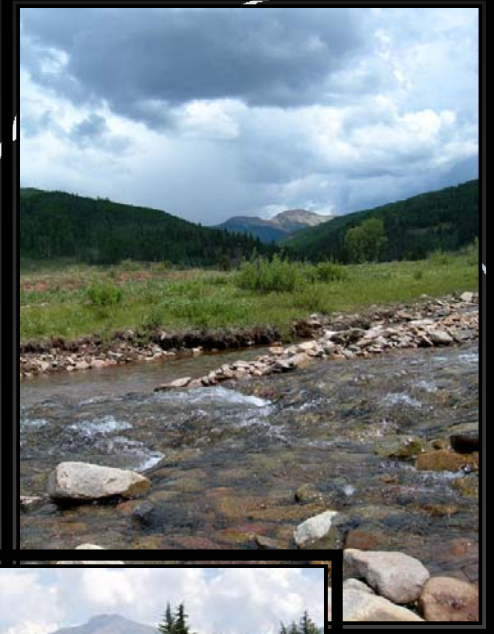


River Protection Workgroup

Involving the public in protecting the natural values of selected streams while allowing suitable water development to continue



History of the RPW

- **The San Juan Public Lands Center (USFS and BLM) is required, in its public lands planning process to evaluate rivers in their area for “eligibility” and “suitability” for the federal Wild and Scenic River designation. They released their draft Plan in 2007.**
- **A *Government to Government Roundtable* met and discussed these issues. It became apparent a collaborative, community driven-process was needed to engage broad publics in identifying values - economic, ecological, and social -- for select river/stream segments and to determine if agreement can be found on the appropriate level(s) of protection.**
- **The San Juan Citizens Alliance approached the Southwestern Water Conservation District and they agreed to launch the project. A Steering committee formed in 2006. A public process model was developed for the five river/stream segments. Three Workgroups have concluded this phase and two are in process. Regional discussion starts next year.**

