

4 – Background and Risks

The Water Plan will become an element of the Larimer County Comprehensive Plan and will help bolster Larimer County’s strategic planning for water, stormwater, impacts to water quality, and environmental flows. Understanding what the challenges are will help identify mitigation strategies to keep water flowing for everyone and everything that depends on it.

Risk Development

Larimer County prioritized risk categories and associated risk criteria, which were derived from January Water Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group meetings, a January 2024 survey sent to the advisory groups and County Core Team, and feedback from various Larimer County boards.



Poudre River Fly Fishing, Photo by Ryan Burke

Risk Categories and Criteria

Risk Categories 1–4 have been mapped spatially to be included in the risks mapping part of the project, whereas Risk Categories 5–6 will be addressed in the mitigation strategies but will not be mapped.

Risk Category	Risk Criteria
(1) Supply and demand planning	Increased demand from population growth
	Uncertain water futures as it relates to climate
	Changes in land use
(2) Watershed health and natural hazards	High intensity wildfires
	Source water quality
	Habitat
(3) Water rights	Water rights impacted by administrative calls on the river
	Colorado-Big Thompson Project (CBT) use
	Urban encroachment on agricultural lands
(4) Infrastructure	Water delivery infrastructure
	Storage
(5) Lack of water conservation policies or measures	Policies or guidelines
	Measures to avoid curtailment
	Cohesive approach; municipalities, HOAs, County
	Water efficiency in agriculture
(6) Lack of water education	Land use policies
	Lack of public awareness
	Lack of understanding by policy/decision makers

Feedback form to provide topic-specific can be accessed here:



View the Water Plan website to learn more here:

