



FROM SOURCE TO MOUTH: a creative survey of Monument Creek by Erin Elder

Monument Creek is a 27.2 mile stream that flows along Colorado's Front Range. Cutting through the heart of Colorado Springs, this small but essential waterway is a source of drinking water and a habitat for many plants and animals. It is also a highly engineered public resource, a site of much restoration and repair, a place of recreation, and home to a growing population of unhoused people. Developed by artist and curator Erin Elder, *From Source to Mouth* is a community-centered creative research project that engages elements of geology, hydrology, ecology, land use, and history, as well as personal memory and sensory awareness to explore the multiple, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory perspectives about Monument Creek. By placing diverse voices in dialog, the project considers how this often-overlooked landscape has been constructed, restored, shaped, used, revered, protected, and made public. This ongoing project features an exhibition, a body of research, a collection of oral histories, a number of student and faculty collaborations, a set of community-led public programs, and a forthcoming digital story map website.

EXHIBITION

From Source to Mouth: a creative survey of Monument Creek

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College

September 1 - November 9, 2023

Opening Reception: Friday, September 1, 5-8pm

This exhibition features Erin Elder's creative response to her multidisciplinary exploration of Monument Creek. It features a set of field drawings that depict the creek's various aqueducts, overpasses, drains, pipes, canals, and monitoring stations to explore the infrastructure that defines the creek's many uses. The images are presented alongside excerpts from oral histories collected from creek stewards and a collection of field-recorded soundscapes. Taken together, these elements render visible and imagine what is unseen, forgotten, or removed from view. As a multisensory contemplation of this specific place, Erin's work illuminates an interconnectedness that can inspire care for water, land, the past, the future, and each other.

ARTIST TALK

Looking and Listening to Learn: a conversation between artists

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College

Friday, October 6, 5:30-6:30pm

[Register here](#)

The exhibition *From Source to Mouth* features an artistic interpretation of a very specific place, Monument Creek. Taking the forms of field drawings, soundscapes, and a series of locally-sourced oral histories, the project is informed by two years of fieldwork and interpersonal research. Join artist Erin Elder and her collaborator, CC Music Professor Iddo Aharony, in conversation with Jessica Hunter from CC's Creativity & Innovation to discuss artistic approaches for exploring place. How can art-making inspire different ways of learning and knowing? How can art open our ears and eyes to the spaces we inhabit, cherish, or even overlook? RSVP for this First Friday event.

PANEL DISCUSSION

We Don't Have a River: a discussion from many perspectives

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College

Wednesday, November 8, 5:30-7pm

Colorado Springs is the largest city in the American West without a major river. Because Colorado Springs augments its local water from intermittently-flowing smaller streams by piping water from Pikes Peak and the Western Slope, the city has developed a unique and complex relationship to water. This multidisciplinary panel discussion looks at Monument Creek, the city's first and primary water way, as a microcosm of larger issues, midsets, and inequities. It invites broad consideration of the creek from perspectives including geologic time, endangered species, hydraulic infrastructure, homelessness, urban development, and more, to reveal how the city has developed and how it might live in the increasingly arid future.

COMMUNITY-LED EVENTS

Water Resource Recovery Facility Tour with Colorado Springs Utilities

4205 Mark Dabling Blvd.

Wednesday, September 13, 1-3pm

[Register here](#)

Every drop of water in our community is precious. Water used in homes and businesses flows through sewer mains to one of two water resource recovery facilities in town. Discover how Colorado Springs Utilities reclaims wastewater to public health standards and environmentally safe conditions before releasing the clean water into Monument Creek to be used by others downstream. Witness the fascinating steps of separating biosolids, using microbiology to remove contaminants and disinfecting with ultraviolet light to meet strict discharge permit requirements. This tour of the J.D. Phillips Water Resource Recovery Facility includes an overview of our community's water resources and key challenges for a sustainable water future.

From City Beautiful through the New Deal and Beyond: Stories of Water and Stone in Monument Valley Park

Penrose Pavilion, Monument Valley Park

Saturday, September 30, 10-11:30am

[Please RSVP at info@fmvp.net](mailto:info@fmvp.net)

Parks require continuing attention and improvements as time passes and behaviors change. Join this walking tour hosted by Friends of Monument Valley Park and joined by New Deal for the New Deal to learn about the WPA projects in this historic park in downtown Colorado Springs. Participants will enjoy a one-mile stroll in Monument Valley Park as guides interpret its architectural, stonework, and landscape features, while the beauty of the grounds and views appeal to the senses. Gather near the Penrose Pavilion south of the pickleball courts, next to Shadow Lake near the park's swimming pool. Parking is available at the parking lots where Mesa Rd turns to Glen Avenue.

10th Annual Creek Week

throughout the Fountain Creek Watershed

September 30 – October 8, 2023

[More information here](#)

Creek Week started in 2014 when community members in the Fountain Creek Watershed District realized there was a major need for a community cleanup program. What began as a small community effort has blossomed into something extraordinary; Creek Week is now a 9-day community improvement program -- the largest of its kind in the state. Over the last 9 years, 19,000+ volunteers have picked up over 140 tons of trash from Palmer Lake to Pueblo and beyond. Now, in 2023 we are celebrating 10 years of Creek Week and inviting citizens to add to these impressive numbers. The Fountain Creek Watershed District encourages individuals and groups to form a Creek Crew for the 10th Annual Creek Week Clean-Up. Pick a time, pick a date, and pick it up!