

**Water Supply Reserve Account – Grant and Loan Program  
Water Activity Summary Sheet  
Agenda Item 9.c**

**Applicant:** The Nature Conservancy

**Water Activity Name:** Yampa-White Basin Nonconsumptive Needs Assessment Watershed Flow Evaluation Tool

**Water Activity Purpose:** Study of nonconsumptive Needs

**County:** Rio Blanco, Moffat, Routt Counties

**Drainage Basin:** Yampa/White Basin

**Water Source:** various

**Amount Requested:** \$169,002.35 (Yampa/White Basin Account)

**Matching Funds:** no sources identified

<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
The proposed project will evaluate flows for nonconsumptive needs within the major environmental and recreational focus reached identified by the basin using the Watershed Flow Evaluation tool. Staff recommends approval of up to \$169,002.35 from the Yampa/White Basin Account to help complete this project.

**Water Activity Summary:**

The Yampa-White Basin has completed Phase I of its nonconsumptive needs assessments as required by HB05-1177. Phase I was a focus area map showing areas in the Yampa-White Basin where environmental and recreational activity occur. The effort described in this statement of work will utilize the Watershed Flow Evaluation Tool (WFET) that was piloted by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) during 2009 to further assess and quantify the Yampa-White Basin's nonconsumptive needs. The WFET provides a framework for examining ecological risk related to flow conditions at a watershed or regional level. The WFET will use hydrology predicted by CWCB's Colorado Decision Support System (CDSS) models and ecological risk relationships developed as part of the CWCB pilot as starting point for this effort. The benefit of using the WFET as part of the nonconsumptive needs assessment for the Yampa-White Basin is that it allows for a cost effective estimate of the ecological and recreational risk related to flow and can develop a range of flows for the environmental and recreational focus reaches in the basin.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- Develop the Watershed Flow Evaluation Tool (WFET) in the Yampa-White Basin
- Develop Ecological and Recreational Risk Mapping and a range of flows related to the risk mapping
- Include results from the Colorado River Water Availability Study in WFET results
- Provide a general assessment of whether or not current river management to meet existing water rights and Colorado River Compact deliveries from the Yampa-White Basin support nonconsumptive needs

*Threshold and Evaluation Criteria*

The application/project meets all four Threshold Criteria, though further explanation of how it relates to the needs assessment will be necessary. No Statewide funds are being requested, therefore the evaluation criteria does not apply.

### *Funding Overview*

Grant funding in the amount of \$169,002.35 is being requested from the Yampa/White Basin Account. No match was identified.

### **Discussion:**

This study will assist the Yampa-White Basin Roundtable in assessing its nonconsumptive needs by quantifying flows within the basin. In addition, the study will be relying on the site specific work being conducted by the Colorado Basin Roundtable for use of verification, along with other in-basin studies formerly conducted. The timing of the grant enables this work to be coordinated with Phase II of the Colorado River Water Availability Study (CRWAS).

In order to accommodate staff request for providing the application in time for CRWAS coordination, the applicants are seeking a waiver of the requirement to provide the application 60 days prior to the board meeting. A draft proposal and letter was submitted by the deadline, with an updated letter and proposal submitted within 30 days of the board meeting. Staff recommends waiving the deadline, given these circumstances.

### **Issues/Additional Needs:**

- All issues and additional needs have been resolved with the applicant.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of up to \$169,002.35 from the Yampa/White Basin Account to enable the Yampa-White Basin Nonconsumptive Needs Assessment Watershed Flow Evaluation Tool.

All products, data and information developed as a result of this grant must be provided to CWCB in hard copy and electronic format as part of the project documentation. This information will in turn be made widely available to Basin Roundtables and the general public and will help promote the development of a common technical platform.

In accordance with the revised WSRA Criteria and Guidelines, staff would like to highlight additional reporting and final deliverable requirements. The specific requirements are provided below.

**Reporting:** The applicant shall provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of the executed contract. The progress report shall describe the completion or partial completion of the tasks identified in the scope of work including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues.

**Final Deliverable:** At completion of the project, the applicant shall provide the CWCB a final report that summarizes the project and documents how the project was completed. This report may contain photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.

**Engineering:** All engineering work (as defined in the Engineers Practice Act (§12-25-102(10) C.R.S.)) performed under this grant shall be performed or certified by a professional engineer licensed by the State of Colorado to practice Engineering.