

Native Fish Comments - WMP Public Meeting #2, 4/4/2019

What steps are being taken to ensure rare native fish, unique to the St Vrain, are not locally extirpated?
Wildlife & fish should be able to migrate through the river corridor from Airport Road to Sandstone
Preserve the St Vrain riparian zone and upland should be preserve in perpetuity
Leave native trees, grasses, shrubs, etc. I love the natural areas of the creek and think the wildlife does also. I hate the stripped concrete trough and believe wildlife does also.
Modify Beckwith Diversion to allow native fish passage
Remove game/non-native fish from gravel ponds or prevent such fish from spilling into the creek.
Remove or provide fish passage through Beckwith Diversion.
Prioritize three planting on creek banks to manage temperatures. This should not be sacrificed in flood control plans.
We should be shooting for a better "grade" for our stream reaches not accepting things as they are. Woody debris is important for fish spawning and for aquatic insects/amphibians.
Ensure that the RSVP flood control impacts on the St Vrain channel does not result in extirpation of rare native fish
Control ag and development impact on water from runoff of fertilizers, silt, pollution, etc.
Where are all the trees along the greenway? Aesthetic and good for fish, birds, wildlife corridor, etc.

Native Fish Key Themes

Provide habitat along creek corridors
Measure and improve numbers of native fish species in creek corridors
Create fish passages
Prioritize native fish species over non-native and game species where possible

Pollinators Key Themes

Plant bunches of native flowers that bloom April - September
Consider forage plans for contractors - other communities are doing this
Habitat is "low hanging" fruit
Concerns with population density & grasses
policy at city level
Stop enforcing weed ordinance for dandelions
More trees along river and "deadfall" to provide for native bees, beetles, etc.
Perhaps give illustrations of what natives to plant in our gardens with the help of nurseries such as Harlequin Gardens and groups such as the Colorado Native Plant Society
Should require native plants for new developments (xeriscape & native) not huge tracts of bluegrass lawn that is an ecological desert and wastes water resources
City should incentivize neighborhood pollinator gardens/communities
Create a City pollinator network that enables individual garden owners to map locations and connect with one another
Reduce fragmentation by distributing native wildflower seeds to all homeowners
More education for HOAs so that they don't encourage vast tracts of lawn and keep people from planting native plants. Change city codes to be less restrictive about "weeds" and educate populace about what "weeds" are
We can distribute seed all we want but we need social/human changes in norms - educating the younger generation; classes on xeriscape @ library; media connecting Longmont to its natural pollinators
More education of public on pollinator plight and dangers of pesticide use
Ban sale of neonicotinoids in Longmont (code change)
Require/suggest native plants for peripheral plantings (like along Nelson Road in West Grange)

Provide more pollinator habitat throughout the City (i.e., in new developments, when public spaces are renovated)
Restrict the use of neonicotinoids
Install bee boxes
Provide environmental education signage about the purpose of pollinators and what the public can do to provide habitat
Create pollinator-friendly policies

Bee hotels are a great ideal. It would be great to have signage along with it to explain its function and maybe some pollinator facts. Boulder County People & Pollinators Action Network (BCPPAN) could help with that.
Spoke to Brad Schol about urging/forcing/requiring housing developments to include native plants as their open space requirement. Amend development code. Greenway standards to compel developers. Capture this into recommendations.
Install bee boxes. Yes! Include signage and info for education. PPAN will help. Don Murray & Ingrid Moore.
Do suggestions presented like: apply for grants to fund: bee boxes, education, more demonstration gardens; converting turf to more pollinator friendly vegetation, especially when updating like Lou Miller Park
Utilize community gardens. They could use some care and plants, i.e., 11th Street
More plants, flowers, etc. along roads like Hover
Plant native wildflowers around borders of parking lots, roads, etc. to feed pollinators
Give away native seed mixes, promote native plants in people's yards
Sample gardens open to the public (like at the water facility in Berthoud)
Eliminate use of neonicotinoids (systemic) insecticides
Is there a map of where the native trees will be planted as part of RSVP?
City promotes Arbor Day tree sale but none of the available trees are native to Colorado
Plant milkweed
Prioritize planting trees, shrubs, bushes that attract native pollinators - remember the early spring, late fall pollinators. Also look for things that provide shade cover and habitat.
I like the converting turf idea.
Include plans to make management policies nimble to accommodate unanticipated global warming effects i.e., expansion of warm water transition zones, less water, more smoke filled skies, etc.
Cottonwoods are extremely important native trees. Though the cotton is "messy" it is vital nest material for songbirds.
Greenspire, coffee toll NOT native to Colorado.

