Colorado’s Riparian Corridors
Connecting Our Cities To The Headwaters Via Floodplain Greenways

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Using floodplain greenways to travel toward the sourcewater

What if you started bicycling in Denver or

in another floodprone community a little bit upstream (like Golden)?

Could you get to the headwaters?
Could you travel along floodplains in Fort Collins or in Colorado Springs? and reach the headwaters?
Wilderness Areas & Roadless Areas
White River National Forest, Colorado
A Significant Component of the Front Range’s Headwaters

“... untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”
“Where’s the beef?”

• What could the connection to the headwaters be?
• What should that connection be?
• What do cities want that connection to be?
• If the connection is tangible (i.e. something besides money, something you can touch or experience with your other senses)

• Let’s explore floodplain greenways
Greenway:

1. A linear open space established along a natural corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or ridgeline.

2. An open-space connector linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and with populated areas.
I Suggest Three Types of Greenways

• **Basic Greenway** — *almost allegorical streams; accept most constraints of prior urbanization*

• **Enhanced Greenway** — *more recognizable channel shapes; moderate level of stream corridor rehabilitation*

• **Restored Greenway** — *stream and floodplain corridors that recreate pre-settlement riparian channel and overbank conditions; very high level of riparian corridor network restoration*
Potential Benefits of Greenways

- Flood hazard reduction
- Creation of an integrated system of community amenities
- Water quality and habitat enhancement
- Protection of agricultural and urban gardening lands
- Recreation – physical and emotional health
- Environmental education
- Connectivity of communities to each other, to headwaters, and to wilderness
- Opportunities for alternative travel
Colorado’s Riparian Corridors
Connections - Part I

A “Denver-wide” View
A “Denver-wide” View – Existing & Proposed Flood Hazard Reduction Greenways
Colorado’s Riparian Corridors

Connections - Part II

A Regional View

(UDFCD – Denver Metro area)
A Regional View (UDFCD) – All Existing & Proposed Greenways ~ With & Without Flood Hazard Reduction
Interior Secretary Ken Salazar is promoting the “Refuge to Refuge” Greenway in the Denver Metro Area.
Consideration is Also Being Given to Connecting Rocky Flats to Rocky Mountain National Park
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Connections - Part III

A Statewide View
A Statewide View - Existing & Proposed Flood Hazard Reduction Greenways

Existing Greenways with Flood Hazard Reduction as an Explicit and Significant Element

Proposed Greenways with Flood Hazard Reduction as an Explicit and Significant Element
A Statewide View  
(JUST A THOUGHT) 
Maybe Create a Network by Filling in the Floodplain Greenway Gaps?
Colorado’s Riparian Corridors

Connections - Part IV

A Possible First Step in the Clear Creek Riparian Corridor
Implementing the Clear Creek Greenway Is a Logical First Step Toward Connecting the Metro Area to the Headwaters
Planning is Underway for a Connection from Golden (& uninc. Jefferson County) to Clear Creek County
From the Bottom of Floyd Hill to Idaho Springs
Idaho Springs
Official Floodplain Mapping for Idaho Springs
Through Idaho Springs and On to ...
Georgetown
Official Floodplain Map for Georgetown
Silver Plume
Silver Plume and Beyond
Official Floodplain Map for Silver Plume
This segment of the Clear Creek Greenway is already in place; it starts 5 miles upstream of Silver Plume in Bakerville.
It extends 5 miles to Loveland Valley *(the beginner ski area)*
The Greenway Master Plan proposes connections to Summit County.
Your Destination – The Headwaters

Clear Creek County

Summit County
Is there a legitimate nexus?

Could Denver Water and/or Aurora Water establish a valid set of reasons *on behalf of their customers* for:

– collaborating with Clear Creek County in implementing the Master Plan for the Clear Creek Greenway, and

– collaborating on other greenways connecting the Denver Metro Area to its headwaters?
Is there a legitimate nexus?

Could the U.S. Forest Service and/or the National Park Service (as managers of public lands in the headwaters) establish a valid set of reasons for:

– collaborating with Clear Creek County in implementing the Master Plan for the Clear Creek Greenway, and

– collaborating on other greenways connecting the Denver Metro Area to its headwaters?
Questions
Comments
Better Ideas

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