

## EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL (AGRICULTURE): DRY CREEK BASIN COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Conducted by: San Miguel Basin Conservation District  
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 Project Partners: U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service; U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Land Management; Colorado Division of Wildlife; Landowners  
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 Matching Funds: \$84,000

The Dry Creek Basin Coordinated Resource Management Plan (DCBCRMP) is a long-term, whole watershed strategy to utilize best management practices (BMPs) to improve the area in a sustainable fashion. Key to this approach is bringing together the various stakeholders to create cooperative solutions that help maintain the quality of life for residents and visitors to the San Miguel Basin.

Dry Creek Basin is located in the southwestern part of the state near Naturita, and is home to the Dry Creek Basin State



Wildlife Area.

To improve water quality in the San Miguel River, both proven and experimental BMPs were selected for this project. Objectives were to restore minimum basal cover and properly functioning riparian areas.

The project efforts included: increasing vegetative ground cover; reducing erosion, soil loss and sedimentation in the San Miguel River; resolving conflicts in vegetation resource use; and maintaining cooperation and participation among land owners and land managers.

To control erosion and reduce sedimentation, approximately 60 miles of former mineral exploration trails were identified and made off-limits to vehicle traffic. Bare ground was reseeded.

Cost share money was made available to private landholders for water diversion repair, vegetation treatment and fencing. Actions included:

- Installation of 2 miles of permanent fence
- Installation of 2 miles of electric fence to meet intensive grazing requirements
- More than 950 acres were re-seeded, interseeded or treated to control weeds like Russian knapweed, musk thistle, whitetop and perennial pepperweed
- 100 acres received a rollerchop and hydromulch treatment to promote ground cover
- Prescribed burns were used on 500 acres
- Water developments, including new pipelines and tanks, were installed to reduce animal pressure on riparian areas
- 15 existing erosion control structures were rehabilitated or replaced
- An existing irrigation diversion structure was repaired

Annual monitoring is used to assess the effectiveness of the BMPs and modify the long-term strategies.