

Kerber Creek Restoration Project



Sustaining the health of the Kerber Creek watershed through collaborative restoration projects and community education



Introduction



The Kerber Creek Restoration Project represents a partnership among government, landowners, and local non-profit organizations all with a common vision: to restore the Kerber Creek watershed through collaborative efforts and community involvement. Our partners' combination of scientific knowledge, restoration experience, and interest in the Saguache County community has produced a unique project based on the participation of all sectors of society. This rare opportunity for the integration of environmental conservation, economic development, youth education, and citizen participation both produces on-the-ground results and improves the experience of residents of and visitors to Saguache county.











cated in northeastern Saguache County, one of the largest counties (land-wise) in the state of Colora-



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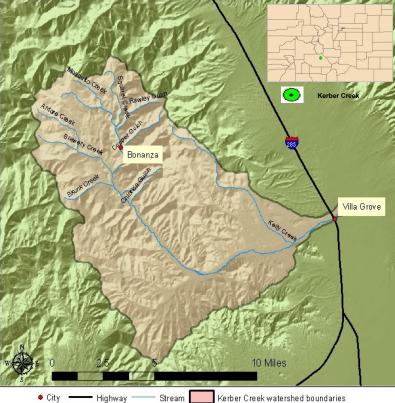
most end of the San Luis Valley, home to the cities of Monte Vista and Alamosa and the famous

Great Sand Dunes National Park.

The watershed is bordered by the San Juan Mountains to the west and the Sangre de Cristo Moun-

tains to the east. Within its boundaries are the cities of Villa Grove and Bonanza, the smallest incorporated town in Colorado with a pop-

ulation that fluctuates between 10 and 15.





Kerber Creek Watershed Restoration: Why & How







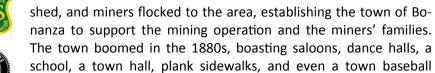


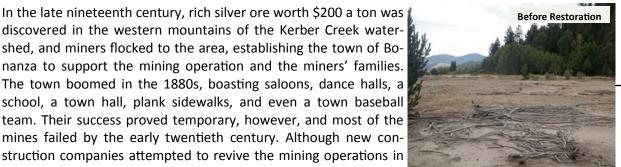
Legacy mining activities in the upper Kerber Creek watershed introduced harmful contaminants, including acid mine drainage, into the stream system, limiting the ability of aquatic organisms to survive. The deposition of mine wastes along Kerber Creek during flood events rendered the soils toxic, killing riparian vegetation necessary for terrestrial habitat and stream bank stability. Since 2007, the Kerber Creek Restoration Project has implemented restoration methods that improve fish habitat, stabilize stream banks, and remediate soils, addressing all of the environmental issues that resulted from legacy mining activities. In addition to active restoration, project staff monitor water quality, vegetation cover, and other environmental variables to document the effectiveness of these methods. Check out the before and after pictures on the back of this sheet!



History of the Kerber Creek watershed



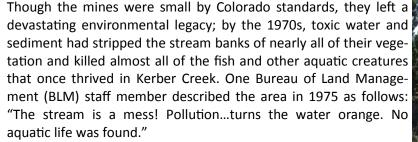






team. Their success proved temporary, however, and most of the mines failed by the early twentieth century. Although new construction companies attempted to revive the mining operations in the 1910s and 1920s, most failed by 1930.



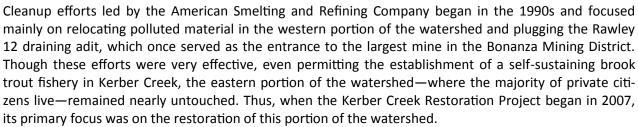
































Awards and Accomplishments

Since 2007, the Kerber Creek Restoration Project has:

- Treated 80 acres of contaminated soils
- Installed 348 in-stream rock structures
- Restored 6000 feet of stream bank
- Attracted over 16,000 hours of volunteer work
- Secured over \$2,000,000 of funding through grants

Since 2009, the Kerber Creek Restoration Project has received six awards:

- U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region: Water Emphasis of the Year Honor Award (2009)
- Bureau of Land Management: Hardrock Mineral Environmental Award (2010)
- Colorado Riparian Association: Excellence in Riparian Area Management Agency Award (2010)
- U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region: Forest and Grassland Health Partner of the Year (2010)
- American Fisheries Society Western Division: Riparian Challenge Award (2011)
- Public Lands Foundation: Landscape Stewardship Award (2011)



