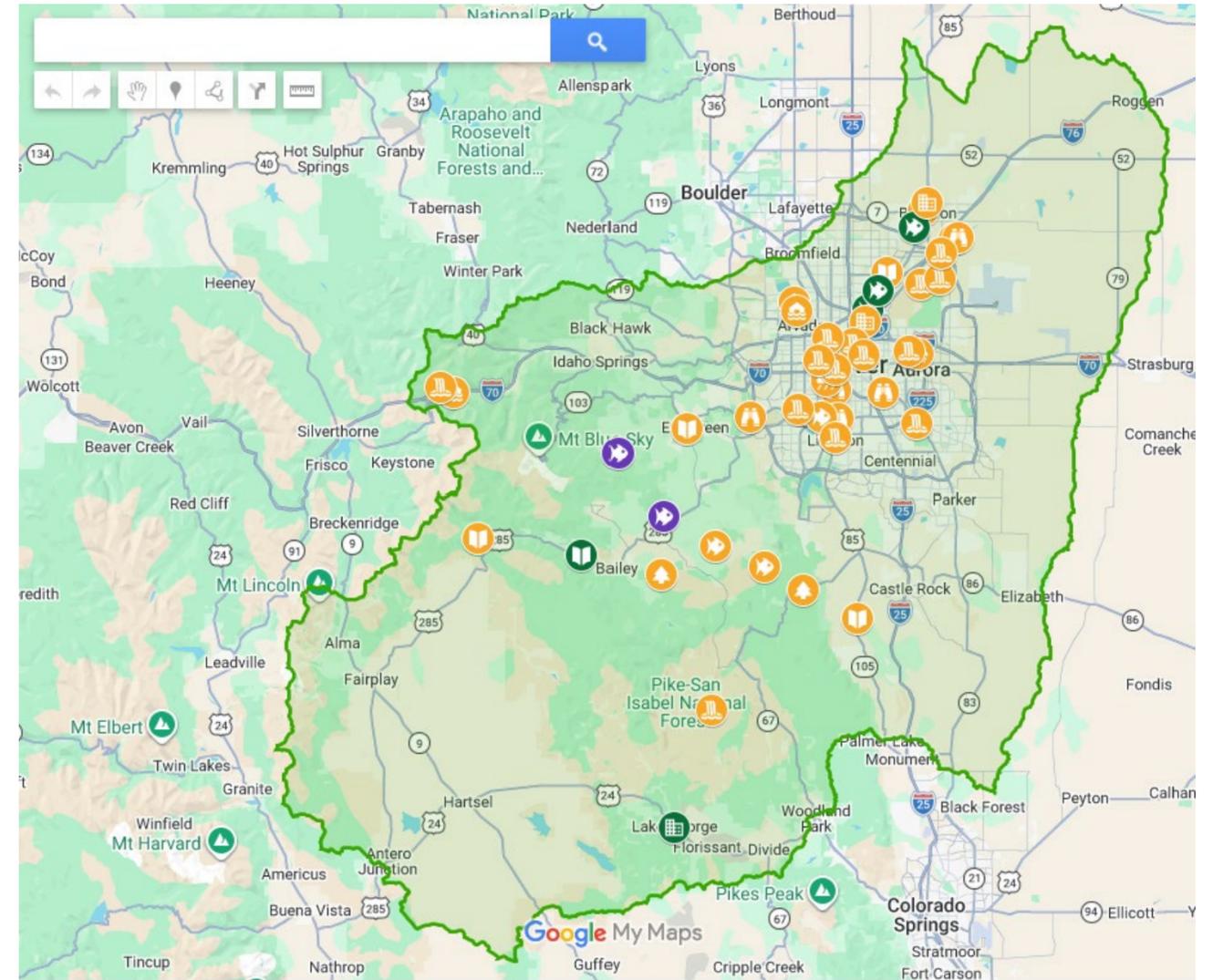
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Distribute a **monthly partnership newsletter** with updates on events, funding opportunities, and projects to:

- Identify and amplify partner programs and initiatives
- Create and distribute resources to help partners plan and organize events



SPRUWP Collaborative Projects Workshop & Database



SPRUWP 2027 & Beyond

- Scope is dependent on funding.
- Interests moving forward include:
 - Hosting regular committee meetings focused on upcoming grant opportunities/Urban Waters specific programs
 - Hosting community volunteer events (e.g., tree plantings, trash pickup, etc.)
 - Contributing funds to support local projects





QUESTIONS?