

**9-29-11**

**Volunteers Create Wetland on Fountain Creek:** Fountain Creek got a little bit greener thanks to 65 volunteers from southern Colorado who planted more than 4,500 plants, shrubs and trees to establish a new wetland last Saturday.



The new wetland, located on Clear Spring Ranch south of the city of Fountain, is part of a comprehensive mitigation plan for the [Southern Delivery System](#) (SDS) project developed by [Colorado Springs Utilities](#) to address SDS construction impacts. Once established, the wetland will help restore and stabilize the banks of Fountain Creek – providing additional habitat for wildlife and improving water quality by reducing erosion along the stream bed.

Volunteers from Colorado Springs Utilities, the [Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control and Greenway District](#) (District), local high schools, CSU-Pueblo, Pueblo Community College, UCCS, and the community planted the new trees and plants on a quarter acre near the creek. The plants will be watered periodically until they become established. There are plans to add more willows in the area next spring, and an additional 12 acres of wetlands will be created on Clear Spring Ranch over the next few years, prior to completion of SDS.

In addition to wetland mitigation, next year Colorado Springs Utilities will begin work to realign and add curves to a stretch of the creek to slow down flows and help reduce erosion.

Additionally, Colorado Springs Utilities has committed, through the SDS Pueblo County 1041 permit, to contribute \$50 million to the District for improvements to the creek once the SDS project is complete. To date, Utilities has contributed \$300 thousand to the District to cover staffing and project costs, as well as another \$300 thousand for a flood control study being conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey – as part of the \$50 million commitment.

Last year, Colorado Springs Utilities paid Pueblo County \$2.2 million for sediment reduction projects on Fountain Creek in Pueblo as additional mitigation on the creek. Part of this funding has already been used for a sediment removal device in Fountain Creek upstream of its confluence with the Arkansas River.

Colorado Springs Utilities also has invested \$25 million toward a \$75-million commitment in the 1041 permit to improve and fortify its wastewater collection system.

For more information on the Southern Delivery System, visit [www.SDSWater.org](http://www.SDSWater.org).

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