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SECTION 1: PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE CHERRY RESERVOIR BASIN

Cherry Creek Reservoir is a flood control reservoir on Cherry Creek in Arapahoe County that is owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to protect downstream communities from flooding. The Cherry Creek Reservoir Basin watershed includes over 386 square miles and 600 miles of creeks and streams that drain to the Reservoir (Figure 1-1). According to the USACE, Cherry Creek Reservoir has a maximum surface area of 850 surface acres at an operating pool with an elevation of approximately 5550 feet above mean sea level. The Reservoir is located south of I-225 and west of Parker Road in Cherry Creek State Park (CCSP or the Park). Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) leases the land surrounding the Reservoir and manages the 4,000-acre Cherry Creek State Park as a recreational amenity for the citizens of Colorado. The Reservoir is one of the most productive fisheries and widely enjoyed recreational areas in Colorado, with over 1.5 million visitors annually. The Reservoir is considered eutrophic and does not currently meet its 18 microgram per liter (ug/L) chlorophyll-a water quality standard, requiring active watershed and in-reservoir management to reduce nutrient loading and improve water quality.

The Colorado Legislature established and tasked the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority (CCBWQA) with preserving, protecting and enhancing the water quality of Cherry Creek and Cherry Creek Reservoir, and achieving and maintaining water quality standards for the Reservoir and watershed. In keeping with its statutory responsibilities, the mission and vision of CCBWQA is to benefit the public by improving, protecting, and preserving water quality in Cherry Creek and Cherry Creek Reservoir for recreation, fisheries, and other warm water aquatic life, water supplies, and agriculture to achieve and maintain current water quality standards. The CCBWQA also supports effective efforts by partner counties, municipalities, special districts, and landowners within the basin providing for the protection of water quality, ensuring that new developments and construction activities pay their equitable share of costs for water quality preservation and facilities, and promoting public health, safety, and welfare.

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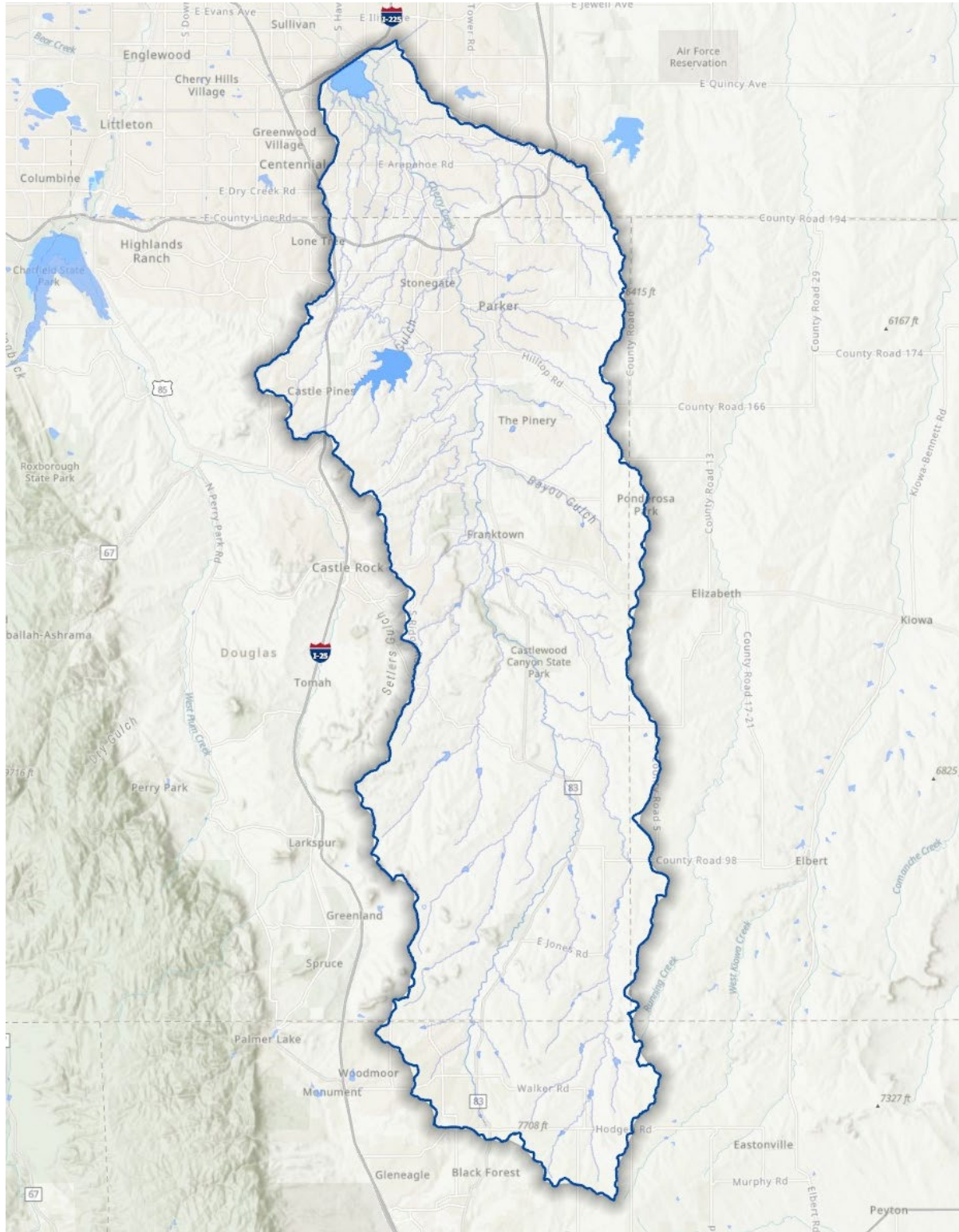


