

**Bear Canyon Creek Basin  
September 2013 Flood Disaster**

11/14/13

1. The most intense rainfall and flooding affecting Bear Canyon Creek occurred on September 11 between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 12:00 midnight, and September 12 between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.
2. It is estimated the recurrence interval (the chance of a flood of this magnitude happening on any given year) for Bear Canyon Creek corresponds with a 75-125 year event. After further evaluation and analysis, the city will confirm the estimated recurrence interval.
3. The city documented flow paths and high water marks and draft mapping of this information is available for review.
4. Significant erosion occurred, especially in the upstream reaches of the creek above Lehigh Street.
5. Significant water flowed down the hillsides owned by Boulder Open Space and NCAR.
6. Debris in the form of rocks, cobbles, sand, silt, mud, sediment, woody debris and wreckage was deposited in culvert pipes and in flooded areas. The culvert at Lehigh was completely plugged by debris, which caused water to flow down the east bound lanes of Table Mesa Drive.
7. Water was mostly contained within the improved channel, although water spilled onto Broadway flowing north and then downhill through the Martin Acres neighborhood.
8. Water also backed up upstream of the Denver Boulder Turnpike and also inundated Baseline Road.
9. Excessive amount of floodwater and groundwater in the wastewater collection system caused water that could not fit in downstream pipes to flow to the next lowest point such as a basement or a crawlspace. There were also cases where dirt and debris were carried into the system (by floodwaters) and caused localized blockages. Based on the extent that issues were relieved as overall flows in the system subsided, it appears that most issues were caused by floodwater and groundwater and not by flood debris related blockages.
10. Colorado residents have until Nov. 28 to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency for disaster assistance.
11. The city plans to restore drainageway features under the city's control (and jurisdiction) to their pre-flood condition and function. It is anticipated that a significant portion of the cost of this work will be reimbursed by FEMA.
12. As a result of the September flood event, it is likely that FEMA flood hazard maps will be updated based on flooding evaluation and analysis. Actual flooding will also inform on-going flood mitigation project work. Documentation of damages and the analysis of the benefit-cost of flood mitigation project work will inform future prioritization decisions. Decisions by the City Council will be made in consultation with the public, Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, and the city's Water Resources Advisory Board. Until the prioritization of future projects is completed (most likely as part of the 2015 budget process) new flood mapping and mitigation work, including property acquisition, is unlikely to be initiated.