



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 25, 2024

Administration Building
5334 South Prince Street
Littleton, Colorado 80120
303-795-4630
arapahoeco.gov

Senator John Hickenlooper
Byron Rogers Federal Building
1961 Stout Street
Suite 12-300
Denver CO 80294

Senator Michael Bennet
Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building
1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO 80204

Dear Senator Hickenlooper and Senator Bennet,

We are writing to express our support for the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority's application for FY25 Congressionally Direct Spending regarding restoration of Cherry Creek in Cherry Creek State Park. This critical project would improve flood control and capacity within the park and adjacent areas as well as preserve the City of Aurora's main water line, and improve stream function for aquatic life, floodplain reconnection and riparian vegetation.

Cherry Creek State Park is an urban oasis visited by over 1.5 million Colorado and national visitors each year. IT directly borders four cities within the metropolitan area (Denver, Aurora, Centennial and Greenwood Village) and is within a 10-mile radius of the Town of Parker, City of Lone Tree, and Foxfield. Families of diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds access the park to enjoy the trail system, wildlife, fishing, water recreation, picnicking and other activities. The park is accessible and connected by 42 miles of a multi-use trail system spanning from Castlewood Canyon to Downtown Denver. On an annual basis, Colorado Parks and Wildlife harvests over 100 million walleye eggs from the reservoir to support fisheries throughout Colorado.

The Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority (Basin Authority) was established by the Colorado legislature to protect and improve water quality in the reservoir and in Cherry Creek, particularly from nutrient pollution that leads to algal blooms. Despite very stringent total phosphorus limits for wastewater treatment plants and other projects in the basin, phosphorus loading to the reservoir remains high and the reservoir does not meet its chlorophyll-a water quality standard, resulting in harmful algal blooms. Through recent engineering studies, the Basin Authority identified a severely eroding channel condition for Cherry Creek in the park between the reservoir and Lakeview Drive ("Reach 1") that is not only contributing ongoing significant sediment and phosphorus loading (>1,680 pounds/year) to the reservoir, but it is

also impacting trails and vegetation (loss of trees), placing Aurora Water's major water pipeline at risk and causing other environmental impacts. Based on an engineering alternatives analysis, the Phase 1 cost to stabilize and restore Reach 1 is estimated at nearly \$12 million of an overall \$18 to \$24 million effort for the stream reach, far exceeding near-term resources available from the Basin Authority, local governments, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and The Mile High Flood District, who are supportive of this project.

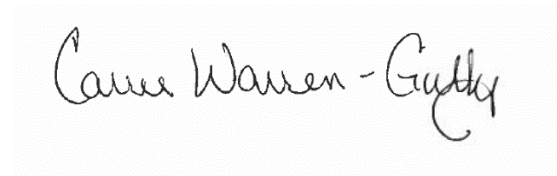
Your prioritization of Cherry Creek restoration as a Congressionally Directed Spending project will yield the following benefits to Colorado residents and the 1.5 million park visitors alike:

- Reduce phosphorus loading to Cherry Creek Reservoir, which would help reduce routine closures of the reservoir to recreational uses.
- Reduce sediment loading to Cherry Creek Reservoir, which would help maintain the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control capacity and function within the park and adjacent areas.
- Increase channel stability for Cherry Creek during flood conditions, reducing damage to 2.25-miles of trails and the only road crossing the State Park (Lakeview Drive).
- Protect the City Aurora's water supply line through the State Park.
- Improve stream function for aquatic life, floodplain reconnection, over 40 mammal species, and riparian vegetation.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical project.

Sincerely,

ARAPAHOE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carrie Warren-Gully". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Commissioner Carrie Warren-Gully
Chair of the Board

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Dear Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Centennial in support of Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority's FY25 Congressionally Directed Spending application for the restoration of Cherry Creek in Cherry Creek State Park.

The initial estimate of channel reclamation cost is over \$23 million within Cherry Creek State Park and an additional \$10 million upstream of the park, exceeding the combined resources of Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority and Cherry Creek State Park, which makes federal funding for this project imperative. The Authority's request is focused on Phase 1 of the highest priority portion of the stream reach, with an estimated cost of \$12 million. The erosion is threatening the surrounding environment, wildlife corridors, critical infrastructure, and water quality.

Risks of inaction include continued erosion, environmental impacts, loss of wildlife habitat and natural resources, risk to infrastructure including a water supply pipeline and roads, significant on-going phosphorus and sediment loading to the Reservoir, and increased damages from flooding.

We support this project to protect the tremendous asset that is Cherry Creek Reservoir. It is important to not only improve and protect the water quality in Cherry Creek and the Reservoir, but to provide access to nature in our urban landscape, protect the species that reside within the basin and ensure continued access for the health of our community.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Mayor Stephanie Piko
City of Centennial
spiko@centennialco.gov
303-754-3374

CC: Centennial City Council
Representative Jason Crow



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
TRI-LAKES PROJECT
9307 S. WADSWORTH BLVD
LITTLETON, CO 80128

27 MAR 2024

Jane Clary
Technical Manager,
Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority
Cherry Creek Lake State Park
Aurora, CO

Jane,

Thank you for the discussion on 26 MAR 2024 regarding the proposed Reach 1 of the Cherry Creek erosion control/repair/mitigation project. We appreciate you sharing information about the need for the project, the proposal, and the upcoming deadline for submitting Congressionally Directed Spending applications.

The Tri-Lakes Project supports the work of the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority in general, and the proposed Reach 1 project specifically.

We have been in contact with our Omaha District subject matter expert on this type of proposal and look forward to connecting the CCBWQA with the District to explore funding opportunities for this important work.

Joseph R Maxwell
Joseph Maxwell,
Operations Project Manager
Tri-Lakes Project Office