River and Stream Segments of Focus

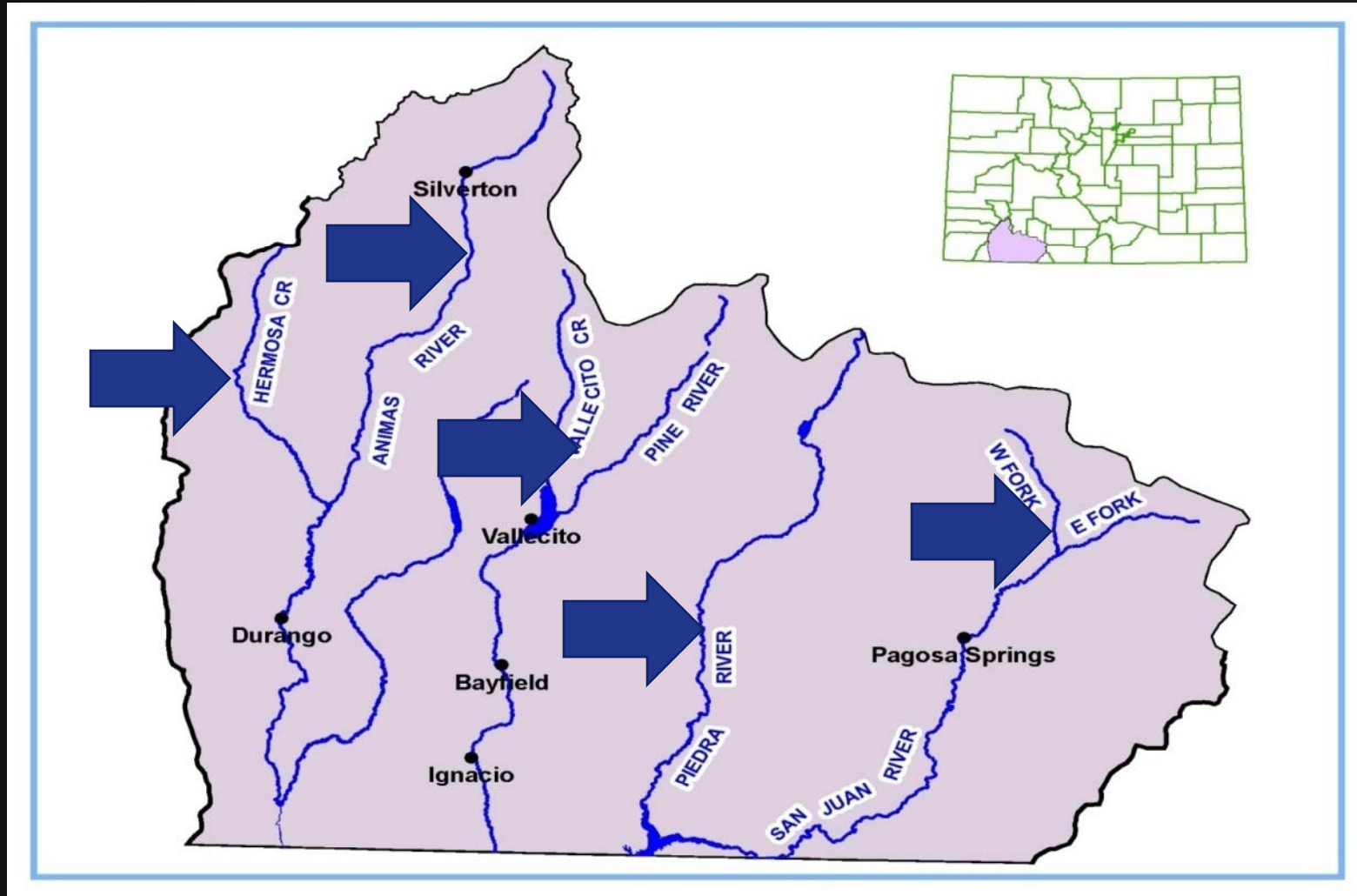
~ Hermosa Creek

~ Animas River

~ Pine River/Vallecito Creek

~ Piedra River

~ San Juan River - East/West Forks



The RPW Project is Working...

- to bring diverse stakeholders together in a collaborative process to determine values needing protection - ecological, economic and social;
- to recommend the types of tools necessary, either existing or newly-developed, to protect the values; &
- to make recommendations in the context of **striking a balance** between the protection of natural values and water development.



Southwest Colorado is diverse! Many VALUES are discussed by the Working Group Members



RPW Steering Committee Organizations

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Division of Water Resources, and the Colorado Water Conservation Board
 - San Juan Citizens Alliance (SJCA)
 - Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD)
 - San Juan Public Lands (USFS) and Tres Rio Field Office (BLM)
 - Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT)
- Staff from the local offices of U.S. Senator Michael Bennet, U.S. Senator Mark Udall and U.S. Representative Scott Tipton
 - The Wilderness Society - Wilderness Support Center and
 - Trout Unlimited - Five Rivers Chapter

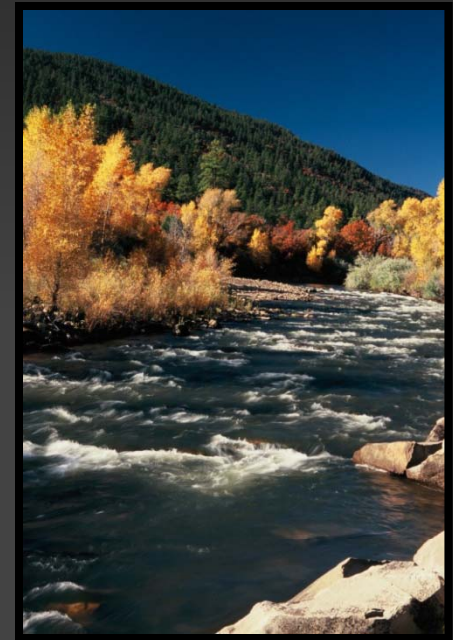
The Steering Committee meets monthly to plan and debrief each Workgroup, and do project funding and administration.