Biodiversity Key Themes

City planning and development codes should provide for habitat protection and especially connectivity. Longmont should not be the weak link in habitat connectivity in the county/region.
Don't neglect the solid and (illegible) component of diversity! The underground fungal and bacterial communities that facilitate floral establishment as well as soils textures, pHs + other descriptors of the pedon.
Preservation of wildlife corridors promotes genetic diversity
We should consider entire length of river corridor as one habitat. We should not be doing piecemeal as everything upstream is connected to the downstream and vice versa.
We need more wildlife surveys and these surveys should drive changes within the city. You have to know what is around you before you begin building, constructing, etc. We have no baseline data for most (illegible) prior to flood.
In areas along St Vrain river where corridor is narrow or where wildlife passage may be obstructed with fencing and other man-made features, the city should accommodate migrating wildlife by providing an alternate dryland path in the river corridor for wildlife use. They should not have to walk thru water.
Promote biodiverse farming not mono crop
Preserve the St Vrain riparian zone and adjacent areas in perpetuity with open space purchases, conservation easements, etc.
City should conduct comprehensive baseline studies to determine types of wildlife species that use or migrate along the river corridor. Data is necessary to determine migration solutions.
Why is intrinsic value, rights of nature always last?
For fish and wildlife, ensure an open river corridor from Airport Road clear to Sandstone Ranch!
Legislate meaningful i.e., strict penalties on developers to incentivize preservation of ecosystems.

Establish baseline data, monitor changes over time, and respond with management actions as needed
Preserve habitat, particularly corridors, through various mechanisms including land preservation and development requirements
Understand and recognize the impact of wildlife management in and around Longmont (think regionally)

Wildlife Conflicts Key Themes

Beaver should not be considered a conflict species. Rather, manage them for environmental benefit.
Last summer we had 30+ turkey vultures in our front yard (near Central Elem) every night for months. The mess, and the smell, were amazing. Happy to have them in town but that many birds for that long way exhausting. I'm not even sure anything can realistically be done but I'm crossing my fingers and cheering on the owls and crows in that tree.
We need to set aside natural areas to attract wildlife like foxes, geese, rabbits where they can coexist as part of a natural ecosystem. Too much development of housing takes away natural areas.
Prairie dogs are a keystone species and should be recognized as such. Beavers are the same. Without these 2 species, numerous other species have no homes, food, etc. including charismatic species such as hawks and burrowing owls.
What about landscaping of drainages? Providing habitat within new developments.
What about more bat houses instead of spraying for mosquitos
Fox habitat improvements to limit the rabbits or owl nesting
Rabbits without any natural enemies and increasing
Realize humans are the problem, act accordingly
Measure and report populations of migrating birds. Identify and address issues regarding population (illegible)
With regard to prairie dog management/conservation - work with other agencies to secure and protect areas adequate to support the species ecology and connectivity requirements to the greatest extent possible! Thank you for all your efforts on our and wildlife's behalf!
More education about housecats and how they affect wildlife
City signage education on feeding wildlife, fishing line (leave no trace), and spread of diseases with wildlife
Wildlife proofing classes/education/outreach - closing/cap chimneys = window wells - baby animals
Introduce owls for turkey manmt
_____ conflicts
_____ management practices?

Preserve land and corridors for wildlife to coexist within, and around, the City using public and private land opportunities
Provide habitat improvements such as bat houses
Partner with neighboring agencies to increase natural areas and wildlife habitat
Provide outreach to the community about how to address conflict issues



Reduce some potential conflicts by protecting habitat connectivity & wildlife movement corridors

Cats should be required to be indoors or be on a leash. They are one of the major killers of not just birds but reptiles, small mammals, amphibians.

