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I. INTRODUCTION

This report represents a summary of the water quality design associated with the Arapahoe Road Bridge over Cherry Creek project. The project is located within the northwest ¼ of Section 29, the northeast ¼ of Section 30, the southeast ¼ of Section 19, and the southwest ¼ of Section 20, Range 66 West, Township 5 South, Parker, Colorado Quadrangle in Aurora, Colorado. The project location is shown on Figure 1.

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is proposing to replace the existing Arapahoe Road Bridge over Cherry Creek. At this location Arapahoe Road is within the City of Aurora; however, the project limits for the project will affect portions of the City of Centennial and Unincorporated Arapahoe County. In conjunction with the roadway improvements, the local storm sewer systems for Arapahoe Road within the project limits will be improved to meet current CDOT drainage criteria. Cherry Creek is the main outfall for all of the local drainage within the project limits.

Currently, stormwater within the project limits generally drains from the west to the east on Arapahoe Road to a low-point in the roadway profile approximately 550-feet east of the bridge at the intersection with Chambers Road. Stormwater inlets along Arapahoe Road capture a portion of the stormwater west of the bridge and discharge into a network of roadside swales that outfall directly into Cherry Creek. The stormwater that bypasses the inlets continues east on the roadway and is captured by the roadside swales that are located west of the bridge. Stormwater from the bridge deck and the roadway east of the bridge are captured by inlets at the low-point on the north and south sides of Arapahoe Road. The low point inlet on the north side of the road directs flow to an existing 42-inch storm sewer that outfalls directly into Cherry Creek. The low point inlet on the south side of the road directs flow to an existing box culvert that outfalls into a 500-foot long wetland bottom channel that outfalls into Cherry Creek.

The proposed improvements will raise the Arapahoe Road bridge over Cherry Creek to meet CDOT freeboard criteria and in doing so, creates a crest vertical curve on the bridge dividing the stormwater in the project limits and creating a new low point west of the bridge. Stormwater inlets will be installed at the new low point to capture stormwater west of the bridge and inlets at the existing low-point will require minor relocation to capture stormwater east of the bridge.

Offsite drainage systems will be combined with the proposed drainage system in two locations. The first offsite system is the Shoppes at Arapahoe Commons development located north of Arapahoe Road and west of the proposed bridge, within the City of Aurora. This system currently drains into a roadside swale north of the road, but will ultimately be tied-in to the proposed storm sewer system west of the bridge. The second offsite system is the Arapahoe Industrial Park No. 2 development, located south of Arapahoe Road and west of the proposed bridge, within the City of Centennial. This system currently drains into a roadside swale south of the road, but will ultimately be tied-in to the proposed storm sewer system west of the bridge. The outfall of a third offsite
system located south of Arapahoe Road, west of the proposed bridge will be rerouted to the south to accommodate the new bridge footprint and proposed Cherry Creek overbank grading. This third offsite system is also located within the City of Centennial.

A new section of the Cherry Creek Regional Trail will be constructed as part of this project. This will consist of a 10-foot wide concrete trail that will run north/south along the western Cherry Creek overbank and pass under the new Arapahoe Road bridge.

For a more detailed discussion of the existing and proposed stormwater drainage system, please refer to the Arapahoe Road Over Cherry Creek Bridge Hydraulics Report completed by Muller Engineering Company for this project.
FIGURE 1: PROJECT VICINITY MAP
NOT TO SCALE
II. DISCUSSION OF CDOT MS4 / NDRD REQUIREMENTS

Design Criteria
With the exception of the recreational trail, the impervious areas for this project are located entirely on CDOT right of way and therefore is covered by the CDOT MS4 permit and subject to the requirements therein (see CDOT MS4 Permit Coverage Map in Appendix A). The current version of the CDOT MS4 permit requires that 100% of the stormwater runoff from the impervious project area be treated for water quality and the water quality treatment facility should either capture 100% of the water quality capture volume and/or remove 80% of the Total Suspended Solids (TSS).

