

Poudre Runs Through It Study/Action Work Group
A Guiding Document
Adopted 5-11-18

The Poudre Runs Through It Study/Action Work Group (PRTI) adopts this “guiding document” to describe the informal and flexible framework within which the PRTI works to bring together agricultural, municipal, environmental, recreation, business and other stakeholders to better understand the river and each other, and to support and undertake collaborative actions that foster a healthy working Poudre River.

Vision

Diverse Interests Collaborating to Make the Poudre River a Premier Example of a Healthy Working River

Definition of “Healthy Working River”

Our definition of a healthy working river is one that supplies the goods and services demanded by our complex society, within the existing and evolving water rights system and honoring existing property rights, while maintaining and improving ecological integrity and resilience. The word “river” connotes not only the river channel and its banks but also the upper watershed that supplies the water, the lands that are irrigated by the river, the areas supplied with domestic and industrial water from the river, and the treated wastewater and other return flows that come back into the river.

Composition of Membership

The PRTI is comprised of around 25 individuals (members) at any given time that reflect the breadth of values and interests and uses of the Poudre River. The PRTI strives to include as members individuals from the regional municipalities and water providers, from the local agricultural sector, from regional environmental and recreation organizations, and businesses, among others, provided that all members have a stake in the Poudre River and agree to the PRTI’s collaborative mission. Details are spelled out in our Membership Statement, attached.

Mission

To provide a courteous and considerate “space” where members can convene for the purpose of sharing information and perspectives, building relationships, bridging differences, and developing collaborative ideas to further the PRTI’s Vision, through:

- 1) Study: Drawing from the best available science and information, to learn from each other and from outside resources about all aspects of the Poudre River including diversions for agriculture, industrial and domestic use; ecology and water quality; recreation and tourism; history and culture; and attributes that enhance personal connection to the river as a part of nature. And to further refine what we mean by “healthy working river.”
- 2) Action: to collaboratively support, incubate, catalyze, and/or initiate actions that advance progress toward our healthy working river vision.

Action: Supporter, Incubator, Catalyst, Initiator

In order for PRTI to make significant and ongoing strides in furthering PRTI's vision of making the Poudre River a premier example of a healthy working river, we aim to pay close attention to the action part of our Mission. Our aim is to be flexible and serve whatever role is appropriate (e.g. supporter, incubator, catalyst, and/or initiator) in furthering ideas consistent with the PRTI's vision. For instance, we can proactively identify needs and potential actions that advance progress toward our vision. We can seek others, whether individuals or groups, with whom we can partner. In some cases we can simply write letters of support for actions that advance our vision. In other cases we can bring together key potential players to incubate ideas. Sometimes we can serve as catalysts, and sometimes as partners of efforts catalyzed by others. When we choose an action that we will lead, we will adopt it as one of our PRTI initiatives and seek funding, if needed, to accomplish it.

Our initiatives to date are:

- 1) Poudre River Forum
- 2) Instream flow augmentation initiative
- 3) Gaging the river signs
- 4) Resource investigation for "after flood" ditch company diversion structure improvements to incorporate environments benefits
- 5) Investigation of the causes of large, abrupt flow fluctuations on the river

Typically, criteria for action includes:

- 1) The action must have the consensus of PRTI membership
- 2) The action must be supported by resources outside the PRTI base funding
- 3) The action must have a champion(s) within the PRTI membership or a reasonably clear path to achieve such a champion outside the group

Suggested process for proposing/initiating a new action:

- 1) Either a current member of PRTI or someone external to the group can propose to initiate a new action by notifying the PRTI facilitator.
- 2) The PRTI Steering Committee will discuss the proposal at its next scheduled meeting or at a special meeting if needed and may choose to meet with the proponents to refine the action proposal.
- 3) After discussion with the PRTI Steering Committee the proponents will decide how to move the proposal forward for discussion, possible concurrence, and timely action (if warranted) at subsequent PRTI meeting(s.)

Definition of "Consensus"

For the PRTI to adopt or support a proposed action, there must first be consensus among the PRTI members to do so. We define consensus as having the firm backing of most, and at least agreement to not oppose by the others. We operate under a 1-2-3 framework, where 1) means you fully support, 2) means you support or can live with it but may have reservations, and 3) means you cannot support. If any action is proposed where most members fully support the action and a few oppose it, the opposing members must articulate the reason for their opposition and in good faith consider

revisions to the proposal or action that would address the concern(s). Nothing in this process is intended to prevent members or groups of members from separately taking actions outside of the PRTI.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is chosen from within the membership of the group and reflects a balance of the same breadth of values and interests as the membership. Among the responsibilities of the Steering Committee are:

- Provide a welcoming sounding board for members and others to introduce and gauge support for potential initiatives they are considering forwarding to the membership
- Help resolve roadblocks for any agreed-to actions, if appropriate
- Plan and evaluate PRTI sessions
- Sign letters of support approved by the PRTI membership
- Maintain diversity in the PRTI membership mix, consider the nominations of new members and recommend their approval by PRTI membership
- Propose the annual budget for base funding and assure that necessary funding is raised and expenses monitored
- Continually assess the effectiveness of PRTI in making timely progress toward achieving its stated vision, making or recommending changes as necessary

PRTI Sessions—Study/Action/Relationship Building

Full group sessions are normally held about five times a year, usually September, November, January, March, and May. This schedule and frequency and duration of meetings may be altered by the Steering Committee as necessary to accommodate the desires of the PRTI membership.

