

# SWAN RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT

*Working to Reclaim Our Mining Past*

## What is the Swan River Restoration Project?

Collaborative partnership comprising a diverse group of agencies, nonprofit organizations, and individuals working to restore the dredge mined Swan River Valley. Primary goals of this multiphase restoration project include the following:

- Restore stream and floodplain functions to over three miles of the Swan River and surrounding areas destroyed by past dredge mining.
- Reconnect the North, Middle and South Forks of the Swan River with a natural, stable stream channel and enhance the adjacent riparian and upland areas.
- Restore a self-sustaining trout fishery and create habitat for a diversity of native wildlife.
- Provide educational opportunities and demonstrate restoration techniques for streams degraded by historic dredge mining.
- Enhance recreational opportunities along the restored stream and riparian corridor.



The project site is broken into four construction reaches. Reach A & B are on Summit County and Town of Breckenridge Open Space property. Reaches C & D are on private property. Reach A is complete. Gravel removal on other reaches is ongoing.



Dredge boats operated in the Swan River Valley during the late 1800's and early 1900's. Dredge mining literally turned the Swan River upside down while searching for gold and other precious minerals. Gravels and cobbles were cast aside, littering the landscape, and severely degrading ecological, recreational, and aesthetic appeal.

## The Reach A Restoration Site - What Happened Here?

The Reach A restoration project on County/Town Open Space accomplished the following:

- Replaced approximately one half mile of stream channel confined to a roadside ditch, with approximately one mile of new meandering stream.
- Established year-round flows in the channel and created a 65 foot wide native riparian corridor.
- Restored over 16 acres of riparian and upland habitat.
- Provided a series of 22 pools, riffles, and glides to create a diversity of aquatic habitat for fish, insects and a healthy self sustaining ecosystem.
- Created new opportunities trails and trailheads for fishing, recreation, and aesthetic enjoyment.
- To facilitate completion of the first 1-mile section of this restoration project, approximately 63,300 cubic yards of excess gravel was exported from the restoration site for beneficial reuses elsewhere in Summit County.



Before and after images of Reach A of the Swan River Valley show the landscape transformation that has occurred along this half-mile stretch of the valley floor. Work is ongoing throughout the valley to remove the remaining gravels, with the ultimate goal of restoring the landscape to a condition similar to what would have existed prior to dredge mining.

## Project Partners and Visionaries

Collaborating and funding partners include: Summit County Government; Town of Breckenridge; US Fish and Wildlife Service; US Forest Service; Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Colorado Water Conservation Board; Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety; Friends of the Dillon Ranger District; Blue River Watershed Group; Colorado Trout Unlimited; and others.



For more information visit: [www.RestoreTheSwanRiver.com](http://www.RestoreTheSwanRiver.com) or the [Summit County Government Website](http://Summit County Government Website)

Or contact Summit County Open Space and Trails at 970-668-4060