Along St Vrain where river is narrow or wildlife passage obstructed (w/fencing, etc.) City should support wildlife by providing dryland path for wildlife for maintaining connectivity
We should all that we can to protect and sustain (and restore) native species in the community
Require buffer zones for various wildlife habitat
Define riparian zone of St Vrain and include "upland"
No dogs at Dickens Farm
The St Vrain has tested positive for e-coli - need on-going monitoring
I love the raptors, fox, deer, bobcats, and appreciate the diversity of species and habitat required to support them. I much prefer being able to experience natural areas vs. development names after the wildlife it replaced.
preserving large tracts of land + habitat connectivity for large predators/ungulates (bears, mountain lions) deer often positively impacts other species
Wildlife passage should be considered along the river corridor to facilitate movement of large species such as white-tailed deer, bear, etc. the riparian area is the starting from the edge of the river not within the channel.
Allow prairie dog colonies to thrive - keystone species for burrowing owls, other raptors, ferrets, etc.
Raise public awareness of migrating species - birds, insects/pollinators
Turkeys are a delight
Prioritize habitat connectivity
I enjoy watching bats in the evening along ditch greenways
Prairie dog colonies provide wildlife watching opportunities
Ditches and greenways in neighborhood are a great place to see wildlife and appreciate biodiversity that is close to home (accessible)
Why is species on which others rely last?
The 150+ bird species I've recorded within city limits have enriched my quality of life in Longmont. Continuing to support biodiversity at all levels is not only paramount for ecosystem health but for quality of life as well. Thanks!
What about small urban woods to promote biodiversity

Continue to protect and provide habitat for the variety of species in Longmont
Wildlife passages and connectivity should be provided, including riparian buffer zones
A variety of wildlife including foxes, birds, and prairie dogs are enjoyed by residents

Foxes - I miss seeing them between 23rd St & 21st St.

Guiding Principles Comments - WMP Public Meeting #2, 4/4/2019

Guiding Principles Key Themes

More input from Open Space/Natural Resources staff trained in ecology on planning and zoning decisions which affect open space/wildlife corridors/riparian and other sensitive habitats
We need comprehensive and on-going baseline wildlife studies along St Vrain - including potential for wildlife since RSVP.
Longmont should have a natural resources planner whose job is to review, any/all annexation proposals or development applications in proximity to open space, riparian areas +/- habitat sensitive areas. Boulder City and Ft. Collins have this.
More "re-fill" not "in-fill". Can we increase occupancy of vacant buildings first before developing "empty" land that is being used by wildlife.
As City looks at plan and funding for west of Sunset for RSVP leave trees to help the river!
City should ask voters to increase open space sales tax for land acquisition along St Vrain and other public amenities as part of a long term flood recovery and long term maintenance
We need to put conservation easements in place along the St Vrain to provide access for maintenance and to provide a buffer/screen of vegetation between river and development
Extending open space tax beyond its expiration to help with open space land acquisition and management Yes!
The city needs a natural resource planner to advice on development in areas with riparian habitat areas

Extension of open space tax for land acquisition (habitat preservation)
Natural resource planner involvement in relevant planning projects and proposals
Usage of conservation tools to protect and preserve habitat

Other Comments Received by Email - WMP Public Meeting #2, 4/4/2019

BRON did accomplish getting the following wording into the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan, Environmental Resources Element:
(minus the brackets)

ER 1.03 Acknowledging our responsibility to ensure [the rights of] that naturally occurring ecosystems and their native species populations [to] continue to exist and flourish in Boulder County, Boulder County will develop conservation and recovery plans for priority Species of Special Concern.

I would like to propose that Longmont include a similar phrase in their Wildlife Management Plan update (perhaps in the preface?)

Such wording would be stronger than just "to support diverse and abundant wildlife for their intrinsic value".

I suggest the intention ought to be to protect wildlife's intrinsic "right to exist and flourish". This is standard language within the "rights of nature" movement worldwide.

I was pleased to hear of the 2017 resolution to protect pollinators.

I met with Aren Rodriguez a month ago to offer a draft resolution to protect the St Vrain Watershed.

Such a resolution could strengthen the achievement of the goals of the Wildlife Management Plan.

BRON plans to meet with all city council members concerning our draft resolution in the near future.

Here is an excerpt of that draft wording:

A much broader vision--one that transcends existing minimum stream flow regulations, and setting aside of small habitat conservation areas--

will be needed to sustain native species throughout the watershed.

Acknowledging the rights of native ecosystems and their native species populations to exist and flourish within the watershed

is a necessary first step toward establishing this vision.

Key Themes

Data collection on wildlife is necessary to making meaningful management decisions

Understand and manage riparian corridors as zones, holistically - up and down stream and as extensions into uplands

Acknowledgement of the rights of nature to exist

Use conservation tools (i.e., easements) to protect and improve habitat along the St Vrain

The City should act as a leader in habitat preservation and restoration efforts.