Design Criteria for permanent Best Management Practices (BMP's) are referenced from Volume 3 of the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District’s (UDFCD) Urban Storm Drainage Criteria Manual (USDCM) and is typically applicable to permanent BMP's that capture 100% of the water quality capture volume. Permanent BMP’s that treat 80% of the TSS are typically proprietary and it is up to the designer to write a specification that requires any proprietary permanent BMP used on the project to have the ability to treat the tributary area and imperviousness while complying with the removal rates required by the current CDOT MS4 permit.

This project is located within the Cherry Creek basin and therefore is subject to the review of the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority (CCBWQA). The CCBWQA reviews land disturbance projects for compliance with Control Regulation No. 72 and the CCBWQA’s CR72.7 Stormwater Guidance Document. CCBWQA is a quasi-governmental agency and political subdivision of the State of Colorado whose mission is to improve, protect, and preserve the water quality of Cherry Creek and Cherry Creek Reservoir and to achieve and maintain State water quality standards for the Reservoir and related watershed. Control Regulation No. 72 provides limited direct responsibility to the CCBWQA to implement projects that reduce the inflow total phosphorus concentrations to Cherry Creek Reservoir. Control Regulation No. 72 allows alternatives for water quality capture volume (WQCV) BMPs where:

“...the permittee may allow alternative BMPs that do not use WQCV approach or are in combination with the WQCV, if they are shown to have comparable or better nutrient concentration reduction characteristics for the given use when properly designed, implemented, and maintained...Specifically, the permittee may allow for the owner to use stream bank stabilization at the development site...to reduce the need for WQCV for the whole site.” (@72.7(c)(6)(iii)).

With Control Regulation No. 72 allowing stream bank stabilization as an alternative, CCBWQA defines stream reclamation to mean:

“...additional measures or enhancements to channel or stream stabilization that typically includes riparian and floodplain vegetation planting or enhancements and a channel cross section that results in more frequent connection and flooding of the overbank area. Riparian vegetation promotes filtration of fine particles with attached nutrients, and over-bank flooding promotes additional filtration and to some extent infiltration both
which reduce nutrient loads and concentrations. Therefore, the benefits from stream reclamation include the reduction in sediment and nutrients (i.e.: phosphorus and nitrogen) transport from the main channel, but also reduction in nutrient loads from riparian and floodplain vegetation through more frequent floodplain inundation.”

Existing Water Quality Features
The wetland bottom channel at the outfall of the existing box culvert was designed as a water quality feature that treats stormwater that is collected by the box culvert system east of the proposed bridge. Within the project area, the box culvert collects stormwater from the southern half of the road from the west side of the existing bridge to the eastern project limit. There is also an existing water quality pond that treats stormwater from a portion of the Shoppes at Arapahoe Commons development on the north side of Arapahoe Road, west of the existing bridge. This water quality pond will remain intact and the outflow from the pond will be rerouted to tie-in to the proposed storm sewer system west of the proposed bridge.

The north side of the existing roadway through the entire project area and the south side of the existing roadway west of the existing bridge within the project area have no dedicated water quality features as there have been no improvements to this section of Arapahoe Road since the initiation of the MS4 program. The existing drainage system collects storm water runoff via storm inlets and roadside swales directly into Cherry Creek. For a more detailed discussion of the existing storm sewer system, see the Arapahoe Road Over Cherry Creek Bridge Hydraulics Report completed by Muller Engineering Company for this project.

Design Objective
Beginning in 2010, the CCBWQA has been working with SEMSWA, UDFCD, Arapahoe County, and Aurora (collectively called “Parties”) to plan, design, and implement stream reclamation along Cherry Creek from the Cherry Creek State Park southern boundary to the downstream end of Cherry Creek Valley Ecological Park, a distance of approximately 2.08 miles. The planning effort has resulted in an update to the current Cherry Creek drainage master plan for the 2.08-miles. The four phases of the project are expected to cost approximately $11.7M to implement over the next 5-years, or so. The complete project is referred to as Cherry Creek Stream Reclamation – State Park to Eco-Park or “Stream Reclamation Project”.