Figure 1-1. Cherry Creek Reservoir Basin

*DRAFT for Review & Comment***1.2 CCBWQA'S VISION, MISSION AND GOALS**

During 2017-2018, CCBWQA undertook an extensive stakeholder process to refine and define its vision, mission and goals, which was reviewed by the CCBWQA Board and reaffirmed in 2023. A key theme of the process included maintaining a “straight line of sight” to stay focused on the vision and mission of CCBWQA. This Watershed Plan provides a common roadmap to support the mission, vision and goals and includes more detailed information on project prioritization, metrics of success, monitoring and adaptive management.

This vision and mission define what we want to be, what is possible, and what we desire to achieve. CCBWQA's vision and mission statements (Figure 1-2) are used to establish goals and objectives (Figures 1-3) that are incorporated into management practices and governing documents to provide a consistent, comprehensive foundation for decision-making. These elements function as building blocks that direct the future focus of the Cherry Creek Watershed and Cherry Creek Reservoir improvement program, in both the near term and into the future.



Figure 1-2. The CCBWQA Watershed Plan Supports the CCBWQA Vision, Mission, and Goals

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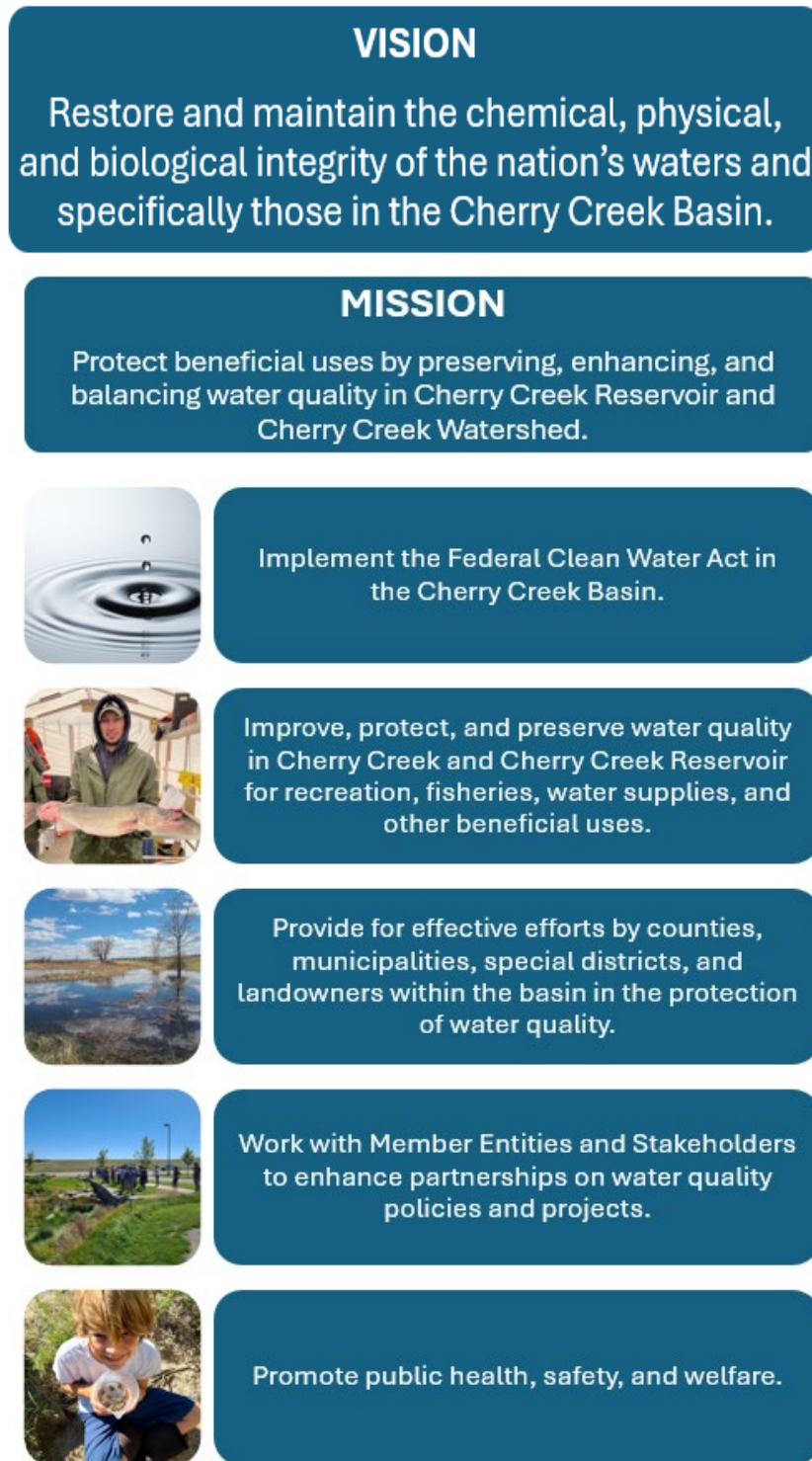


