



Our Mission

To create a watershed investment fund in the Cache la Poudre and Big Thompson watersheds through which water beneficiaries fund fire mitigation projects in the upper watersheds to reduce impacts of wildfire on water resources. Our vision, mission and approach are focused on mitigating wildfire risks in order to improve forest health, enhance water quality and quantity and ensure businesses that rely heavily on clean and available water can prosper and thrive. While our focus is on water, there are numerous valuable co-benefits to this work including improved wildlife habitat, reduced infrastructure damage, decreased firefighting costs, avoided loss of recreational opportunities, etc.

Our Approach

Using sophisticated tools, Peaks to People Water Fund identifies the treatment type and location based on the greatest potential risk reduction. We monitor each site before and after the treatment to accurately measure the results of the treatments.

Peaks to People Water Fund and the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute have developed a **Watershed Investment Tool** to inform the type and location of forest health treatments in the watersheds, ensuring that funds are put towards the greatest potential outcomes. The tool also enables us to analyze the results of each project to inform future decisions. The Watershed Investment Tool can be used to identify priority treatment areas based on the needs and concerns of a specific entity that is at risk from increased sedimentation levels.

Additionally, Peaks to People Water Fund and Sitka Technology Group have developed a **Watershed Health Outcomes Tracker**. This valuable tool enables implementers, landowners and funders to track proposed and active projects designed to improve forest health and protect water in Northern Colorado. The tool allows implementers and funders to track performance measures for projects related to avoided water impacts as well as co-benefits. It is planned to be the primary means for proposing projects for funding from Peaks to People.

Key milestones and achievements

2008 -2011

- Established Colorado Conservation Exchange to create an ecosystem services marketplace, led first by members of the Laramie Foothills Advisory Group, TNC and CSU
- Recruited Founding Stakeholder Group (see below)
- Funded first coordinator with anonymous foundation grant
- Developed first focus on rangeland stewardship and nutrient trading

2012

- Launched the Colorado Conservation Exchange to the public
- Established 3 pilot projects at Roberts and Sylvan Dale Ranches to prove the concept
- Co-initiated and co-founded the High Park Fire Coalition which then became CPRW
- Obtained first major donations from an anonymous donor and New Belgium Brewing to support initial feasibility studies
- Shifted focus to source water protection because of High Park Fire

2013

- Established more formal Exchange Steering Committee (see below)
- Completed first design workshop with Exchange Steering Committee and Visioning Document with Environment Incentives
- Completed Green-Gray Infrastructure Analysis to establish relative costs of investing in new water treatment plants compared with forest treatments

2014

- Established more formal Exchange Working Group with sub teams on Market Development, Science & Monitoring, Landowners, and Fund-raising and Outreach
- Submitted first major grant to fund staff and forest treatments

2015-2017

- Designed Exchange Operations Manual
- Established Exchange Charter, Vision and Road Map
- Secured major foundation funding to launch treatments, recruit staff
- Recruited Founding Director
- Launched New Forest Treatment Projects
- Focused on Development of the Watershed Investment Tool

2018 & beyond

- Completed Work at Forest Demonstration Sites
- Completed Development of Watershed Investment Tool
- Formed Stakeholders Committee
- Launched Social Media Campaigns
- Developing Cross-Organizational Project Tracker Website
- Received federal tax exempt 501(c)(3) status
- Continue Program Build Out

Accomplishments to Date (Peaks to People funded projects)*

- \$210,000 invested in fuels reduction activities
- 174 acres treated
- 69 acres active crown fire reduced
- \$124,000 in avoided home loss
- 994 metric tons of avoided sediment impacts to water supplies
- 104 acres crucial wildlife habitat protected from severe wildfire
- \$17,000 reduced sediments costs to water supplies

Anticipated Accomplishments (through 2020)*

- \$2,000,000 invested in fuels reduction activities
- 1,000 acres treated
- 990 acres active crown fire reduced
- \$460,000 in avoided home loss
- 93,000 metric tons of avoided sediment impacts to water supplies
- 657 acres crucial wildlife habitat protected from severe wildfire
- 46 acres avoided impacts to parks and open spaces
- \$705,000 reduced sediments costs to water supplies

Founders and Funders

- 2010 – 2018 Brainstorming and Stakeholder Building Phase then Proof of Concept Phase sponsored by the Center for Collaborative Conservation and The Nature Conservancy
- **Founders and Initial Stakeholders (2010-2013)-**
 - Laramie Foothills Advisory Group
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - Center for Collaborative Conservation
 - Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, CSU
 - Sylvan Dale Ranch
 - Northern Colorado Food Incubator
 - Community Foundation of Northern Colorado
 - New Belgium Brewing Company
 - Odell Brewing Company
- **Funders of the Proof of Concept Phase-**
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - Center for Collaborative Conservation
 - New Belgium Brewing Company
 - Odell Brewing
 - Anonymous foundation
 - Individual donor
 - Healthy Watershed Consortium Grant
- **Current Funders** - Anonymous foundation and The Nature Conservancy
- **Working Group (2014-present)** – Upon completion of our Feasibility Analysis in early 2014, Peaks to People established (then called the Exchange) a Working Group to help progress the outcomes identified in the study. This group consisted of a variety of Northern Colorado businesses, organizations, landowners, and interested parties committed to protecting our forests and watersheds.
Members:
 - Colorado Natural Heritage Program
 - Community Foundation of Northern Colorado
 - Brendle Group
 - United States Forest Service
 - Odell Brewing Company
 - City of Fort Collins Utilities

- Northern Colorado Water Conservancy
 - Larimer County
 - Sylvan Dale Ranch
 - Coalition of the Poudre River Watershed
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - City of Greeley Water and Sewer
 - Center for Collaborative Conservation
 - Colorado State University
 - New Belgium Brewing Company
 - Anheuser-Busch
- **Stakeholder Committee** - Peaks to People continues to work with several members from our working group as well as some new participants as part of our Stakeholders Committee. Like our Working Group, this group also consists of numerous local businesses, organizations, landowners, and interested parties committed to protecting the Big Thompson and Cache la Poudre watersheds. This committee was formed in 2017 to ensure continued input from a diverse group so that the Peaks to People Water Fund functions successfully into perpetuity. Members include:
 - Colorado Natural Heritage Program
 - Northern Water
 - Sylvan Dale Ranch
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - City of Fort Collins Utilities
 - City of Greeley Water and Sewer
 - Center for Collaborative Conservation
 - Colorado Forest Restoration Institute
 - Colorado State Forest Service
 - Natural Resource Conservation Service, Big Thompson and Fort Collins Conservation Districts
- **Board of Directors** -
 - Robin Reid, President Center for Collaborative Conservation
 - Brian Janonis, Director Former Director, Fort Collins Utilities
 - Rob Addington, Secretary/Treasurer The Nature Conservancy
 - Judy Dorsey, Director Brendle Group
 - Alex Castino, Director Great Outdoors Colorado

** Accomplishments modeled with Peaks to People's Watershed Investment Tool and Co-benefits Module. Most calculations do not account for probability of fire. For more information, please visit <https://peakstopeople.org/our-solutions/>*