SUGAR CREEK: OFF-SITE ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENTS

The sponsors of the Chatfield Storage Reallocation Project (CSRP) are pleased to announce that exciting and significant strides have been made since the time of the previous newsletter. The environmental enhancement of the Sugar Creek watershed, located about 17 miles southwest of the reservoir, is also underway.

This area is within the Upper South Platte Critical Habitat Unit (CHU) for Preble’s mouse. The goal for this area is to improve riparian habitat for Preble’s meadow jumping mouse and other small mammals. The Preble’s mouse has a long hibernation season, which is already starting. Hand planting and other habitat improvements can be carried out without disturbing the critical habitat unnecessarily.

The CRMC started construction for the off-site environmental enhancements in and along Sugar Creek south of Chatfield Reservoir in Douglas County. Winter weather is arriving, influencing the amount of work our contractor and environmental consultants will be able to accomplish this year. However, the team is ready to forge ahead with these crucial efforts.

Preparations for the work in the Sugar Creek area have been extensive — including geotechnical and soil investigations, collection of seeds from native plant species and contract packages for the Chatfield Storage Reallocation Project. The environmental enhancement of the Sugar Creek watershed is expected to provide numerous benefits, including improved habitat for wildlife, reduced erosion and increased water quality.

The CRMC is also planning to construct a new wetland complex in Sugar Creek south of the reservoir, which will provide critical habitat for wildlife and improve water quality. The new wetland complex will be constructed in the Sugar Creek riparian area, and will include wetland plantings, creating small mammal passageways, sediment traps and ditch erosion control.

This area is defined by the creek and its confluence with the South Platte River. Enhancements surrounding the reservoir.

The CRMC has seen some major staffing and support changes recently. I’m honored to have been in the project through highly knowledgeable staff involvement.

Tim Feehan, former General Manager of the CRMC, has shifted to a critical position as the energy as the General Manager moving forward, but it will take the entire team to tackle the many challenges and logistics related to the CSRP.

For a quick overview, watch the Chatfield Storage Reallocation Project Video.

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