

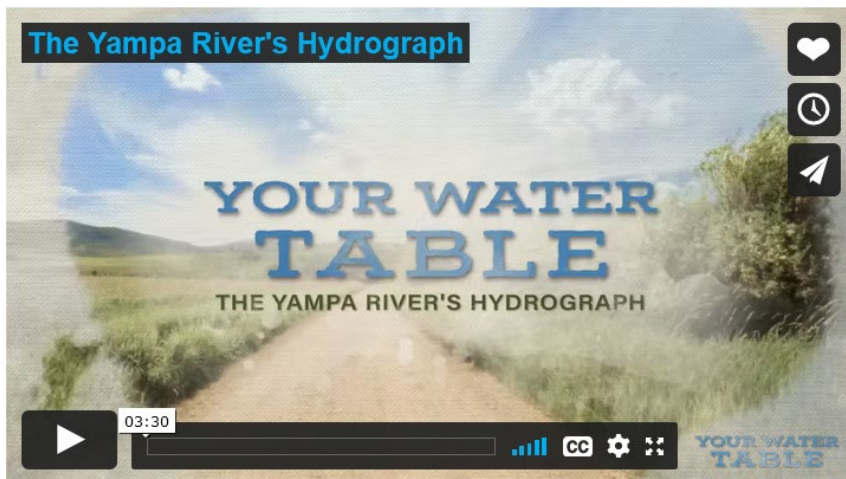
YAMPA WHITE GREEN BASIN ROUNDTABLE



Yampa-White-Green
Basin Roundtable

INTEGRATED WATER
MANAGEMENT PLAN

- One of **9 Basin** Roundtables established in 2007 by State of Colorado
- Offers local communities a **strong voice** in how water is managed by developing locally-driven plans
- Provides **grant funds** to implement 8 basin goals



BASIN GOALS



Protect the YWG Basin from compact curtailment of existing decreed water uses and some increment of future use



Restore, maintain, and modernize water storage and distribution infrastructure



Protect and encourage agricultural uses of water in the basin within the context of private property rights



Improve agricultural water supplies to increase irrigated land and reduce shortages



Identify and address municipal and industrial water shortages



Quantify and protect environmental and recreational water uses



Maintain and consider the existing natural range of water quality that is necessary for current and anticipated water uses



Develop an integrated system of water use, storage, administration, and delivery to reduce water shortages and meet environmental and recreational needs

YAMPA RIVER INTEGRATED WATER PLAN



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MANAGEMENT PLAN

GOAL: Combine community input with science and engineering assessments to **identify actions to protect existing and future water uses and support healthy river ecosystems**

TASKS

- Gather community concerns & ideas
- Assess diversion infrastructure
- Assess river conditions
- Develop action plans



IT IS...

...a volunteer-driven, collaborative process with voluntary participation
...about identifying common ground and strategies that provide multiple benefits for both people and the river

IT IS NOT...

...a tool to increase regulatory oversight
...meant to tell people how to manage their land or water
...a top-down water management plan

FOCUS AREAS FROM RESEARCH & INTERVIEWS



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Water Shortages & Low Flows

Improve the basin's ability to meet the river flow needs of the fishery, seasonal recreational boaters and agricultural water users by identifying preferred flows and alleviating shortages today

Riparian Habitat & Erosion

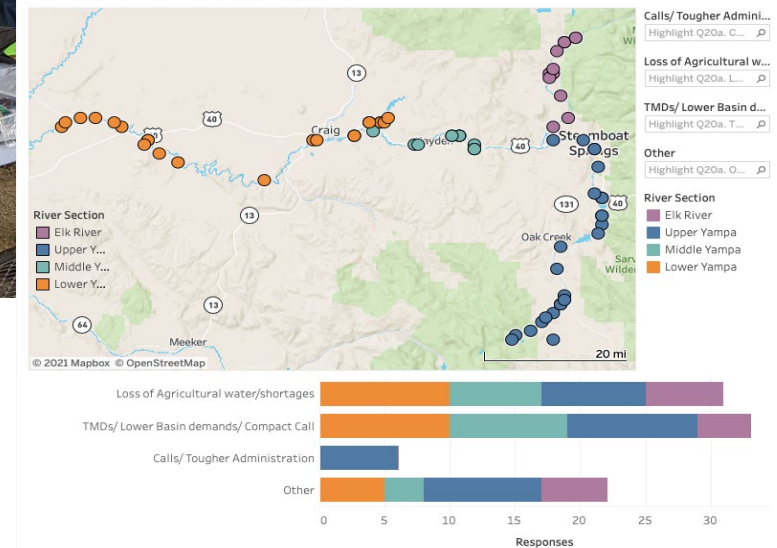
Identify projects and strategies that balance the needs of water infrastructure with increasing high quality habitat in riparian lands through voluntary incentives for riverside landowners

Infrastructure Upgrades & Lack of Drought Planning

Strengthen Ag diversion infrastructure to benefit agricultural operations while ultimately improving river health, fish, and flows.