Figure 1-3. CCBWQA Vision and Mission

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Figure 1-4. CCBWQA Goals and Objectives

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1.3 WATERSHED PLAN SCOPE

The watershed plan is organized to meet the needs of CCBWQA, but it also covers themes required in Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Stream Management Plan elements and US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) 9 Elements Watershed Plan. The roadmap below (Figure 1-4) illustrates the scope and content of the eleven Watershed Plan Chapters. Table 1-1 provides a crosswalk between CCBWQA’s outline and USEPA’s and CWCB’s outlines.

What the Plan IS	What it’s NOT
✓ Roadmap	
✓ Integrates multiple on-going efforts	⊘ All the answers
✓ Prioritizes most important actions	⊘ Section 208 Plan
✓ Adaptive & easily updated	⊘ Static
✓ Dynamic	

The previous CCBWQA Watershed Plan was completed over ten years ago, in 2012. In 2024, the Plan has been updated to:

- Reflect changes in watershed conditions
- Reflect increase knowledge based on long-term monitoring data, an HSPF watershed model and a QUAL2E reservoir model
- Reflect changes in CCBWQA activities
- Prioritize actions based on modeling and other characterization and analysis efforts, and
- Facilitate funding opportunities.

Report

Interactive Data exploration Tool

Link to additional information

Click on an icon to access supplementary and updated Watershed Plan information

CCBWQA watershed planning is fluid – CCBWQA maintains a practice of adaptive management, which governs prioritized activities to meet its mission. Priorities can change based on numerous factors from flooding to funding. Thus, this plan is intended to be a dynamic document that leverages many existing and to-be-developed CCBWQA references and tools. These elements are identified by interactive links throughout the Plan.

Appendix A contains a library of the reports, tools, and links referenced in this Watershed Plan.

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Figure 1-5. CCBWQA Watershed Plan Roadmap

*DRAFT for Review & Comment***Table 1-1. Crosswalk between CCBWQA Watershed Plan, CWCB Stream Management Plan and EPA 9 Elements Plan**

CCBWQA Plan	CWCB Stream Management Plan	EPA 9 Elements Plan
1 - Purpose and Scope 2 - History 3 - Applicable Regulations	1 - Define purpose and scope	
4 - Current Conditions 6 - Risks and Vulnerabilities	2 - Assess conditions and identify risk	
5 - Relative Source Contributions	3 - Select objectives and measurable results	1 (a) - Identify causes and sources of pollution 3 (c) - Describe management measures and targeted critical areas
7 - Potential Management Strategies	4 - Identify potential alternative actions	2 (b) - Estimate load reductions Expected 3 (c) - Describe management measures and targeted critical areas 5 (e) - Develop an information and education component
8 - Evaluate and Prioritize Actions	5 - Evaluate and prioritize actions	3,4, (c, d) - Estimate technical and financial assistance needed 5 (e) - Develop an information and education component
9 - Implement priority actions	6 - Implement priority actions	6 (f) - Project schedule
10 - Monitor Implementation Outcomes	7 - Monitor implementation outcomes	8 (h) - Identify indicators to measure progress 9 (i) - Develop a monitoring component
11 - Adaptive Management	8 - Manage adaptively	