It does not determine pre-set outcomes for each Workgroup.


RPW Funding...

- *Colorado Water Conservation Board*
 - *National Forest Foundation*
 - *Southwestern Water Conservation District*
 - *San Juan Citizens Alliance*
- *Trout Unlimited - Five Rivers Chapter*
 - *Southern Ute Indian Tribe*
 - *The Wilderness Society*
 - *In Kind Donations*

THANK YOU CWCB!



RPW Methods

- Form Public Workgroups on five streams/river segments
 - Use developed process model and principles
 - Do outreach prior to Workgroups forming
 - Convene the Workgroups (FIVE TOTAL)
 - Develop values statement
 - Provide education (speakers, Information Sheet, etc.)
 - Discuss level of protection needed to protect the values
 - Reach consensus if possible. If not, reflect a range of opinion on tools
 - Produce reports that are widely-disseminated
 - Host Regional Discussion -- Finish project resulting in *both* local actions and a regional plan
- 

Public Workgroup Principles

- **Anyone with an interest is a stakeholder...has a seat at the table**
- **Respectful dialogue**
- **Solutions that address diversity of interests**
- **Use of accurate facts and information**
- **Lots of interaction – consensus – collaboration – possible negotiations**
- **Fair, open, transparent process (Web site)**

The RPW is a collaborative, place-based learning initiative



Process Model

- o Phase I:
Background information. Process discussed and agreed upon, and ground rules set. Basic information is shared including an “*Initial Information Sheet.*” Workgroup learning needs are addressed.
- o Phase II:
Values are discussed and statement agreed to. Group discusses protections already in place. By the end of Phase II, participants will have considered a range of options for protecting values.
- o Phase III:
The Workgroup looks to the future. Each option is discussed. Workgroup reaches conclusions and develops recommendations and/or action plans. A report is produced and disseminated.

THEN.....the Regional Discussion in 2013

Workgroup's Recommendations (so far)

* Hermosa Creek (NORTH OF DURANGO)

- federal legislation to establish a Wilderness area, permanent un-roaded area and a Special Management Area -- honor most existing uses; honor economic uses of the area; keep water quality strong; circle back on WSR; this bill is expected to be introduced in Congress in 2012

* San Juan – East and West Forks (NEAR PAGOSA SPRINGS)

- finding was that the WSR tool not be used in the segments that cross private lands
- range of opinion on WSR for the public sections (Regional Discussion topic)
- brainstormed creative ways to protect the values of the area of focus and specifically to protect the ORV-identified value of geology; focus on engaging local solutions

Workgroup's Recommendations cont.

* Vallecito Creek/Pine River (NEAR DURANGO & BAYFIELD)

- participation was lower than the other groups but key stakeholders weighed in; a lot of outreach was done
- entire segment is in Wilderness which is a high level of protection -- and generally the Wilderness is an adequate protection tool for this segment
- suitability should be retained

* RPW for the Animas River – started June 2011

* Piedra River Workgroup – started in October 2011

Regional Discussion

- * Focus on developing a regional approach(es) using the outputs of the five Public Workgroups
- * Approaches will be related to Wild and Scenic River issues and other potential federal or state tools that may require legislation
 - * Public Workgroups will have representation
- * Consensus recommendations from Workgroups cannot be reversed
 - * Expected to begin in 2013

In summary, the RPW so far....

- › 3 reports have been released detailing specific recommendations
- › 250 stakeholders have participated in the project
- › 57 RPW Workgroup meetings held across the five selected streams/segments
- › MANY are involved: governments, non profits, conservation and recreation groups, water entities, community coalitions, etc.
- › The Steering Committee has met every month since 2006 to guide the process AND it is now planning the Regional Discussion
- › The Hermosa Creek Workgroup and its Drafting Committee will continue to work on the Hermosa Creek Bill

Thanks! Questions?

