



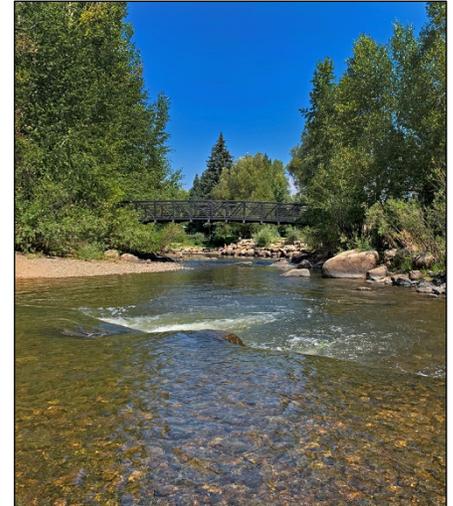
Water Partnership Keeps the Yampa River Flowing

Series of Water Releases Maintains Biological Integrity of Tributary

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-August 25, 2020-Every ounce of water makes a significant difference in the west especially as the summer winds down and water flows shrink, temperatures spike and dissolved oxygen levels become scarcer in waterways like the Yampa River.

This was never more highlighted than by the work of the Colorado Water Trust and local partners such as the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District, Yampa River Fund, Colorado Parks & Wildlife and the city. With weather forecasts remaining dry and hot, the city was preparing to close the Yampa River late last week.

However, the Colorado Water Trust upped the initial Stagecoach release amount when the city's 350-acre-foot pool was set to expire prior to the weekend. The increased amount was in addition to the Upper Yampa Water District's bypass and drawdown releases. All combined, the mix was ideal and added about 30 cubic feet per second (cfs) to the river, which makes a big difference for stream temperatures, aquatic habitat (pool depth), and the recreational experience.



“Due to the strong relationship with the Colorado Water Trust and funding from the Yampa River Fund, the city was able to receive needed last minute water releases to maintain the biological integrity of the river and keep it open for recreationalist,” commented Parks & Recreation Director Angela Cosby.

Colorado is suffering from drought conditions across much of the state and currently has the most land mass experiencing extreme drought of anywhere in the U.S. Forecasts don't show signs of significant precipitation soon and increasing wildfires across the state also pose a severe risk to the health of the state's waterways. Yampa River stream flows are currently hovering around 85 cfs and many rivers across the state are experiencing similar critical levels.

“We truly have something unique here besides simply the river,” ebbled Water Resource Manager Kelly Romero-Heaney. “The collaboration by these separate entities ensures that the community's number one treasure and a hydrological gem for the region remains healthy.”

This marks the seventh year in the past decade that the Colorado Water Trust leased water from Stagecoach Reservoir to maintain strong flows and water temperatures.

City staff will continue to monitor flows and river temperatures at the [5th Street Bridge](#). Water temperature monitoring was incorporated in November 2017 through a partnership with Mt. Werner Water, the Colorado River District and the USGS.

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