Manage invasive species

Protect wildlife in riparian corridors and streams by providing habitat (i.e., trees, shrubs,

No allowance of variances along the St Vrain

Policy needed for cats "running at-large"

As to restoring and/or increasing, preserving and enhancing wildlife habitat, I support the promotion of more private yard landscapes becoming (xeric) native or regional or locally adapted species (which includes flowering shrubs and grasses which are allowed to mature (as mentioned last night).

Still more: let us also suggest green roofs throughout the city?

They could link a large number of new spaces: see attached photo. (And for smiles the green roofed bus.)

In this manner we citizens may better follow the lead of the city?

I am working with Mark Guttridge of Ollin Farms to build a couple demonstration experimental and educational regenerative agriculture projects - such that they attract wildlife like pollinators and birds on open space property and elsewhere. "Regenerative Agriculture" is a holistic land-management practice of farming techniques which focus on healing the soil. Healthy organic soil holds more water, makes the soil more flood resistant, and fights disease - all while increasing biodiversity and supporting wildlife.

This sustainable method of managing natural ecosystems (through small diverse farms) restores the land, reverses ecosystem degradation and provides renewed free ecosystem services.

There are sponsoring grants available.

1) My highest priority is to maintain all setbacks with no variances!

From the WMP: The City could increase its current setback requirements from streams and wetlands and add setbacks for other high-priority habitats (ditches, ponds, mature trees, native grasslands, etc.)

The Riparian Management Zone consists of a stream or ditch, adjacent riparian vegetation, and a buffer extending up to 300 feet beyond the outer edge of the riparian vegetation (including the outer edge of the canopy of trees).

2) Let us attend to strict noise and light pollution requirements, for the sake of wildlife, along the St Vrain Creek Corridor under the RSVP project!

(comprised of the river and the adjacent riparian area) is critical wildlife habitat. This means that it is “an area of unique habitat which has a crucial role in sustaining populations of native wildlife and in perpetuating and encouraging a diversity of native species in the county. The area may be significantly productive habitat or particularly vital to the life requirements of species that are critically imperiled or vulnerable to extirpation.” The BCCP further designates the St. Vrain Creek corridor as a riparian habitat connector. A riparian habitat connector is an area where “wildlife movement adjacent to relative unfragmented waterways... provides connectivity among Environmental Conservation Areas.” To prevent future flooding after the devastating 2013 flood, the Resilient St. Vrain (RSVP) flood mitigation project was implemented. As a result of this project, the river corridor through Longmont has been/will be significantly altered to pass more water, including widening and deepening the river channel and removing almost all trees and other vegetation comprising the river’s riparian area. It is my understanding that no comprehensive wildlife or vegetation surveys were done anywhere within Longmont prior to the devastating 2013 flood. Therefore, there are no pre-flood data of species presence or densities along the river corridor to compare with data collected post-flood. I have been doing wildlife (primarily bird) surveys at the Peschel open space property near Sandstone Ranch since early 2016. These surveys were a condition of a grant used to partially fund river and greenway restoration work in that area. Although it is impossible to chart how the flora and fauna have changed—for better or worse—as a result of the flood, my survey partner and I have recorded at least 90 species of birds in our 3 years surveying. This accounts for nearly 1/5 of all bird species recorded in the entire state of Colorado. We have also recorded 5 species of mammal at this site, including American mink and American beaver, both riparian-obligate species. The incredible diversity of wildlife at Peschel can be accounted for by its distance from the city proper and the ability to let the river meander and vegetation grow up naturally within the area. However, the river corridor running through the city of Longmont also contains a lot of diversity. Last year, I began conducting bird surveys at Roger’s Grove and Golden Ponds to provide post-flood, but pre-RSVP work data. Incredibly, despite being in the middle of the city, my survey partner and I have recorded at least 92 bird species at these two sites combined. Like Peschel, we have also recorded American mink

In accentuating a wildlife corridor through town, we may enable needed genetic diversity as well as provide some habitat within the city. But we may also be enhancing the ability of wildlife to get into trouble that leads to their demise (raccoons, coyotes, even bears or mountain lions), by getting them into situations in which they run into trouble with humans. How well prepared are our animal control efforts?