Sessions provide opportunity for:

- Relationship building/communication about happenings on the Poudre
- Presentations/Q&A to further knowledge about the Poudre from various angles
- Reports and active discussion about ongoing and potential PRTI Initiatives
- Opportunity for members to propose PRTI action such as
 - Letters of support to be sent
 - Incubation efforts to engage in
 - Initiatives to undertake

Base Funding

Base Funding is needed to pay salary for the PRTI facilitator provided by CSU and for basic expenses such as meeting space, field trip transportation and food. The Steering Committee proposes an annual budget for adoption by members. PRTI members and the organizations with which they are affiliated annually “pass the hat” in order to collect the budgeted amount needed each year.

Funding for Initiatives

PRTI does not have formal funding powers and cannot serve in a fiscal agent role. When we incubate an idea and move it to the point of serving as its catalyst or its initiator, we will use our influence to bring in partners and funders to launch and sustain

it. A variety of options are available for serving as fiscal agent for grants received, including but not limited to CSU and the Community Foundation of Northern Colorado.

Future Funding

The PRTI's Vision is ambitious and may at some point require the PRTI to generate a substantial pool of funding from which to draw, in order to support the implementation of initiatives. The PRTI membership will keep in mind that without significant, concerted and sustained efforts to develop funding, it is likely that any major actions and initiatives may not be possible. While mindful of the challenge, the PRTI will continue to explore future opportunity to develop significant and sustained funding for major actions.

Membership in the Poudre Runs Through It Study/Action Work Group

ADOPTED May 6, 2016

Revised July 12, 2016

Revised May 11, 2018

The Poudre Runs Through It Study/Action Work Group (PRTI) is made up of about 25 citizen experts of diverse backgrounds and expertise, actively pursuing the goal of making the Poudre River the world's best example of a healthy "working river"—one that meets both human and ecological needs.

The group has accomplished a great deal in the years we have been meeting. Our members—from agriculture, business, recreation, the environment, industry and urban water management—have built cooperative relationships leading to two major initiatives and some smaller ones. Information about the group and our initiatives is available on our website, <http://www.cwi.colostate.edu/thepoudrerunsthroughit/>.

Colorado Water Institute convened the Poudre Runs Through It Study/Action Work Group in October, 2012, as a response to a very successful 2011 community conversation about the Poudre River and Northern Colorado's Water Future. Those chosen for membership represent a wide diversity of leaders who share a passion for the Poudre River and who see the value in cooperating with those from multiple sectors to put that passion into action. Our members include those with expertise about the human uses of the river and those with expertise about its ecological needs.

Any member of the group can nominate others to become members. In addition, individuals wishing to join the group may nominate themselves. Nominations are to be submitted to the Steering Committee, care of MaryLou Smith, MaryLou.Smith@colostate.edu. Those nominated are considered by the Steering Committee, taking into account the current diversity of the group. The Steering Committee makes membership recommendations for approval by consensus of the full membership.

We keep the group small so that we can build trust and collaborative relationships allowing us to catalyze action initiatives. For the same reason, the meetings are not open to the public. Only members and invited guests may attend and we do not allow alternates or proxies. The individuals chosen come from a variety of organizations with interests in the Poudre, but they do not represent their given organizations. However, we recognize that it is not possible for individuals to completely set aside the interests of the organizations they work for. In some cases, individuals weigh a balance between their personal opinions and the role they play in the community.

Because we meet only a few times each year, it is very important that each of our members commit to being at each session. The sessions are what gives us the

opportunity to build the strong relationships to bridge the diverse interests and values of our members. Those accepted for membership must be willing to commit to the sessions scheduled at the time of their acceptance. Generally, our members miss only on those occasions that critical conflicts arise, and alert us to that ahead of time.

As new members become familiar with our work, they may want to join one or more of our initiative (action) committees, but that is not a requirement. All members, however, are expected to support our goals and projects, including to help promote our annual Poudre River Forum.

Sometimes, community members who otherwise are not members of the Poudre Runs Through It Study/Action Work Group are invited to be members of our initiative committees.

Though all of our initiatives are self-funded through grants, registrations or sponsorships, the minimal operating expenses for the Poudre Runs Through It are covered by our members and the organizations with which our members are affiliated. Once each year we ask for contributions. Though such a contribution is not a condition of membership, we ask that each member contribute annually to our base funding.

Members should either live in one of the communities along the Poudre or do work related to the Poudre. We expect our members to bring with them a demonstrative record of collaboration in past efforts. They should have curiosity about and respect for the interests and values of other group members. Those interested in membership should have a passion for working together to solve the puzzles that emerge as we try to meet the needs of various interests in the Poudre. Because we adopt for action those initiatives upon which we can come to consensus, those accepted for membership must agree to work toward that end.