

# STATE OF COLORADO

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## Colorado Water Conservation Board

### Department of Natural Resources

1313 Sherman Street, Room 721  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Phone: (303) 866-3441  
Fax: (303) 866-4474  
www.cwcb.state.co.us



TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Kevin Houck, Engineer  
Watershed Protection & Flood Mitigation Section

DATE: November 5, 2009

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item 28e, November 16-18, 2009**  
**Watershed Protection and Flood Mitigation Section-**  
**En-bloc Non-Reimbursable Investments**  
**Colorado Floodplain Map Modernization Program**

Bill Ritter, Jr.  
Governor

Harris D. Sherman  
DNR Executive Director

Jennifer L. Gimbel  
CWCB Director

Dan McAuliffe  
CWCB Deputy Director

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### **Background**

A \$150,000 Flood Response Program was authorized in the 2001 Construction Fund Bill (SB 01-157) and enacted by the Colorado General Assembly. This amount was increased in the 2007 Construction Fund Bill (SB 07-122) to \$300,000 to reflect the additional cost of performing existing program functions and the addition of newly added services under the program. The fund was created to give the Flood Protection Section of the CWCB ability to quickly respond and have program funds in the areas of: flood documentation, flood forecasting and outlooks, post event floodplain mapping, aerial photography, and flood mitigation.

### **Discussion**

The current request is to refresh the fund up to \$300,000 for FY 10/11 for: 1) preparation of individual flood documentation reports for actual events in Colorado, 2) contracts with consulting firms for Colorado Flood Task Force flood forecasting and weather outlooks during the spring/summer flood season, plus a web-based daily flood threat bulleting with tailored regional flood outlook reports, 3) ongoing work and increased demand for evaluating and producing 100-year flood and debris flow hazards in areas affected by flooding or other natural hazards, 4) develop scopes of work and projects for flood mitigation activities in communities where flood loss reduction is needed, and 5) develop on-call services for digital and aerial photographs and mapping for post-flood documentation and flood hazard identification.

### **Staff Request**

The CWCB Staff requests that the Board consider restoring up to \$300,000 to the Flood Response Fund to refresh it to the original \$300,000 funding level for Fiscal Year 2010/11. The attached document provides further justification to this important fund.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board request the General Assembly to restore up to \$300,000 from the Construction Fund to be appropriated to the Colorado Water Conservation Board for the Flood Response Program.

## ATTACHMENT – SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION FOR APPROVAL OF REQUEST

The CWCB Construction Fund Non-Reimbursable Investment Program is guided by CWCB Policy #13, adopted September 25, 2000. According to a strict interpretation of this policy, funds are not available this fiscal year for non-reimbursable investments. However, this request for program funding is explicitly requesting an exemption from this policy.

The exemption request is based on public health and safety issues. The Flood Response Program (Program) is the single funding source used to respond to flood events, both major and minor. Funds from the Program are used to support on-site technical expertise, both staff and contractual, as well as important data collection following a flood. This data is used to more effectively improve flood preparedness and mitigation activities for future events, and is a critical input in the request for outside post-disaster assistance from FEMA and other agencies.

The Flood Response Program has been acknowledged by public officials in recent years, when flooding has been viewed as imminent or likely. Members of the Colorado General Assembly have commented publicly that the Program should be maintained and properly utilized for the sake of public health and safety of the citizens of Colorado.

Flooding is the most common natural disaster within the state. A study undertaken in 2003 indicated that in 2003 dollars, the average annual losses due to flooding since 1900 are over \$50 million. The lack of major floods in the past ten years has done nothing to diminish the flood threat throughout the state.

It should be emphasized that this request is for a refresh of the ongoing program up to \$300,000, as opposed to a simple \$300,000 request. In many years, the refresh amount is significantly smaller, indicating that a large portion of the fund may go unused and be carried over to the next year. It should be noted that the unused amount should not be viewed as unneeded funds. Rather, in any given year, the majority of the Program funds are held in reserve in case of an unexpected flood event happening so that funds are available to be spent on an emergency basis. When no flood event happens, these monies are not spent and will then reduce the amount of the request in the following fiscal year.

For these reasons, Staff is requesting an exemption to CWCB Policy #13 on the basis of public health and safety for this request.

**Water Project Construction Program - Project Data**  
**Non-Reimbursable Investment**

**Grantee:** Colorado Water Conservation Board      **County:** Statewide

**Project Name:** Colorado Flood Response Program Fund

**Project Type:** Program Funds for post event floodplain mapping, flood forecasting, aerial photography, flood mitigation and flood documentation

**Drainage Basin:** All River Basins in Colorado

**Water Source:** N/A

**Total Project Cost:** \$300,000

**Funding Source:** CWCB Const. Fund

**Type of Grantee:** State Government

**Median Household income:** N/A

**CWCB Non-Reimbursable Inv.:** \$300,000 (refresh up to) **Interest Rate:** N/A    **Term:** N/A

The CWCB and General Assembly authorized \$150,000 for the Flood Response Program Fund (Fund) in the 2001 Construction Fund Bill. The Fund was created to give the CWCB the ability to quickly respond to events and have program funds for: flood documentation, flood forecasting and outlooks, post event floodplain mapping, aerial photography, and flood mitigation. This amount was increased in the 2007 Construction Fund Bill to \$300,000 to reflect the increased cost of performing existing functions plus the added services. Previous separate accounts for the added services were rolled into the Fund for the sake of efficiency and accountability.

The current request is to once again refresh the Fund up to \$300,000 for FY 10/11 for: 1) preparation of flood documentation reports for actual events, 2) contract with consulting firms for flood forecasting and weather outlooks during the spring/summer flood season, plus a web-based daily flood threat bulletin, 3) ongoing work and increased demand for evaluating and producing 100-year flood and debris flow hazards in areas affected by natural disasters, 4) assist in flood mitigation activities in communities where flood loss reduction is needed, and 5) develop on-call services for digital/aerial imagery and mapping for post-flood documentation/flood hazard identification. Staff recently added capabilities to enhance the NWS products and to provide regional flood outlooks. There is a growing need to re-evaluate flood hydrology, hydraulics, and levees for use in floodplain studies across as well. **There have not been large flood disasters recently, so Staff has responsibly used the Fund to keep funds in reserve as needed and recognizes that the fully authorized amount would be used during major flood years.**

Recent Fund expenditures included tasks relating to flood research, flood forecasting, flood documentation, operating expenses for flood response activities, landslide related flood monitoring, flood mitigation and preparedness activities, and design for emergency flood preparations. The total expenditures since FY06 are \$550,000. The remaining funds were not used in order to leave funds in reserve in the event that a major flood took place, which didn't happen during this time.