BECOME A RIVER SMART COMMUNITY

Colorado's rivers—our natural infrastructure—provide drinking water, support agriculture and recreation, and power our economy. They are part of who we are. However, the combination of drought, wildfires, flooding, and rapid population growth is pushing rivers to their limit. The greatest risk to a community's resilience is a fragmented approach to managing that infrastructure. Too often, planning happens in silos, projects move forward in isolation, and key partners are left out of the decision-making process.

A River Smart Community creates a shared vision and a practical roadmap to coordinate across agencies and sectors so today's work creates lasting river impact.

WHAT IS A RIVER SMART COMMUNITY?

A Framework for Collaboration

River Smart Communities bring the right people together to work on shared river challenges — whether across departments, throughout the community, or along the river corridor. Together, they create more holistic and sustainable outcomes.

Integration, Not Addition

River Smart Communities connect land use, hazard mitigation, water resources management, and river health efforts to identify gaps and draw out common solutions for the river.

Practical Tools & Support

River Smart Communities gain access to self-assessment tools, technical assistance, and peer learning. River Network provides hands-on support to help communities assess their current status, identify priorities and take concrete next steps.





Is your community ready to be River Smart?

- You have **multiple plans or initiatives affecting your river corridor** that could benefit from better coordination
- **Your river is central to community identity**
- **Essential players need to be at the table** but haven't yet had the opportunity to coordinate
- You want to help your community to **embrace more nature-based solutions**
- You want to **integrate river management proactively** rather than react during a crisis
- You're facing **flooding, drought, water quality, habitat, or cross-sector coordination challenges**

WHAT'S NEXT?

Check out the **River Smart Community website**

Conduct a **community self-assessment**

Access a **network of peer communities**

Attend a **workshop or training session**

Request **technical assistance**

IN PRACTICE

GRAND VALLEY RIVER CORRIDOR INITIATIVE
MESA COUNTY, CO

The Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative (GVRCI) is a collaborative, community-driven effort that uses workshops, discussions, and data-driven planning to advance shared priorities — supporting community access, agriculture, tourism, environmental health, safe development, and public well-being.

Through a master planning process, GVRCI is creating a roadmap to guide recreation, land use, and resource protection while respecting local control. Community input and data are shaping strategies that preserve the river's natural and cultural value, expand access, and support long-term resilience.

GET IN TOUCH

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Visit our site for more information:

www.rivernetwork.org