To meet post-construction BMP requirements for construction of the Arapahoe Road Bridge project, CDOT is proposing to participate in the cost of the above Stream Reclamation Project. Stream reclamation is an alternative to stormwater quality detention for post-construction BMPs required under CDOT’s stormwater permit for new development and redevelopment. CDOT’s stormwater discharge permit also requires each agency to comply with requirements of Control Regulation No. 72. CDOT would participate in the Stream Reclamation Project through a funding agreement with SEMSWA, referred to as the "CDOT and SEMSWA Funding Agreement – Arapahoe Bridge Project" (BMP Funding Agreement). SEMSWA would encumber CDOT’s funds into a project account with UDFCD that will be established as part of a separate
intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between the Parties for the planning, design, and construction of the Stream Reclamation Project.

At the FIR level submittal for the Arapahoe Road Bridge Project, two water quality detention ponds (extended detention basins) were proposed to meet the stormwater permit requirements. Based on the above Stream Reclamation Project approach, these extended detention basins have been eliminated from the design. The estimated cost of the extended detention basins and related work will be the amount that CDOT contributes to the Stream Reclamation Project as part of the above-mentioned IGA.

Since the Stream Reclamation Project improvements will not be constructed until after the Arapahoe Road Bridge improvements, it was determined that some level of water quality treatment (or pre-treatment) should be implemented to treat outflows from the proposed drainage systems prior to these flows entering Cherry Creek. Pre-treatment will be implemented in the form of a series of grass/wetland swales.

Summary of Treated Areas
The proposed project disturbance area is 55 acres and the total impervious project area is 10.65 acres. A crest vertical curve in the Arapahoe Road profile creates a drainage divide near the center of the Arapahoe Road Bridge over Cherry Creek. Approximately 5.10 acres of impervious project area along the roadway are located west of the divide and 4.81 acres of impervious project area along the roadway are located east of the divide. The remaining 0.74 acres of impervious area within the project area consists of the concrete Cherry Creek Regional Trail.

Of the 4.81 acres of impervious project area east of the divide, 1.80 acres will drain to the inlet at the low point on the south side of the road that conveys flow to the existing wetland bottom channel (this is less than the 2.4 acres of impervious area that currently drains to this inlet within the project area). The remaining 3.01 acres of impervious project area east of the divide will be collected on the north side of the road and conveyed through the eastern storm sewer that will outfall into a pre-treatment swale and into the future Stream Reclamation Project.

The entire 5.10 acres of impervious project area west of the divide will be collected by the western storm sewer and routed through the pretreatment swales and into the future Stream Reclamation Project.

Outside of the project area, approximately 2.98 acres will be tributary to the western storm sewer system from the Shoppes at Arapahoe Commons development at 100% impervious and approximately 10.8 acres will be tributary to the western storm sewer system from the Arapahoe Industrial Park No. 2 development at 100% impervious. The impervious area from the Arapahoe Industrial Park No. 2 development that will be collected by the western storm sewer will reduce the impervious area that is tributary to the southern storm sewer.

Also outside of the project area, a total of 11.7 acres will be tributary to the southern storm sewer at 100% impervious. Of this area, 10.8 acres is located within the Arapahoe Industrial
Park No. 2 development and the remaining 1.5 acres accounts for a future parking lot. No water quality facility exists for the areas tributary to the southern storm sewer. As part of this project, the areas tributary to the southern storm sewer will be treated by a pre-treatment swale and then by the future Stream Reclamation Project.

The impervious area associated with the Cherry Creek Regional Trail will be treated by pre-treatment swales and then the future Stream Reclamation Project.

There is an existing Xcel substation located north of Arapahoe Road, west of the proposed bridge. Runoff from the substation area is collected by an existing extended detention basin, which will outfall into a pre-treatment swale and then into the future Stream Reclamation Project.

A water quality map that summarizes the treated areas is presented in Appendix B.

**Recommended Design**

There are a total of five storm sewer outfalls associated with the proposed project improvements: 1) western storm sewer outfall – 30-inch RCP, 2) eastern storm sewer outfall – 24-inch RCP, 3) southern storm sewer outfall – 30-inch RCP, 4) existing 42-inch storm sewer, and 5) the existing box culvert outfall into the existing wetland bottom channel. In addition, there is 3,000 LF of 10-foot wide concrete trail that makes up the Cherry Creek Regional Trail.

