

Rio Grande Inter-Basin Roundtable
c/o San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District
415 San Juan Avenue
Alamosa, CO 81101
Telephone: (719) 589 – 2230
Email: slvwcdco1@qwestoffice.net

January 22, 2010

Mr. Eric Hecox, Manager, Office of Interbasin Compact Negotiations
Colorado Department of Natural Resources

Mr. Todd Doherty, Intrastate Water Management & Development
Colorado Water Conservation Board

Reference: "Educating Today to Balance Tomorrow's Water Supplies & Needs -
Rio Grande Basin" – Conservation Education Specialist

Gentlemen:

The Rio Grande Inter-Basin Roundtable (R.G.R.T) has determined that the single, most critical water issue confronting the Rio Grande Basin is the current unsustainable management of surface and ground water. The R.G.R.T. has made the decision that water activities that address this issue be favorably considered for funding from the Water Supply Reserve Account, SB 2005 -179 (WSRA Funds), providing the proposed water activities meet the SWSI findings for the Basin and the CWCB & IBCC Criteria and Guidelines for funding.

The R.G.R.T. is requesting authorization to distribute WSRA Funds pursuant to SB 2005 -179 as follows: Basin Funds of \$25,000.00 (100%). The applicant is a Colorado Tax Exempt Corporation, the "Rio Grande Watershed Conservation & Education Initiative", (RGWCEI), Alamosa, Colorado, a 501(c) 3 organization, originally formed in 2009. The RGEWCI was formed to expand knowledge, to improve educational resources, and to increase public understanding of resource conservation values and practices in the Rio Grande Basin, to build capacity for these activities by supporting a Conservation Education Specialist, and by raising additional funds as a nonprofit organization.

This request by the RGWCEI is to support the position of Conservation Education Specialist in the second half of 2010 and the year of 2011. The funds will be used to supplement other sources of funding for the salary of the Conservation Education Specialist. The water community in the Rio Grande Basin has recognized for many years the importance of educating its youth in broad conservation topics, which have included the issues surrounding water, its sources and uses. Many water conservation and

conservancy districts have supported these efforts by making monetary contributions to fund the position of the Conservation Education Specialist. Since the inception of the R.G.R.T. its members have recognized the necessity to expand these education efforts into the broader community if future decisions and actions are to be acceptable and understood.

As indicated in the WSRA Funding Legislative Criteria, HB 05-1177 (37-75-104), each basin roundtable has powers and responsibilities that include the following: "(c) *Basin roundtables shall actively seek the input and advice of affected local governments, water providers, and other interested stakeholders and persons in establishing its needs assessment, and shall propose projects or methods for meeting those needs.*" The value and potential effectiveness of this public feedback function depends on how well people understand and can articulate and deal with the extremely difficult issues relating to meeting and balancing the consumptive and non-consumptive water needs in the San Luis Valley.

Funding RGWCEI helps the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable to meet its legislative imperative to "(d) [s]erve as a forum for education and debate regarding methods for meeting water supply needs." It also benefits the Roundtable by eliciting greater and better informed public participation so that it can, "(e) [a]s needed, establish roundtable subcommittees or other mechanisms to facilitate dialogue and resolution of issues and conflicts within the basin."

The role of the Conservation Education Specialist will be expanded to initiate a series of landowner workshops with learning experiences for small land owners centered on conservation planning and the small acreage. Topics will include water management, cover crops and water tolerant landscaping. Develop an action plan for a community series. This will be completed in each of the conservation districts in the San Luis Valley, including presentations on the role and activities of the Rio Grande Roundtable, the water issues confronting the Rio Grande Basin, and related topics that will be available for presentation to the broader community. This will be accomplished by presentations to civic organizations, students at Adams State College, and Community meetings. The presentations will be designed so that they can be used by other members of the Rio Grande Basin's Water Community.

PROJECT AND AMOUNT REQUESTED	SOURCE SB 179
<u>EDUCATING TODAY TO BALANCE TOMORROW'S WATER SUPPLIES & NEEDS - RIO GRANDE BASIN</u> \$25,000.00	BASIN

At the regular R.G.R.T meeting on January 12, 2010, there was a quorum of the appointed members of the R.G.R.T. The project proponents were provided time to make a presentation and time was allowed for questions from the R.G.R.T. Members

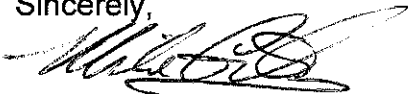
and members of the public. After discussion, a voice vote was taken of all R.G.R.T. Members that were present.

The By-Laws of the R.G.R.T. require a simple majority vote of those Members present for any action to be taken by the Roundtable. The vote was unanimous to approve the request for funding from SB 2005 – 179 for \$25,000.00 of Rio Grande Basin Funds for the funding support of the Conservation Education Specialist.

On behalf of the R.G.R.T. members, we appreciate the Board's consideration of this request and urge your support to the fullest extent possible. Enclosed are the application and supporting materials for the Project. If you require additional information, please notify me accordingly.

The R.G.R.T. appreciates the support of the Department of Natural Resources, the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Interbasin Compact Commission in assisting in meeting the needs of all users of Colorado's water and in fostering intrabasin and interbasin communications and discussions. We believe that the above project will assist in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Gibson", is written over a horizontal line.

Mike Gibson
Chair, Rio Grande Inter-Basin Roundtable

Enclosures (1)