

**Water Supply Reserve Account Program  
Water Activity Summary Sheet  
May 2013 CWCB Meeting  
Agenda Item 25.b**

**Applicant:** Colorado Potato Administrative Committee

**Water Activity Name:** Drip Irrigation Field Trial for Sustainable Potato Cropping, San Luis Valley

**Water Activity Purpose:** Structural Agricultural Project

**County:** Saguache

**Drainage Basin:** Rio Grande

**Water Source:** Unconfined Aquifer

**Amount Requested:** \$40,000 (Rio Grande Basin Account)

**Matching Funds:** \$52,982 cash (applicant), \$63,346 in-kind (applicant)

<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
Staff recommends approval of up to \$40,000 from the Rio Grande Basin Account to assist in the funding of the project titled: Drip Irrigation Field Trial for Sustainable Potato Cropping in the San Luis Valley.

**Water Activity Summary:**

The Colorado Potato Administration Committee (CPAC) seeks to install two sub-surface agricultural drip irrigation systems on 47 acres in the central San Luis Valley. These installations will be on two farms near Hooper, within the boundaries of Subdistrict #1 of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District. This area has been hard hit by extremely dry weather, below average snow pack, and heavy groundwater pumping, resulting in a critically diminishing water supply.

Given the Rio Grande Basin's limited reservoir storage, and financial incentives offered to take land out of production, the cost and availability of irrigation water is the major concern for growers. If the Valley's economy and agricultural way of life are to survive, the long term future of the potato industry must be secured. What is needed, is an effective and sustainable water delivery system, improved irrigation efficiencies, and a different approach to the management of water – with growers using less water, and using it as economically as possible.

CPAC has analyzed production and marketing patterns over the years. Given the continuing drought and diminishing water security, plus positive results of recent research, CPAC has concluded that sub-surface drip irrigation may be a solution. This proposal, with a total Project cost of \$156,328 requests \$40,000 from Basin funds to field test this proposition, to determine the practical and economic feasibility of drip irrigation for potato producers in the Valley. The matching component for this request pays for 74.4% of the Total Project Cost.

**Issues/Additional Needs:**

No issues or additional needs have been identified.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval of up to \$40,000 from the Rio Grande Basin Account to assist in the funding of the project titled: Drip Irrigation Field Trial for Sustainable Potato Cropping in the San Luis Valley.

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.

**Location Map:**