Based on a series of meetings, it was decided by the project participants that CDOT participate financially with the Parties in an undivided interest in the Cherry Creek Stream Reclamation – State Park to Eco-Park Project. The Stream Reclamation Project will take the place of more traditional water quality facilities and provide equal or better water quality protection compared to providing water quality detention ponds. The basis for this approach includes:

1. Control Regulation No. 72 allows stream bank stabilization as an alternate to BMPs that use WQCV when shown to have comparable or better nutrient concentration reduction characteristics.

2. The proposed Cherry Creek Stream Reclamation project will include additional measures or enhancements to channel or stream stabilization that include riparian and floodplain vegetation to provide additional filtration and infiltration of stormwater and, therefore, stream reclamation measures are more comprehensive and beneficial than stream bank stabilization alone.

3. The Authority has collected water quality data in Cottonwood Creek and Cherry Creek that shows that stream reclamation can provide equal or better nutrient reduction characteristics then water quality detention ponds (see next section).

4. The alternative plan to construct two water quality detention ponds is not consistent with and would interfere with the proposed Cherry Creek Stream Reclamation plan developed by the Parties. If CDOT were to construct the two water quality detention ponds, the ponds would have to be removed by the Parties in order to implement the Cherry Creek Stream Reclamation project.
5. The alternative plan to construct two water quality detention ponds would require the ponds to be placed on the City of Aurora’s property. Since the City of Aurora does not allow detention ponds for development or redevelopment to occur in the floodplain, the alternate plan would require an exemption from Aurora’s requirements under their stormwater discharge permit.

6. Water quality detention ponds require more intensive maintenance activities to preserve the pond functions than stream reclamation projects. Therefore, CDOT’s participation in the Cherry Creek Stream Reclamation Project is a more efficient use of public funds and will further benefit water quality.

As previously discussed, the future Stream Reclamation Project is in the planning stages and as such, preliminary design concepts are currently being developed. In general, the Stream Reclamation Project will take a holistic approach to heal the degraded creek corridor, not only stabilizing the channel, but restoring the natural hydrology, water quality benefits, and habitat value of the corridor. The project will use grade control structures to raise and re-establish the baseflow water surface close to the adjacent vegetated benches of the primary channel, keeping the water table high to help sustain riparian vegetation, promoting wide, shallow flow conditions during high flow events, and keeping velocities low and infiltration into the sandy alluvium high. In addition, banks will be protected using bioengineering approaches. A series of drawings showing the preliminary design concepts for the Stream Reclamation Project are presented in Appendix C.

A series of pretreatment swales have been designed to collect stormwater from the proposed storm sewer outfalls. The swales will generally be located in the overbanks of Cherry Creek and will convey stormwater to the Cherry Creek active channel. The swales will consist of varying combinations of erosion control blanket, topsoil, riprap, seeding and plantings. Due to the close proximity of the swale inverts to the Cherry Creek water table, it is anticipated that the swales will generate wetland growth. This, in combination with the flat longitudinal slope and wide cross section, will promote infiltration and nutrient uptake to improve the quality of water prior to outfalling into Cherry Creek. Typical swale cross sections are contained in Appendix D.

A portion of the existing wetland bottom swale will be disturbed during installation of the utility relocations in the utility corridor upstream of the bridge. This channel will be restored to existing grades and revegetated with wetland seed/plants, such that it can continue to serve as a water quality feature for the contributing impervious area.

Expected Pollutant Removal Rates
Since the late 1980’s CCBWQA has been constructing and monitoring non-point source pollutant reduction facilities (i.e.:PRF), such as stream reclamation projects, to control nutrient loads and concentrations in Cherry Creek, the Reservoir, and their tributaries. Data collected by CCBWQA in Cottonwood Creek where stream reclamation has been mostly completed show that these measures have reduced total phosphorus to below concentrations proposed by the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) in Control Regulation 85 (i.e.: 170-µg/l).
Cottonwood Creek data were presented in CCBWQA’s annual report and the results presented to the WQCC during the triennial review hearing for Control Regulation No. 72 on May 14, 2012. Figure 7-24 from the annual report (figure to the right) shows the significant reduction in phosphorus concentrations that can occur when stream reclamation and watershed controls are implemented in a comprehensive manner.

