

South Platte River Master Plan: Project Overview

The South Platte River plays an important role in the communities and economies of Morgan, Washington, Logan and Sedgwick Counties. In 2013, and again in 2015, the South Platte River experienced record flooding that resulted in significant damage to the river corridor and surrounding communities in Morgan, Washington, Logan and Sedgwick Counties. The floodwaters scoured away waterlines, septic systems, roads, and diversion structures. These changes have had adverse impacts on the communities along the South Platte River from the western edge of Morgan County to the eastern edge of Sedgwick County; a distance of approximately 130 miles.

The master planning for a flood damaged river and adjacent communities is a process that must address multiple challenges. The goal of this project is to address the challenges by:

1. Identifying and prioritizing projects considering economic, social, and environmental issues by developing a combination of proven and innovative technologies and methodologies to improve channel stability, habitat, recreation, flood management, and water quality.
2. Developing a master plan for the South Platte River from the western edge of Morgan County to the eastern edge of Sedgwick County that quantifies risks and identifies solutions to address those risks in a geomorphological stable manner that also enhances habitat, increases recreational opportunities, protects water supply diversions and improves water quality.

Successful master plans include a strong collaboration and cooperation with the Counties, as well as other stakeholders. With help from stakeholder, the plan will identify effective solutions to those multiple challenges to ensure technically, financially, and regulatory feasible projects and strategies that restore a healthy, functioning river and floodplain.

The proposed project approach is shown in the graphic below.

This project will provide communities the planning to aid in developing a comprehensive plan with strategies to address floodplain, ecological, and geomorphology issues along the South Platte River. The strategies will help maintain irrigation flows, reduce flooding risks, build resiliency, and aid in developing sustainable, community-friendly redevelopment and recreational opportunities along the riverine corridor.

The project includes evaluating the river corridor, data collection and compilation, public outreach, stakeholder engagement, risk assessments, project identification, project prioritization, and preparing a draft and final master plan report.

