

Conservation through Watershed Plan Development



Lower South Platte River Watershed, Colorado

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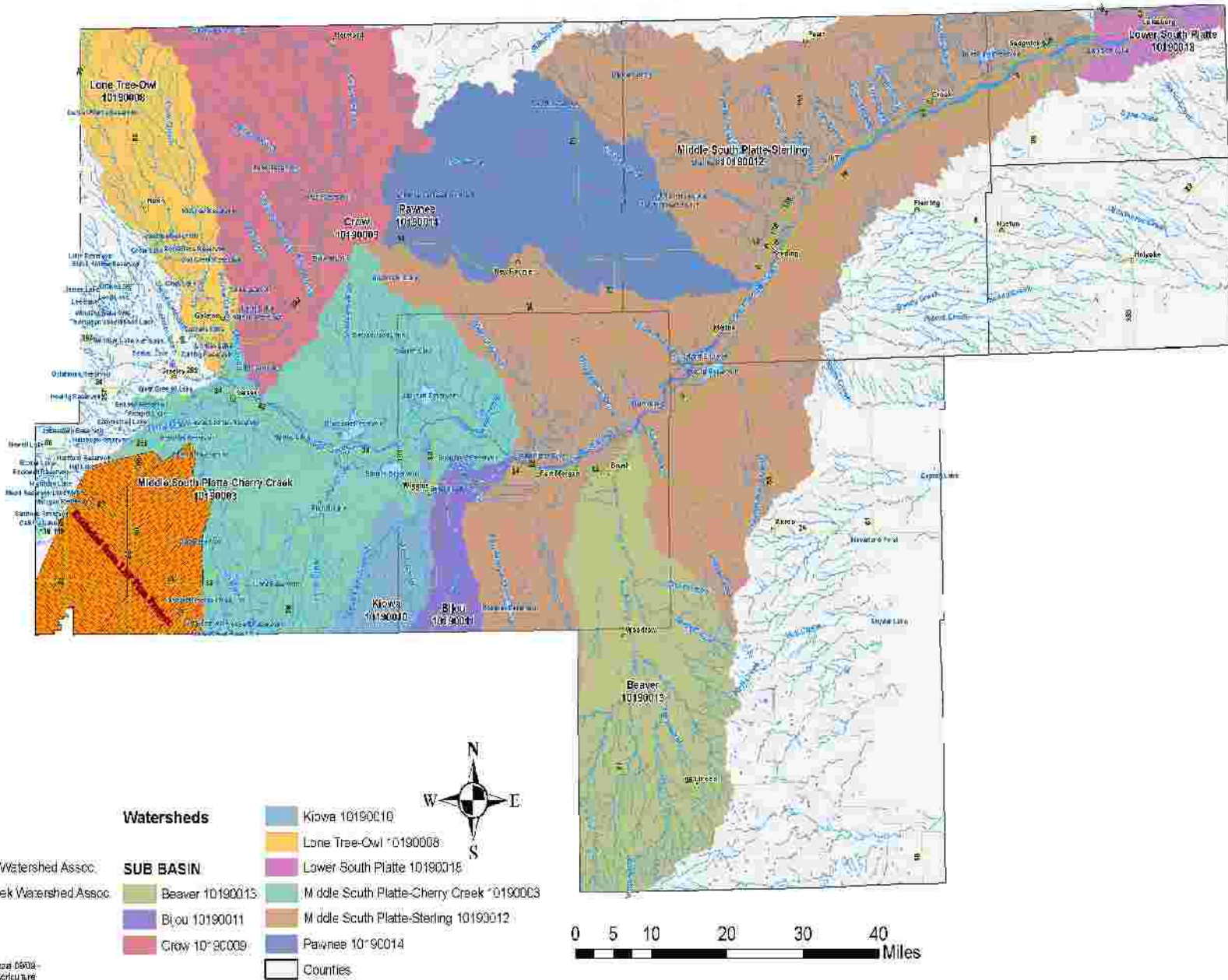
Purpose of Watershed Planning

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
developed process:**

Help communities, watershed organizations,
local, state, tribal & federal agencies to
develop & implement a watershed plan to
meet water quality standards & protect water
resources.

www.epa.gov/nps/

Lower South Platte Watershed Plan Project



Watershed Facts

- Intermittent flow historically
- ~ 4.45 million acres in plan area
- All or part of nine 8-digit HUCs in six counties
- 5 of top 10 Colorado ag. counties in plan area
- 6 counties sold > 46% of the total value of all Colorado ag. products marketed in the state ('07 U.S. Ag. Census)
- River classified as Public Water Source

Keys to Plan Process Success

- Developing engaged, committed Core (advisory) Committee
- Identify Lead Partners
 - Dev. & host plan website (www.lspwp.com)
- Seek input from all stakeholders
- Involve decision-makers
- Separate fact from perception

Positives for Conservation in Watershed Planning

- Collaboration of new, diverse partners
- Commitment of conservation districts
- Opportunity to focus on water quality vs. water quantity
- Proactive approach to protecting basin's water resources
- Establish citizen-based water monitoring

Challenges for Conservation in the Planning Process

- Water conservation vs. return flows & effluent
- Water in the Lower So. Platte extremely valuable/politically charge
- Varied water quality priorities among stakeholders

The outcome: to create a dynamic watershed plan through stakeholder collaboration and data review to encourage watershed mgt. including prioritizing future projects within the basin that will ultimately improve water quality

