

STATE OF COLORADO

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Chris Sturm, Stream Restoration Coordinator

DATE: July 3, 2013

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item 16, July 16-17, 2013 Board Meeting**
Watershed and Flood Protection Section, Rio Grande Headwaters
Restoration – Project Presentations

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Mike King
DNR Executive Director

James Eklund
CWCB Director

Introduction: The Rio Grande Basin is known for working collaboratively on water projects for the benefit of all water users. The projects funded through the Water Supply Reserve Account seek to include consumptive and non-consumptive elements. Members of the basin will share information about completed projects that addressed reservoirs and storage, water efficiency and management, conservation and restoration, and education. The presentation will highlight four case studies: the Terrace Reservoir Rehabilitation Project, the Manassa Land and Irrigation Company Dam and Headgate Project, the Rio Grande Initiative, and the Rio Grande Riparian Stabilization Project (Phase 3).

Discussion: The Terrace Reservoir Rehabilitation Project was a cooperative project between the Terrace Irrigation District and the Alamosa Riverkeeper. The goal of the project was to rehab the Terrace Reservoir spillway to lift a storage restriction. The result is increased capacity to store water for downstream irrigators and in-stream flows.

The Manassa Land and Irrigation Company was a partnership with the NRCS to replace a dam and headgate on the Conejos River. This project improved water management and brought a diverse group of partners together.

The Rio Grande Initiative is sponsored by the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust (RiGHT). The Rio Grande Initiative develops conservation easements for working ranches on the Rio Grande. The easements require that water rights be tied to the land. RiGHT and its partners have conserved 25,000 acres on the Rio Grande.

The Rio Grande Riparian Stabilization Project (Phase 3) was a riparian stabilization and restoration project organized by the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project (RGHRP). The goal of the project was to stabilize rapidly eroding streambanks near Alamosa. The project resulted in improved riparian habitat, water quality, vegetation density, and streambank stability.

Staff Recommendation: This is an information item and Board action is not required