1a. Top concerns (Ag): Ag_Q20a



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED:

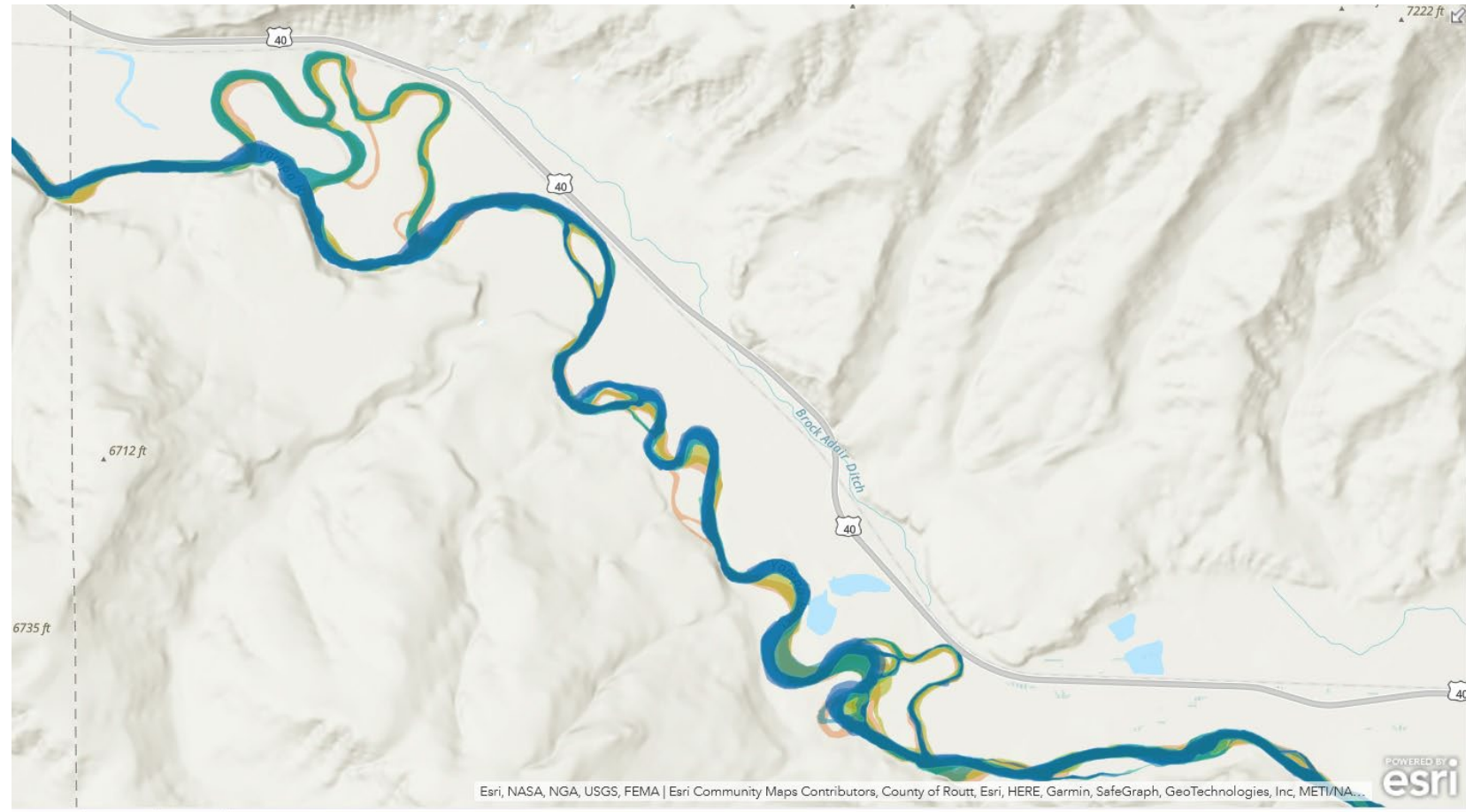
THE YAMPA RIVER HAS BENEFITTED FROM GOOD MANAGEMENT



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- Lack of development next to the river means better wildlife habitat
- Overbank flows help establish riparian vegetation
- Natural flow patterns help native fish survive
- Good water quality reduces costs for communities' drinking water



WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED:

