

**Water Supply Reserve Account – Grant and Loan Program
Water Activity Summary Sheet
Agenda Item 29e**

Applicant: San Luis Peoples Ditch Company

Water Activity Name: San Luis Peoples Ditch Upgrade and Rehabilitation Project – Phase I

Water Activity Purpose: Structural water project or activity

County: Costilla

Drainage Basin: Rio Grande

Water Source: Culebra River

Amount Requested: \$40,000

Source of Funds: Rio Grande Basin Account

Matching Funds: \$102,000 (\$22,000 In-Kind, \$60,000 NRCS, \$20,000 Costilla County Water Conservancy District)

Staff Recommendation
Staff recommends approval of up to \$40,000 from the Rio Grande Basin Account to help complete the San Luis Peoples Ditch Upgrade and Rehabilitation Project – Phase I.

Water Activity Summary:

This request by the San Luis Peoples Ditch (Peoples Ditch) is to support the funding of Phase I of a broader upgrade and rehabilitation project of various elements of the overall irrigation system. The Peoples Ditch, or "acequia", is a gravity-fed irrigation system in the oldest community in Colorado. The People's Ditch holds the first adjudicated water rights granted by a court decree in Colorado, dating to April 10, 1852. The ditch serves 22 shareholders (affiliated water users) and irrigates approximately 2100 acres of hay & other row crops. The majority of shareholders are descendants of the original founders of the acequia and some have owned family shares for nine generations.

Phase I of this project, for which WSRA funds are sought, will address the most immediate area of concern through the replacement of the Rito Seco crossing diversion structure behind a residential area. This diversion structure was built in 1945. The concrete walls have deteriorated, are cracked and crumbling. The culvert has rust holes and is leaking water, the water gates jam and is difficult to open and close. During a cloud burst in the summer of 2009, this crossover structure which diverts excess water into the Culebra River proved to be of no use. The failure to divert the excess water causes severe flooding of residential areas in San Luis and the inability of the Peoples Ditch to divert decreed water rights.

Phase II will involve the replacement of the cement lining along the Peoples Ditch at the Serna and Chavez farms, with a trash rack and 1,600 feet of pipeline. The last cement lining of the ditch was done in 1967. It is now deteriorated including broken cement, deterioration of banks due to seepage, and deterioration of cement around head gates. The condition has caused the cement to bulge, break and contribute to bank erosion. In the targeted section of the ditch its carrying capacity has diminished by 30% because the south bank of the ditch has sunk and lost stability. Lateral ditches are then being used but these do not always send the water where the irrigation is needed. Finally, Phase III will replace a portion of the diversion structure at the Culebra River. The structure is in need of replacement due to rusted gates and a malfunctioning culvert that fails to move accumulated sediment.

Threshold and Evaluation Criteria

The application meets all four Threshold Criteria.

Funding Overview

Grant funding in the amount of \$40,000 is requested from the Rio Grande Basin Account. Requested WSRA funds constitute about 28% of the overall project cost (\$142,000). The balance of funding comes from an in-kind match of \$22,000, NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds (\$60,000), and the Costilla County Water Conservancy District (\$20,000).

Discussion:

The upgrade and rehabilitation of the San Luis Peoples Ditch will meet various consumptive and nonconsumptive needs. The project will help meet the consumptive needs of irrigators by enabling use of their decreed senior irrigation water. The project will also improve water quality and facilitate the redirection of surface and flood flows back into the Culebra River for downstream irrigators. This first phase of the project will also address significant and deteriorating flooding problems in the community of San Luis.

Issues/Additional Needs:

No issues or additional needs remain.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of up to \$40,000 from the Rio Grande Basin Account to help complete the San Luis Peoples Ditch Upgrade and Rehabilitation Project – Phase I.

All products, data and information developed as a result of this grant must be provided to the 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 by or under the responsible charge of professional engineer licensed by the State of Colorado to practice Engineering.