

## Abstract

### **Roaring Fork Watershed Plan – Phase II Guidance Document: *Illuminating the Way Ahead***

Phase II of the Roaring Fork Watershed Plan will generate a series of water resource objectives and recommended actions. It will be up to local governments and other stakeholders to convert the Plan's recommendations into action.

There are a variety of ways local governments in the Roaring Fork Watershed can independently take action to protect our water resources. Local jurisdictions have already taken advantage of many of these opportunities. There are also a variety of mechanisms available to local governments to organize and cooperate for water resource management purposes. ***Illuminating the Way Ahead* summarizes some of the key water resource management tools available to local decision makers in order to help our community prepare for strategic implementation of the Plan.**

In anticipation of the completion of Phase II, it is critical that local governments review their current water resource-related policies, procedures and regulations, and begin to think and talk candidly about what improvements they might be comfortable making in the future. At the same time, it is important for local decision makers to think about collaborative opportunities that exist beyond their jurisdictional boundaries, and to prepare for a frank dialogue with other entities on the water issues facing the entire Roaring Fork Valley. We will need unprecedented Valley-wide political cooperation, mutual support and resource sharing to successfully implement the Roaring Fork Watershed Plan.

We hope you and your colleagues find *Illuminating the Way Ahead* useful as we move through the Phase II process. Individuals new to water resource management planning in Colorado will also want to take advantage of the supplemental background material included in the document's detailed Appendices:

- Appendix I: *The Past, Present and Future of Transmountain Diversion Projects* – An overview of existing, proposed, and defeated transmountain diversion projects impacting Colorado's Western Slope.
- Appendix II: *State Governmental Entities with Water-related Authority* – A summary of the diverse state entities with responsibility for Colorado's water matters.
- Appendix III: *Protecting Water Resources with Local Land-use Authority* – A summary of additional opportunities for local governments to become more involved in water resource protection by taking a closer look at wells associated with development, engaging in stormwater management, and evaluating the implications of the exercise of conditional water rights.
- Appendix IV: *Local Governmental Entities with Water-related Authority* – A summary of the large number of municipal and quasi-municipal corporations recognized in Colorado that have some type of water-related authority. This is also a useful reference for identifying and understanding the roles of many familiar entities in the Roaring Fork Valley.