



Coalition for the Upper South Platte

A Healthy Watershed ~ Now and in the Future

FACT SHEET:

Our mission: to protect the water quality and ecological health of the Upper South Platte Watershed, through the cooperative efforts of watershed stakeholders, with emphasis placed on community values and economic sustainability.

Priority issues include: water resources and quality, forest health, fire rehabilitation, noxious weeds, stream/river restoration, erosion and flood control, community education, riparian corridor enhancement sustainable recreation, local economies, volunteer outreach, community preparedness, and carbon sinks and storage.

Our organization was formed in August 1998, as the *Upper South Platte Watershed Protection Association* by area stakeholders interested in 'a healthy watershed, now and in the future'. The organization was created through a Memorandum of Understanding with cooperating agencies concerned about the South Platte River water quality and is voluntary, not regulatory in nature. Goals and preliminary objectives for protecting the 2,600 square mile watershed were agreed upon and the Strategic Plan was adopted in February 2001. The Upper South Platte watershed, supplemented by water from the western slope, provides water to 75% of Colorado's front-range population. In January 2001, the Association changed its name to the '*Coalition for the Upper South Platte*'. CUSP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



In 2002, CUSP agreed to assist the US Forest Service and other governmental agencies with the Hayman Fire Recovery Program. CUSP was particularly involved to coordinate needs for rehabilitating private watershed lands impacted by the fire. Community volunteers made it possible to mitigate these needs. CUSP now operates the *Hayman Recovery Assistance Center* in Lake George.

CUSP operates with a true sense of purpose, rooted in our mission. The staff works with partners and stakeholders, ranging from federal and state agencies to area landowners, local governments, residents, school kids, other nonprofits, businesses, and any individuals who want to do something on the ground to make our little corner of the world a better place.

CUSP does almost nothing alone, yet with our partners, we have accomplished so much: we have helped heal the scars — both physical and metaphorical — the Hayman fire left on our land and our hearts. We help homeowners and government agencies in the effort to protect us all from the next conflagration. We restore rivers to improve fish habitat and reduce erosion. We build and restore trails to increase recreational opportunities (something our communities value dearly), while reducing negative impacts on the environment. We fight noxious weeds, educate children and their teachers, encourage volunteers, and answer the call whenever we can make a difference.

CUSP receives its funding from tax-deductible donations and grants by stakeholders, foundations, businesses and interested individuals. Many grants require matching funds. CUSP facilitates many projects and programs, working with volunteers to improve our watershed. Groups or individuals willing to volunteer are invited to call our office today! 719-748-0033