We may become in danger of loving our open space corridors to death. Humans who like to walk dogs, or to fish, are important supporters of wildlife and open space but also trample things. One area that I happen to be familiar with over a span of 30 years or so is the City of Boulders Bobolink trail starting at Baseline and Cherryvale. There, along the banks of South Boulder Creek, the use of split rail fences separating the creek from people over much of the path has enabled much richer bankside vegetation than was true decades ago. Are there plans for some limitations on riparian zone access in the St Vrain corridor?

For pollinators, I think that again, interactions with private properties adjacent and near to open space creates issues. Can we move to a city wide restriction on pesticides, including neonicotinoids?

At the earlier meeting, some of us were discussing prairie dogs. I'm wondering about issues around the establishment of new colonies, especially in the newly re-landscaped St Vrain corridor areas. Two categories of general concern:
Census: How are prairie dogs counted? Especially when landowners are so strongly motivated not to find more than 25, if it is true that under that limit, prairie dogs can be exterminated. Prairie dogs of course don't understand the need to cooperate with "census" efforts and those that may be initially visible scurry away to hide in their burrows. It is easy not to find them. Immigration: Prairie dogs naturally move around and establish new colonies. Old colonies eventually die out. This is a needed ongoing process. To successfully establish new colonies would prairie dogs need to learn to "immigrate" in "caravans" of 25 or more?

Within the city of limits of Longmont lies some of the most significant wildlife habitat in the State of Colorado. A bald eagle communal roost is located near Longmont Open Space on the confluence of St. Vrain and Boulder Creeks. It has been called “The Whopper” and “historic” by the public (Times-Call 1/20/2008) because of the large number of bald eagles roosting at the site. The seasonal eagle count average is 20 to 40 and has been as high as 80 in past years. Union Reservoir and surrounding habitat comprise one of the most productive habitats for nesting and migratory birds in eastern Colorado, especially on the north shore, according to the Boulder County Audubon Society. It also provides winter range and winter concentration areas for bald eagles and is part of an important regional bald eagle wintering and breeding area. Saint Vrain River is a one-of-a-kind transitional stream. It is an extremely important aquatic ecosystem that has been described by CPW as having “immense aquatic conservation value to the State of Colorado” because of the rare native fish (glacial relics) that inhabit the river, including state-listed threatened and special concern species. Transition zone streams, like the Saint Vrain, are heavily impacted by urban development on the Front Range and are considered one of the most imperiled aquatic habitats in Colorado (Colorado State Wildlife Action Plan). Plans are currently being drawn up for intensive urban development along the Saint Vrain River Corridor in designated opportunity zones. Oil and gas development activities are/will be taking place near Union Reservoir, including extraction of fossil fuels from beneath the reservoir. The future for Longmont’s wildlife is bleak unless the city takes immediate action to protect our wildlife and habitat through stronger land use laws, designation of wildlife conservation areas, and the mapping of wildlife habitat so that we know what we have, among other things.

Several comments I plan to submit is for a city policy to accept prairie dogs for relocation onto city owned property from public land outside of Longmont,
+ prairie dogs impacted by the 119 Bus Rapid Transit project. Longmont will benefit from this project so it should take responsibility for providing a new home for impacted prairie dogs.
+, the city should begin planting plains cottonwood trees on city OS properties near the confluence of St. Vrain/Boulder Creeks, where the communal roost is located. So in a 100 years, there will be strong trees where our eagles can build their nest or roost. + I plan to make it clear that this area should be protected with a good buffer. + Keep the public out of this area.

There is a chapter in the wmp titled “Recommendations for ordinance code changes.” This is where the recommendation to increase the riparian setback came from. I plan to submit comments which spell out ordinance changes regarding light/noise pollution, restricting building heights adjacent to the creek, etc., as stated in Stand’s letter, and as a condition of an annexation agreement the developer will dedicate the 150 setback. For the chapter regarding acquisition priorities I plan to emphasize OS acquisitions along the river.

I will also ask that a 300 foot setback for Union Reservoir. At one time CPW recommended this. I may submit a comment about wildlife surveys in that surveys should be the norm and funded, not the exception.

~City Council should be deciding body for development proposals in proximity to Open Space/wildlife habitat

~Any all/development proposals in proximity to Open Space and other habitat should have Boulder Co.

~Riparian conservation buffers need to be maintained with no variances/exceptions allowed.

~lighting and noise at night should be prohibited

~Dogs should not be allowed at Dickens Nature Area

~dogs should be on leash at Buttonrock on Sleepy Lion trail

~Full time vol. coordinator for Natural Resources needed