Data collected by CCBWQA for Cherry Creek, where stream reclamation has only been completed in the middle reaches between the Reservoir and the Town of Parker, show that total phosphorus concentrations during base flows have decreased since 2000 during the period when watershed was experiencing unprecedented growth. Whereas base flow concentrations are still higher than the proposed standard, the median values have been significantly reduced as reflected in the data on the figure to the left. Two additional reaches of Cherry Creek have been reclaimed in 2012 and two more reaches are planned for construction in 2013 and are expected to further reduce phosphorus concentrations.

The current version of the CDOT MS4 Permit requires that permanent BMP’s either capture 100% of the water quality capture volume, or remove 80% of the TSS. The minimum post-construction BMP requirement in Control Regulation No. 72 for new development and redevelopment is extended detention basins, which is a permanent BMP that includes WQCV. The International Stormwater BMP Database (http://www.bmpdatabase.org/) provides BMP performance information that is updated periodically and summarized in Table 2-2 of the UDFCD manual Volume 3. These data show that the total phosphorus median effluent (discharge) concentration for extended detention basins is 0.20-mg/l (200-µg/l). Since Cottonwood Creek data show that phosphorus concentrations are less than 170- µg/l the data demonstrates that stream reclamation does have comparable or better nutrient reduction characteristics as a BMP with WQCV characteristics.

The pretreatment swales will provide water quality treatment independent of the Stream Reclamation Project. As stated in the UDFCD manual Volume 3, “Grass Swales have low
longitudinal slopes and broad cross-sections that convey flow in a slow and shallow manner, thereby facilitating sedimentation and filtering (straining) while limiting erosion.” In addition to these treatment mechanisms, wetland vegetation is anticipated to be present in the swale bottoms, thus encouraging nutrient uptake into the plants. The following is a list of pollutants that can be treated using grass swales and a ranking of their effectiveness as referenced from the UDFCD manual Volume 3 (also based on the International Stormwater BMP Database):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pollutant</th>
<th>Typical Effectiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sediment / Solids</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrients</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Metals</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacteria</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Right of Way Needs/Concerns**

The water quality improvements designed for this project will not require any right of way acquisition. Colorado Revised Statute 43-2-135 requires the City of Aurora to own, operate, and maintain any water quality facilities associated with this project. Through an alternatives analysis it was determined that the future Stream Reclamation Project would be utilized in combination with a series of pre-treatment swales, which will be located on City of Aurora property. Approval from the City of Aurora to implement the recommended water quality plan is in the process of being obtained. A temporary construction easement will be required to construct the improvements.

**III. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Water quality improvements to be constructed as part of the Arapahoe Road Bridge Project consist of the pretreatment swales located downstream of all storm sewer outfalls. There are no operation requirements associated with the swales. Maintenance requirements include removal of sediment that may accumulate in the swale bottoms, unclogging of the cross culverts that pass swale flows under the regional trail, and repair of any erosion that may occur due to storm flows along Cherry Creek. The majority of the pretreatment swales can be accessed directly off of Arapahoe Road or by way of the Cherry Creek Regional Trail. All disturbed areas should be reseeded with similar native species.

Water quality improvements to be constructed after the Arapahoe Road Bridge Project consist of the improvements associated with the future Stream Reclamation Project. Design and construction of the future Stream Reclamation Project will be guided by the Parties. Decisions related to the operations and maintenance of these future facilities will be determined and shared by the Parties as the project reaches completion of final design.
IV. REFERENCES

Drainage Design Manual (including Chapter 19: New Development and Redevelopment Program), Colorado Department of Transportation, 2004

Urban Storm Drainage Criteria Manual, Volumes 1 and 2 (2001-2006) and Volume 3 (Update November 2010), Urban Drainage and Flood Control District


URS Corporation January 2004. *Cherry Creek Corridor Reservoir to Scott Road Major Drainageway Planning Preliminary Design Report.*


CR72 @ 72.7.2
APPENDIX A
APPENDIX C
APPENDIX D