

## Reasons for Updating the *Stormwater Master Plan*

In 2012, Fort Collins Utilities is updating its *Stormwater Master Plan* to address stormwater quality from rainfall runoff and to identify and prioritize stream restoration projects that protect the City's watersheds and preserve natural and beneficial functions of floodplains.

The goals are to:

- protect infrastructure and the public
- improve stormwater quality
- rehabilitate damaged urban streams

### **Protect Infrastructure and the Public**

Erosion in some streams has caused public safety concerns and damage to infrastructure, e.g., near-vertical banks where children play. In some areas, utility lines are in danger of being exposed or culvert crossings are compromised, which can lead to road damage or collapse. The proposed stream rehabilitation projects will help address these issues.

### **Improve Stormwater Quality**

Untreated stormwater runoff from streets, rooftops and yards releases pollutants into the stream system. Poor water quality in streams leads to a decrease in macroinvertebrate species, the primary food source for fish and other aquatic animals.

Federal water quality regulations are expected to be more stringent in the future and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) intends to strengthen its stormwater program. In anticipation of these regulations, *Stormwater Master Plan* updates include retrofits of existing stormwater systems to include treatment of stormwater discharge where none currently exists.

### **Rehabilitate Damaged Urban Streams**

Urbanization has caused local streams to change drastically. Increases in base flows and runoff in minor rainstorms have caused unstable banks and significant erosion in the streams, creating safety concerns and loss of aquatic habitat for fish and other aquatic species.

Stormwater treatment and stream rehabilitation are necessary to return impacted streams to a healthy and more naturalized ecosystem. Removal or reconstruction of existing barriers to fish passage, channel improvements to reduce erosion and create more biodiversity, and removal of pollutants in runoff before it enters the stream system are at the center of the current *Master Plan* update.