

## River Watch Items for June 2021 UWP Board Meeting

- On May 28<sup>th</sup> River Watch volunteer John Hulburd and I visited the four River Watch sites that will be added to our sampling schedule in June 2021. Three sites on the upper segment of Red Mtn Creek, Commodore Gulch at Hwy 550, and Gray Copper Gulch at CR20 were found to be easily accessible. At an alternate Commodore Gulch site on CR31 the stream is not accessible on foot, but can be sampled from the CR31 bridge by bucket and ~30 feet of rope. We will likely use the site on Hwy 550. An interesting observation at the upper segment of Red Mtn Creek (COGUUN06a\_A); we found the creek is augmented by a diversion shown in Figure 1 that comes from a tributary of Mineral Creek on the San Juan County side of the pass.



*Figure 1. Diversion at Red Mountain Pass that adds water to Red Mtn Creek from a source in San Juan County.*

- The new River Watch sampling schedule began on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Ten sites were sampled between June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 4<sup>th</sup>. High flow nutrient samples were collected at five sites and sent to CPW for analysis on June 7<sup>th</sup>. The “high flow” was relatively modest at only about 300 cfs on the Uncompahgre. The new Blue Lake site has not yet been sampled due to snow on the trail. We expect to visit the site sometime during the last two weeks of June.
- A new diversion pipe to send water to the golf course on Loghill is being installed on Dallas Creek right at our River Watch sampling site at the CR24 bridge. We might have to move our site upstream or downstream, depending on how the diversion structure interferes with the natural flow.
- Streamflow stats:
  - The Uncompahgre reached its highest flows to date (as of June 6<sup>th</sup>) at the USGS gauge near Ridgway with peaks slightly above 1100 cfs. The historical median is about 570 cfs on June 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - The USGS gauge near Ouray had flow peaks of about 750 cfs on June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Median for 6 June is about 560 cfs.
  - Discharge from Ridgway Reservoir was raised to about 200 cfs in late May, but has since been lowered to about 150 cfs.
  - Diversions on Dallas Creek seem to have changed abruptly on 31 May with flow at the USGS gauge jumping from < 1 cfs to about 8 cfs; still well below the median of about 20 cfs for that date. An abrupt flow increase to greater than 60 cfs occurred on 5 June, the only time this runoff season that flow has exceeded median flow.
  - Cow Creek had a peak flow of > 300 cfs on 5 June. Prior to June 4<sup>th</sup> the creek had been flowing at 100-130 cfs.