

Water Supply Reserve Account – Grant and Loan Program
Water Activity Summary Sheet
September 24, 2013
Agenda Item 18(h)

Applicant: Colorado Water Trust

Water Activity Name: Josh Ames Diversion Removal on Poudre River

Water Activity Purpose: Nonconsumptive

County: Larimer

River Basin: South Platte

Water Source: Poudre River

Amount Requested: \$200,000 (Statewide Account); \$100,000 (\$75,000 South Platte Basin Account, & \$25,000 Metro Account)

Matching Funds: \$1,075,000 (78%, cash: Colorado Water Trust & City of Fort Collins)

Staff Recommendation:
Staff recommends approval of up to \$200,000 from the Statewide Account, \$75,000 from the South Platte Basin Account, and \$25,000 from the Metro Account for the project titled: Josh Ames Diversion Removal on the Poudre River.

Water Activity Summary: WSRA Funds will be used to implement the Sterling/Josh Ames Project which includes the removal of the Josh Ames Diversion and check structure on the Cache la Poudre River located just upstream of the North Shields Avenue Bridge in Fort Collins, Colorado. The structure has been unused since 1971, when the point of diversion was moved. The check structure stretches from bank to bank, creating a dam approximately six feet high. This dam collects sediment and backs up water, increasing water temperatures and evaporative water loss, and creating a barrier to fish passage. Multiple benefits of the restoration and removal of the diversion and check structure include lower water temperatures and minimize evaporative loss because of shallower ponding of water. The Sterling/Josh Ames project includes the restoration of the North Shields Ponds Natural Areas (The Sterling property), consisting of the restoration of ½ mile of the riparian corridor, restoration of 5.7 acres of wetlands and riparian habitat as well as reconnection of the floodplain to the river. Removal of this barrier--one of many barriers planned for removal as part of the larger project--will cumulatively improve the transitional habitat that may be used by several threatened and endangered plains fish species (cutthroat trout, minnow & darter species). Public safety will be enhanced by removing the dam which presents a hazardous obstacle for float-boaters.

Threshold and Evaluation Criteria

The application meets all four Threshold Criteria.

The application articulates how the project meets the Evaluation Criteria as summarized below:

Tier 1: Promoting Collaboration/Cooperation & Meeting Water Management Goals & Identified Needs:

- a. The project meets both environmental and recreational needs in the area. The project has the potential to increase base flows during low flow time periods.
- b. Significant cooperation and collaboration is demonstrated in this project, including working with the City of Fort Collins, water providers, and other interested stakeholders and members of the community. The broad process for the Poudre River Projects involves traditional consumptive water interests, ditch companies, local beer industry, CSU, UniverCity Connections, and Larimer County, and joint funding from both the Metro and South Platte Roundtables.
- c. The reach of the project was identified in the nonconsumptive needs assessment as being an environmental and recreational focus area.

Tier 2: Facilitating Water Activity Implementation:

- d. The applicant indicated that this is the only project element that is not yet fully funded, and Larimer County and the City of Fort Collins are able to remove the Josh Ames diversion structure unless additional funds are secured by the Colorado Water Trust from other sources. WSRA funding will provide the opportunity to proceed with multiple projects simultaneously, reducing overall costs and thereby increasing the likelihood of success.
- e. CWT/City of Fort Collins funds represent 77% (\$1,000,000) of total project costs (\$1,300,000), demonstrating a significant and appropriate commitment to the project by the applicant.

Tier 3: The Water Activity Addresses Issues of Statewide Value and Maximizes Benefits:

- f. The applicant indicates that this project complements the open space and environmental goals of the Fort Collins Natural Areas Department by expanding wetlands, and improving riparian, aquatic and terrestrial habitat by reconnecting the river to the floodplain.
- g. n/a
- h. The applicant indicates that the Poudre River corridor through Fort Collins provides transitional habitat for the plains fish species that are listed as state endangered, threatened and species of concern.
- i. The relative amount of WSRA funds request in relationship to the amount contributed for this project provides a benefit to Colorado in relationship to the amount of funds requested.
- j. The applicant points out the complimentary objectives of Colorado Parks and Wildlife to protect and restore terrestrial and aquatic habitat across the state. The project also compliments CWCB's Watershed Protection and Restoration efforts to stabilize and restore stream channels, reduce flood hazards, and provide habitat.

Issues/Additional Needs:

- The applicant should provide staff with a detailed monitoring plan that describes geomorphic and biologic monitoring methodologies.
- The monitoring plan should conform to the CWCB Measurable Results Program's Standard Operating Procedures for Topographic Survey of Stream Channels.

- All proposed river channel work should conform to the CWCB Rules and Regulations for Regulatory Floodplains in Colorado

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of up to \$200,000 from the Statewide Account, and \$75,000 from the South Platte Basin Account, and \$25,000 from the Metro Basin Account for project titled: Josh Ames Diversion Removal on the Poudre River.

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 and Final Deliverable: 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. 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.