



## MESSAGE FROM MARSHA

### **FOUNTAIN CREEK-THE CROWN JEWEL OF COLORADO**

Fountain Creek, one of Colorado's major watersheds within the Arkansas River Basin, is home to one million square miles of surface water and provides a lifeline to millions of people in Colorado and Kansas. In order to address the ongoing flooding, drainage and erosion problems effectively within the Fountain Creek Watershed, it is necessary to create a special drainage district that focuses on issues unique to Fountain Creek.

SB141 creates this district and represents the culmination of the years of planning and negotiation. As one of the proud sponsors of SB141, it was my privilege to work with Gary Barber, Chairman of the Arkansas Inter-Basin Compact Committee; Commissioner Sally Clark; Commissioner Dennis Hisey; and Larry Paterson, Utility Director for the City of Fountain in developing this legislation.

These passionate, dedicated individuals worked closely with their colleagues and stakeholders from Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs and other communities along Fountain Creek to establish relationships built on trust and conviction, and forge ahead with solutions to address the flooding, soil erosion, water quality and loss of residential and business properties along the creek.

The Arkansas River Basin is the largest river basin in Colorado, covering approximately 27% of the surface area in the state of Colorado. The Fountain Creek Watershed area includes the communities of Fountain, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Manitou Springs, Green Mountain Falls, Woodland Park, Palmer Lake and Monument, and drains south into the Arkansas River at Pueblo.

Over the past 100 years, 112 people have died in floods from raging rivers of the Arkansas River including 78 people in Pueblo and 18 people along Monument Creek in Colorado Springs. The photos on the Fountain Creek Watershed website at <http://fountain-crk.org> tell the tragic story of flooding and soil erosion along the creek. The turbulent floodwaters along Canon Avenue in Manitou, the loss of residential and business properties in and around the City of Fountain and massive crop losses along the Lower Fountain Creek represent the ongoing tragedies our citizens are enduring without proper management of the creek.

The passage of SB141 will be an historic event for El Paso and Pueblo Counties, our region, Colorado and the nation. The Fountain Creek Watershed District created by SB141 provides a framework that will allow two counties to heal and transform Fountain Creek, our diamond in the rough, into the "crown jewel" of Colorado as our Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar has often predicted it could ultimately become.

***Marsha Looper (R)***

Colorado State Representative HD#19

[Email-MarshaLooper@gmail.com](mailto:Email-MarshaLooper@gmail.com),

Website: [WWW.GOMARSHA.ORG](http://WWW.GOMARSHA.ORG), 719-238-5600