



Department of Integrative Biology 2017 Fall Seminar Series

When: Friday, December 8th

Where: SI 2001 at Noon

Dr. Rebecca Hufft

**Associate Director of Applied Conservation
Denver Botanic Gardens**

Ecological Stewardship: Restoration at Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms

The South Platte River Basin accounts for over half of the state's economic activity, contains seven of the top ten agricultural producing counties in Colorado, and includes many areas for recreation. Water flows in tributaries in the South Platte River Basin are variable and ephemeral, with many reaches that are dry for large portions of the year. Historical channelization of these creeks has exacerbated this problem. Over time, banks have become steeper and the channel more incised, with less water getting onto the banks which reduces the flood plain and available riparian habitat. Riparian habitat is vital for plants and animals and serves as an important wildlife corridor, especially in our urban and suburban areas. In 2015, we successfully initiated a watershed improvement project in the lower portion of the South Platte River Basin at Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms. We installed three in-stream structures along Deer Creek to re-wet historical oxbows, improving hydrology from historical stream channelization. We also planted over 1000 willows, cottonwoods, and other native riparian species and initiated a long-term monitoring program. We have seen increased channel flow and animal use in restored areas. I will present results of our first two years of monitoring, research opportunities, current plans to expand the project, and a discussion of longer-term management implications.

Everyone is welcome to the seminar. If you would like to meet with the speaker, please email Dr. Chris Miller at chris.miller@ucdenver.edu