



KERBER CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT – Saguache County, Colorado – www.kerbercreek.org

The Kerber Creek Restoration Project began in 2005 to continue restoration of the Kerber Creek watershed from historic mining impacts. Kerber Creek is located in northern Saguache County. Dozens of mines operated in the watershed from 1880 to the 1970s as part of the Bonanza Mining District. Mining activity left hundreds of tons of waste exposed in the watershed, much of which washed down the stream and were deposited as far as 17 miles below the mining district. Mining activity that ended decades ago continues to degrade the watershed.

In 2005, the Bureau of Land Management decided to continue some previous restoration work in the watershed with a collaborative approach, involving local landowners, government agencies and private interest groups. These partners formed the Bonanza Stakeholders Group in 2007, and have raised over \$1.4 million dollars for physical restoration work, and donated over 9000 volunteer hours to the project since 2008. These contributions have supported the restoration of over 37 acres of riparian land since 2008, which benefits light agriculture, wildlife habitat and stream bank stability. The stream itself has also been restored. Project partners have installed 171 in-stream rock structures and reshaped over 3600 linear feet of stream bank since the Project began- a total improvement equivalent to two miles of stream. This benefits fish habitat, the health of floodplain vegetation and base flows in Kerber Creek.



2008: barren ground, toxic soil, poor wildlife habitat



2010: healthy plant growth and soil composition



2008: vertical banks, wide and shallow stream



2010: reshaped banks, deeper and narrower stream

For its success, the Kerber Creek Restoration Project was honored with three major awards in 2010, from the BLM, the Forest Service, and the Public Lands Foundation. For more information, contact Brian Devine, OSM/VISTA Watershed Coordinator, at 719-655-6133, or bedevine25@gmail.com.

