



What's at Stake: CU's Proposed Development at CU South

Tuesday, August 16 at 6pm

Register at EmpowerOurFuture.org/Events • For more information: www.repealcusouth.org

The CU South Annexation is a seriously problematic deal for Boulder that fails to mitigate against 500-year flooding, ignores the climate change, and ignores treaty rights. Here are comments from the event speakers:

1) Need to keep the area as a floodplain

- Floodplain needed for: managing floods, serving as pasture/regenerative agricultural lands, carbon sequestration, and as habitat for rare and endangered species.
- Historic construction of neighborhoods, major roadways, and mining gravel in the floodplain and margins has already altered the natural flow-paths of flood waters and drained wetlands that historically absorbed past floods. Because of this, a storm event in 2013 led to widespread flooding with damages estimated at \$40 million.
- The City of Boulder's proposed a flood-control project is estimated to cost us \$63 million. But it will provide limited protection during a flood...even one similar to that in 2013, and will disrupt the flow of groundwater that supports hundreds of acres of critical grassland and wetland habitat.
- The University of Colorado plans a major expansion in and next to the floodplain, further reducing habitat and its ability to absorb floods.

– **Steven Telleen**, Ph.D. Environmental Biology – CU Boulder, South Boulder Creek Citizen Initiative

2) Need to listen to the science

- Climate change is producing more frequent droughts and a drying out of the southwest US. The Colorado River basin is in the midst of a 20-year drought and the Bureau of Reclamation has recently implored states to curtail usage by 30% this year.
- Yet, Denver has begun to enlarge the Gross Reservoir (in the foothills of the greater South Boulder Creek watershed) based on the assumption that the added water supplies will come from increased diversion of water from the Colorado River basin.
- Climate change science predicts intermittent – but more intense – storms and flooding. Overall, the frequency of major flooding is predicted to increase.
- Despite this, the City of Boulder recently chose to reduce the level of flood protection in the South Boulder Creek watershed from a 500-year to a 100-year flood event. Denver and Boulder are not listening to the science from the water scarcity perspective nor from the water abundance perspective.

– **Gordon McCurry**, Ph.D. Hydrology, Principal Hydrologist, McCurry Hydrology, LLC

3) Need to listen to the land

- Historic promises have been made. In exchange for allowing safe travel for settlers “going west,” several treaties were signed that formally acknowledged that what is now Colorado belonged to indigenous peoples – including the Treaty of Fort Laramie (1851) for the land between the Arkansas and North Platte Rivers east of the Rockies drained by the South Boulder Creek watershed.
- Yet each treaty was broken to permit development by settlers and, today, by speculators and corporations in the name of economic development.
- In addition to the standing agreement that the United States has a trust responsibility and is required under law to consult with tribes, both CU Boulder and the City of Boulder have previously committed to acknowledge and uphold these land agreements.
- Such broken promises are at the heart the larger ethical and sustainability issues challenging our country and our relations with other countries.

– **Renée Millard- Chacon**, Diné/Azteca Native Coloradoan, Spirit of the Sun – Youth Program Coordinator, Founder – Womxn (CO Native Women’s Network)

SUMMARY

Whether by design or by default, we will face the climate change barreling down on us and it will be costly. In anticipation of pulling bonding for the proposed South Boulder Creek project in 2024, wastewater rates have increased 12%. If/ when the bond is issued, water-use bills are project to increase 5 – 8%.

FEMA has signaled they do not have the funds to keep bailing-out development in floodplains.

The South Boulder Creek watershed (“CU South”) is the last undeveloped major watershed along the front range. We hope it will not also serve as another example of what happens when we fail to listen to the land, to the science, and to the promises we make to future generations.

Our hope is that listening to the land, the people, and the science will inspire us to do better in managing our land and our water and in respecting all our beings.

Empower Our Future

A Boulder-based coalition of organizations and individuals in support of local clean power.

The mission of Empower Our Future is to work towards 100% renewable electricity by 2030 in an electrical system that is more democratic, decentralized, competitive and equitable than is currently provided by Xcel's monopoly in Colorado. We also support other efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Our primary focus is on Boulder, but we work at the local, state and national levels and collaborate with and assist other communities as appropriate.

Our “Empower Hours” are regularly scheduled events that feature renewable energy experts, promising technologies, legislation, etc., all with the goal of providing the public with education about energy matters, and to inspire us all by spotlighting renewable energy innovation.