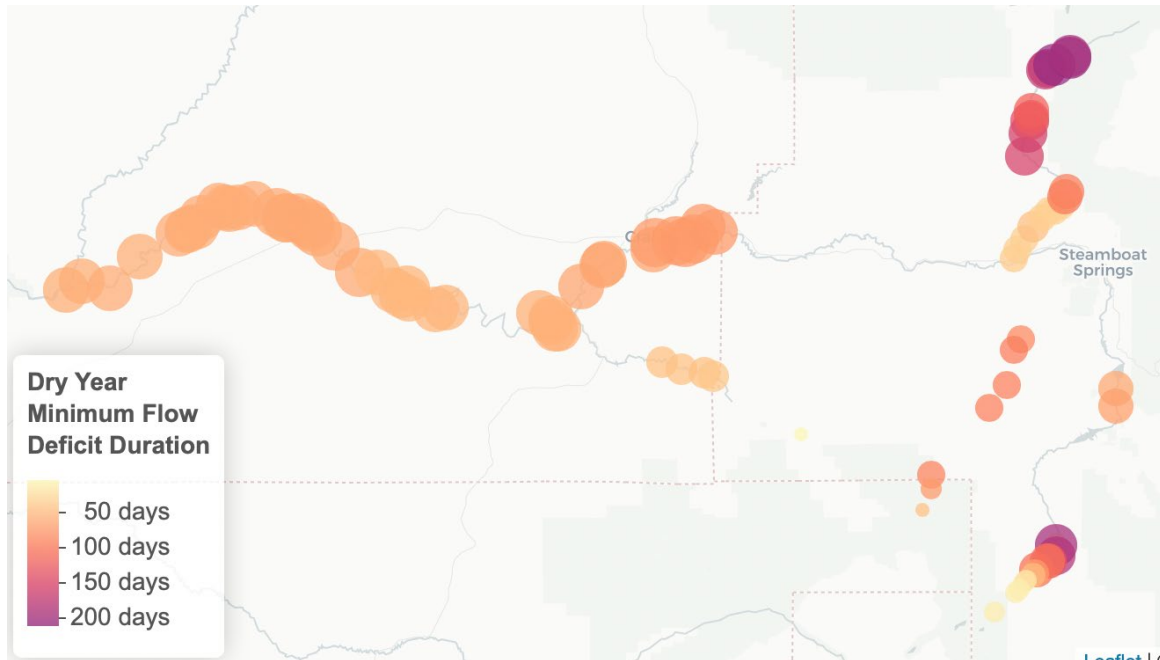
THE FUTURE WILL LOOK DIFFERENT



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Yampa River Environmental Flow Shortages



Yampa Basin Agricultural Gap Results per Tributary

Tributary	Average Annual Demand	Average Annual Gap	Average Annual Percent Gap	Average Annual CU Gap
Baseline				
Above Stagecoach	63,377	564	1%	306
Elk River	41,458	173	0%	94
Little Snake River	72,351	2,243	3%	1,248
Mainstem	107,186	335	0%	193
Other Tribs	71,976	7,034	9%	4,013
Williams Fork	33,304	2,875	8%	1,552
Hot Growth				
Above Stagecoach	85,142	8,382	10%	4,558
Elk River	57,732	3,024	5%	1,642
Little Snake River	99,553	8,227	8%	4,587
Mainstem	284,447	27,678	9%	14,998
Other Tribs	93,979	20,143	21%	11,392
Williams Fork	43,526	7,114	16%	3,842

“The annual volume of flow (at the Maybell gage) has declined from approximately 1.5 million acre-feet to 1.12 million acre-feet... The combination of continued adjudication of new water rights, and the potential for a hotter, drier climate, will likely cause the trend of declining streamflows to continue.” ~ DWR memo, 2021

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED:

WE MUST BETTER LEVERAGE WHAT WE HAVE



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Elkhead Reservoir

- Improve hydrology datasets to better understand where/when there are irrigation and environmental flow shortages
- Coordinate release of stored water to meet irrigation and environmental flow shortages
- Make existing stored water a more viable supplemental supply for water users
- Increase ability of local organizations (CAA, NRCS, Conservation Districts, etc) to meet landowners' and irrigators' needs

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED:

IRRIGATORS & LANDOWNERS REQUIRE BETTER SUPPORT



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MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Money is needed to upgrade irrigation systems and help pay for riverside land improvements
- Technical assistance is needed to design and oversee projects
- Grant writing is burdensome
- Few incorporated ditches reduces competitiveness for funding
- Lack of organizational capacity (i.e. people with time and expertise) makes it hard to plan and advocate for larger investments

