



Lower South Platte River Watershed

The Lower South Platte River Watershed totals 3,051,720 acres.

It includes all of Logan, Morgan, Phillips, and Sedgwick Counties, as well as a portion of eastern Weld County.

NRCS natural resource specialists are staffed at the Fort Morgan, Holyoke, Julesburg, and Sterling USDA Field Service Centers to provide assistance to watershed 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

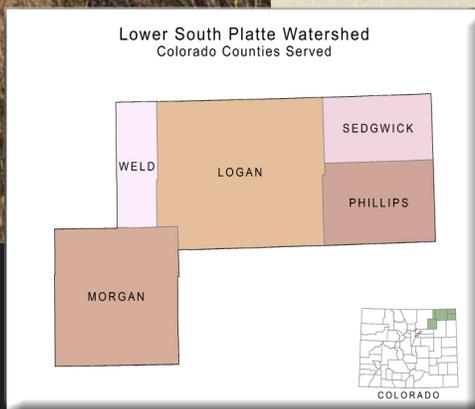
Instead of the traditional statewide approach in addressing priority resource issues like soil erosion, water quality, grazing lands, wildlife, and animal waste, NRCS looks to Colorado's ten watersheds to identify their particular local resource needs and priorities.

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 Lower South Platte River Watershed

- Water Quantity
- Rangeland Health
- Water Quality
- Erosion
- Invasive Species

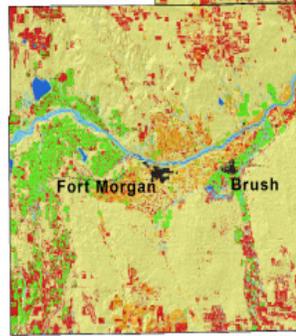
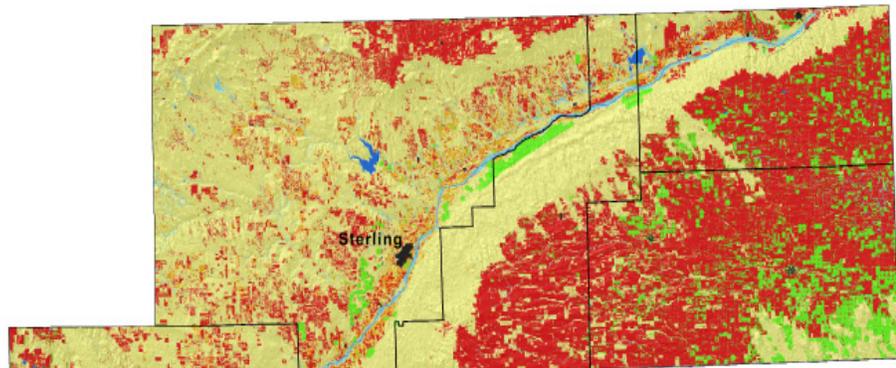


Helping People Help the Land

Watershed Profile

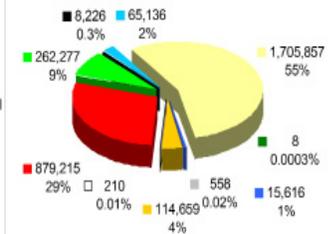


Lower South Platte Watershed



- No Data
- Agriculture Land
- Other
- Dryland Agriculture
- Irrigated Agriculture
- Commercial/Residential
- Riparian
- Rangeland
- Forest
- Water

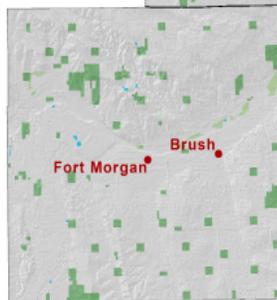
Land Use Acres



Land Use

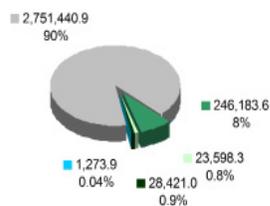
- No Data
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- Rangeland
- Forest
- Other
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Lower South Platte Watershed



- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State
- State, County, City; Wildlife, Parks & Rec
- U.S. Forest Service

Land Ownership Acres



Land Owner

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private
- State
- State, County, City; Wildlife, Parks & Rec
- U.S. Forest Service

Fiscal Year 2011 Environmental Quality Incentives Program Summary

Lower South Platte River	Applications Received	Contracts Approved	Dollars Approved	Acres Treated
Lower South Platte - Agro-Forestry	12	11	\$58,568	657
Lower South Platte - All Lands/Animal Waste Management	4	2	\$133,381	44
Lower South Platte - All Lands/Wildlife	2	1	\$8,520	209
Lower South Platte - Cropland/Soil Management	11	5	\$131,389	2,491
Lower South Platte - Cropland/Water Quality/Quantity	68	24	\$1,479,386	2,589
Lower South Platte - Grazingland	27	16	\$492,843	18,046
Planning - General	1	1	\$16,489	65
Totals	152	60	\$2,320,576	24,100

Farm Bill Program Activities Summary Lower South Platte River

NRCS Program	Applications Received	Contracts Approved	Dollars Approved	Acres Treated
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	158	107	\$2,055,653	167,465

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:

The Ogallala Aquifer and Colorado's Water

Issue:

The Ogallala Initiative proves vital to Water Quality and Quantity issues in Colorado

What NRCS Colorado is Doing:

Much of the High Plains region of Colorado relies on the Ogallala for water but the water in the Ogallala Aquifer is diminishing because of widespread irrigation use.

NRCS in Colorado places special emphasis on land use conversion from irrigated to non-irrigated cropland, and conversion to perennial vegetation and managed for livestock.

In 2011, it is estimated that Colorado awarded nearly \$800,000 in contracts for the Ogallala Initiative, resulting in resource conservation plans on approximately 5,000 acres and although this is a new initiative in the State, the plans impacted the aquifer by increasingly improving residue and reducing tillage on 1,218 acres of cropland.



Center pivot irrigation allows producers to irrigate with a higher application efficiency and uniformity, minimizing runoff from the field or water moving below the root zone where it is unavailable for the crop.

Also, better irrigation water management will be implemented on approximately 4,042 acres, as well as nutrient management plans on 400 which can positively impact water quality irrigation efficiency of water delivery systems has been improved on 1,949 acres. **Program used: EQIP**

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.