

**Water Supply Reserve Account – Grant and Loan Program
Water Activity Summary Sheet
Agenda Item 5.i**

Applicant: Ducks Unlimited

Water Activity Name: South Platte River Phreatophyte Control Pilot

Water Activity Purpose: Nonstructural Water Project

County: Various

Drainage Basin: South Platte

Water Source: South Platte

Amount Requested: \$65,000 (\$35,000 South Platte Basin Account and \$30,000 Statewide Account)

Matching Funds: \$183,000 in total match.

Staff Recommendation
Staff recommends approval of up to \$35,000 from the South Platte Basin Account and \$30,000 from the Statewide Account to help complete the South Platte River Phreatophyte Control Pilot project.

Water Activity Summary:

The South Platte Phreatophyte Control Pilot will remove undesirable phreatophytic vegetation from targeted properties in multiple counties in the Basin that maintain stands of these water-loving plants. Phreatophyte control will decrease consumptive use of Platte River water supplies, increasing water supply in the watershed; it will improve habitat quality for wildlife, especially waterfowl; and, it will reduce the incidence of invasive Russian olive and salt-cedar infestations. The project represents a partnership between the Weld County Youth Conservation Corps, Ducks Unlimited and landowners along the river. DU will manage the partnership and perform construction activities while the WCYCC performs the portions of the clearing work on pilot sites. The program scope encompasses the South Platte watershed from Denver downstream to the Nebraska line.

There are two goals for the South Platte River Phreatophyte Control Pilot: First, to determine the cost-effectiveness of different phreatophyte-treatment techniques as well as the permitting requirements arising from those different techniques. Second, achieve a measurable amount of on-the-ground work to achieve the water supply, invasive weed management, and habitat benefits. Work will be performed on nine river properties located between Greeley and Julesburg with an estimated 12 demonstration sites/plots. All of these properties have (or will have) long-term agreements or perpetual conservation easements ensuring that management activities will persist for some time. Initial clearing of identified treatment areas will occur in fall and winter of 2011 and spring of 2012. Subsequent reshaping and excavation of treatment areas will be initiated when river conditions and permitting requirements allow.

Funding Overview

The applicant is requesting \$65,000 and has committed over \$183,000 in matching funds.

Threshold and Evaluation Criteria

The application meets all four Threshold Criteria and articulates well how this project meets many of the Statewide Evaluation criteria, especially those related to the cooperation and collaboration and how this project meets the Basin's identified nonconsumptive needs.

Discussion:

Staff believes the applicant did a good job articulating how this project can help meet the South Platte basin roundtable's nonconsumptive needs. Part of their NCNA was the identification of the Lower South Platte River as an important region for waterfowl. This project will hopefully lead the way for improved habitat conditions along within this watershed as well as in other Colorado watersheds.

Issues/Additional Needs:

No issues or additional needs remain.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of up to \$35,000 from the South Platte Basin Account and \$30,000 from the Statewide Account to help complete the South Platte River Phreatophyte Control Pilot project.

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.