METROGRO® update

News for neighbors and customers

ISSUE XXXIIV WINTER 2022

A PUBLICATION OF METRO WATER RECOVERY

# Decades of Environmental Stewardship

In celebration of more than six decades of environmental stewardship, Metro Water Recovery initiated an education campaign in 2022 with direct outreach to its external stakeholders. The **Stewardship Campaign** included two public meetings and the launch of a new webpage – which focused on the organization's continuous work to protect public health and the environment.

The public meeting recording is available on the **Stewardship** webpage located in the **About Us** section of the website. Listen to learn more about Metro's commitment to improve the health of the South Platte River – including details about a long-term project that has improved aquatic life and habitat in the river.

The 20-year **Aquatic Life/Habitat Improvements Project** has changed the river's depth of flow, velocity, stream coverage, and channel complexity. Through the project, Metro has partnered with six counties, the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The first four phases of the project are complete.

Metro's commitment to protect the South Platte River is the result of the combined efforts of more than 400 employees. Every day, Metro collects and reclaims about 135 million gallons of wastewater from homes and businesses located in the communities it serves. During treatment at two facilities (Denver and Brighton), more than 95 percent of the regulated contaminants are removed before the treated water is returned to the South Platte River. It takes a village to protect one of Colorado's most important natural resources!

The water Metro cleans accounts for about 85 percent of the river's flow for nine or more months out of the year. The water recovered during the treatment process transforms what has been historically considered a waste product into an asset with many beneficial uses.

*Secondary channels serving as protective and resting cover*

### Additional online resources

**Virtual Wastewater Treatment Tour:** https://treatment.metrowaterrecovery.com

**Community Survey:** https://www.metrowaterrecovery.com/stewardship

**Water Quality Report:** https://www.metrowaterrecovery.com/wqr

**Stream Sampling Data:** https://www.metrowaterrecovery.com/sampling

**Fish Count Data:** https://www.metrowaterrecovery.com/fishcount

**Macroinvertebrate Data:** https://www.metrowaterrecovery.com/macro

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# Harvest 2022

*Combine and grain cart during harvest on the METROGRO Farm*

The METROGRO Farm has felt the challenges 2022 brought to the agricultural communities in eastern Colorado.

In the fall, Metro planted approximately 14,000 acres of winter wheat. However, due to the ongoing drought and extreme wind conditions throughout the growing season, staff was only able to harvest 2,340 acres, with a total yield of about 24,000 bushels. As a result, 7,000 acres of failed wheat crop were planted with milo in late May.

It appears the 2023 wheat crop planted in September and October may be more productive than the previous year. Although, it will depend upon soil conditions that are still very dry throughout most of the farm.

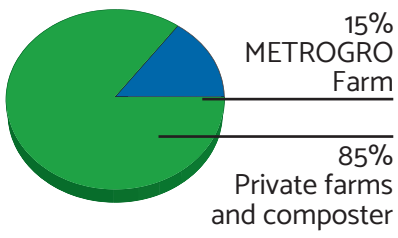
In addition, several fields of six-row winter barley were planted this year to determine if it is a viable option in the future for combatting sawfly infestation.

# Biosolids Distribution for 2022

The chart below summarizes the breakdown of biosolids distributed to the METROGRO Farm, private farms, and a private composter in the first eight months of 2022. All biosolids produced during that period at the Robert W. Hite Treatment Facility (RWHTF) and the Northern Treatment Plant (NTP) were beneficially reused.

| **Distribution from RWHTF** | **Dry Tons** |
|---|---|
| METROGRO Farm | 3,017.96 |
| Private farms | 17,589.56 |

| **Distribution from NTP** | **Dry Tons** |
|---|---|
| METROGRO Farm | 161 |
| Private composter | 615.74 |




A total of 21,384.26 dry tons (104,108.59 wet tons) of biosolids were beneficially reused from January through September.

Dry weight is the solids from biological treatment of wastewater after all water is removed. The average METROGRO® Cake solids content for the first nine months of 2022 is 20.72% for the RWHTF and 19.72% for the NTP.

# Learn More About PFAS

It takes a village to keep our water clean and safe. Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are not by-products of the wastewater treatment process but are present in the wastewater that enters facilities from homes and businesses. PFAS enters the sewer when people wash, rinse, or clean products containing the chemicals. Technologies to remove PFAS from wastewater exist but do not destroy the chemicals. Metro Water Recovery is committed to being part of the solution and has developed a webpage with community resources, so stakeholders can help keep PFAS out of the water cycle. The information is located in the **Community** section of Metro's website (www.metrowaterrecovery.com).

METRO WATER RECOVERY℠

Questions or comments? The METROGRO® Update is a publication of Metro Water Recovery. If you have questions or comments, please contact: Patrick Stanley, Metro Water Recovery, 6450 York Street, Denver, CO 80229, 1-800-237-6603, MetroWaterRecovery.com