

**Water Supply Reserve Account – Grant and Loan Program
Water Activity Summary Sheet**

Applicant: Monte Vista Historical Society

Amount Requested: \$13,000.00

Source of Funds: Basin Account

Water Activity Name: 100 Years of San Luis
Valley Reservoirs Celebration

Water Activity Purpose: Study/Analysis of non-structural activity? See discussion.

Plan and execute a celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the building of reservoirs in the San Luis Valley. The project includes a video/DVD and a traveling exhibit produced for the celebration and to be distributed to schools, libraries, museums, and visitor centers throughout the valley, and a speaker symposium.

Matching Funds: Yes mixed: El Pomar Grant \$5,000; Colo. Division of Wildlife \$500; Colo. Historical Society \$7,665; Colo. Humanities grant \$2,565; in-kind -not fully documented \$6,718.

County: Multiple

Drainage Basin: Rio Grande

Water Source: Not Applicable – Educational Activity

Water Activity Summary:

The celebration is an educational endeavor to create awareness of the value of surface and underground reservoirs; the efforts of people working together 100 years ago to solve critical water problems; and the potential for wise future water decisions by an informed public. Although there will be many fun and family-oriented activities designed to encourage attendance and participation – the core message of “100 Years of San Luis Valley Reservoirs” Celebration is:

- The reservoirs of the Rio Grande Basin of Colorado affect the lives of the entire San Luis Valley population.
- The San Luis Valley has reaped benefits from its surface reservoirs for almost 100 years including irrigation water, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and flood control, and from underground reservoirs for even longer.
- Building the dams required extreme sacrifice – both physical and financial.
- All but Platoro were built and have been maintained with private funds.
- There are numerous small reservoirs built initially for irrigation and/or fish culture now owned by the Colorado Department of Wildlife, and others partnering with CDOW for conservation pools, etc.
- The dams and reservoirs of the San Luis Valley are showing their age. There are issues of safety and full utilization of existing water rights. Private reservoir companies are hard-pressed to fund needed maintenance and improvement.
- With the demand for water ever increasing, there may be opportunities to work together with the other Rio Grande Basin states to maximize this precious resource by increasing storage in the Upper Rio Grande Basin.

A video/DVD with wide distribution throughout the valley could provide an efficient and effective means of bringing the value of irrigation, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and flood control provided by San Luis Valley reservoirs into the public consciousness. The premier showing of the video/DVD will take place on the first day of the Celebration. It will run continuously during the rest of the Celebration. Copies of the video/DVD will be sent free of charge to schools, libraries, museums, and visitor centers of the valley, and be available to others at copying costs.

A traveling exhibit will address the questions: “Why Store Water?” and “Why 1907?” and use many historical photographs, accounts, and newspaper clippings to tell the story of building SLV reservoirs. The exhibit venues are already scheduled through March of 2008, with plans to bring it to all corners of the SLV over the next 5-10 years. The professional quality of this exhibit will serve to attract, engage, and educate.

The focus of the 3-day Celebration will be the speaker symposium entitled “Water Storage of the Rio Grande Basin: The Past, The Present, and The Future.”

Discussion:

The applicant has clearly done a commendable job organizing this ambitious effort. Considerable planning, coordinating and organizing has gone into the proposed activity. There are two key issues related to the application.

- First, it is unclear whether the proposed activity is considered a study/analysis of non-structural activity. The criteria and guidelines and statute do not define non-structural activity.
- Second, threshold criteria 4 requests that the applicant consider how the water activity meets the provisions of CRS 37-75-104. In short Senate Bill 06-179, which created the water supply reserve account indicates that allocations from the account shall assist in meeting those water supply needs identified in the Statewide Water Supply Initiative or other appropriate sources and/or helps complete a needs assessment, an analysis of unappropriated water, or involves proposed methods or projects, both consumptive and non-consumptive, for meeting those needs. Staff believes that the proposed project marginally meets the intent of the legislation. Staff sees some connection of the proposed project in educating the local community on the condition and purpose of water storage and therefore has some value associated with the basin needs assessment.

Issues/Additional Needs:

The budget indicates that some past costs have been incurred and it appears that the request may include past costs which is not allowed (see specifically related to the budget item for video and DVD costs). This will need to be resolved if funding is approved and may result an adjustment in the amount of funds allocated.

Additional level of detail is needed on budget items where rates and level of effort are not provided.

In some cases there is not adequate description and justification of the in-kind contributions. Since this is not essential to the decision to fund or not fund and given other matching cash this information is not thought to be essential.

Staff Recommendation:

Given the above concerns staff does not have a recommendation at this time. Staff will request that the Board provide direction, confirmation or modification of staffs interpretation of the two issues identified in the discussion section. Based on that direction staff will formulate the recommendation and request Board action.