



March 10, 2014

Mr. Kevin Reidy
Office of Water Conservation and Drought Planning
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman St., Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

SUBJECT: Outreach Grant Request – Landscape/Irrigation Evaluations and Reporting
Water Returns, a Green Legacies [non-profit] Sustainable Program
(a component fund of Pikes Peak Community Foundation)

Dear Kevin:

This is a grant request for \$29,900 to fund an expansion of Water Returns' existing work with small water providers in the arena of outdoor water conservation. Water Returns' goals for this grant are 1) to promote sustainable landscaping and efficient irrigation through both training and hands-on technical assistance in the form of 60 on-site consultations and in depth landscape/irrigation evaluations, and 2) to structure the evaluations and the resulting implementations so that they provide reliable monitoring information for the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) and participating water providers, based on property owner implementation of recommendations for reducing water consumption.

For purposes of this grant application, our participating Client Partner water providers included in this outreach effort are Security Water District, Donala Water District and the City of Fountain.

As a non-profit educational organization, we extend the reach of small utilities (both covered and non-covered entities) whose resources do not allow for water conservation activities beyond the basics. To date, we have provided these services through financial contributions from these utility providers and other Client Partners and in-kind contributions from participating industry professionals (Service Partners) and Green Legacies Board of Directors (Water Returns' parent organization). In spite of these conservative resources, we have trained close to 1000 homeowners, assisted a dozen owners associations, schools and businesses including USAA, Focus on the Family and Briargate Business Campus, managed landscape installations/restorations for half a dozen homeowners in the Mountain Shadows burn area and other locations in El Paso County, and performed more than 50 residential and commercial landscape and/or irrigation consultations and evaluations. At the same time, we have provided conservation services related to Water Conservation Plans to the City of Fountain, Security Water District, Cherokee Water District and Donala Water District.

This grant will allow us to increase our outreach by providing more landscape/irrigation consultations and evaluations. We will make initial on site consultations available to homeowners attending one of the training sessions sponsored by the water providers we serve (conducted by Water Returns and its Service Partners). In order to receive a consultation, applicants will be asked to complete surveys designed to assess both their need for assistance and their commitment to maintain a sustainable landscape. Water Returns trained personnel will

Water Returns - A Green Legacies [non-profit] Sustainable Program

5975 Nora Point #203, Colorado Springs, CO 80919 | 719.534.9960 | info@waterreturns.org

conduct these landscape/irrigation consultations; then based on the findings of both the visit and the survey, homeowners may become eligible for further assistance:

- funded in part by the water provider
- offered at a significantly reduced cost through our Service Partners with oversight by Water Returns, or
- managed through Water Returns with a contractor of their choosing

Included in the survey/screening process is a waiver allowing Water Returns and the water provider to monitor water use changes resulting from actions implemented; only homeowners who undertake major improvements to existing irrigation systems or landscapes under Water Returns oversight will be monitored. These monitored projects will become part of the water providers' HB1051 Water Conservation Plan Implementation reporting, and will be made available to CWCB for use in its conservation measure impacts monitoring. Because the projects will be subject to Water Returns' and Client Partners' oversight from initial survey to project completion, and will be required to meet Water Returns' criteria (based on Colorado Waterwise Council's Best Management Practices), many variables will be eliminated and results should be applicable to other projects for planning purposes.

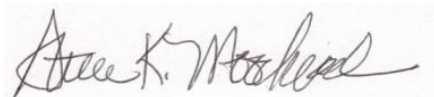
Specifically, the grant will cover the program development and implementation period from March 2014 through December 2015. The recruitment and training of evaluators will take place during March and April 2014. Initial consultations, detailed evaluations, report preparation and further investigation, assistance and monitoring will be ongoing, beginning with the April training classes in 2014. It is anticipated that the grant will enable Water Returns to generate an income stream that will allow this program to become self-sustaining.

The entire scope of this program enhancement will cost \$71,750. Our request for \$29,900 represents 42 % of the total project cost. The remaining cost (\$41,850 or 58%) will be borne by financial and in-kind contributions from participating Client Partners, Service Partners and board members. Water Returns does not charge its clients for travel, nor is funding for these expenses included in this application.

Attached is our application, including the Project Summary, Scope of Work, Budget, Project Schedule and Project Team and Partners.

I have authority to accept and disburse funds provided through this grant for Water Returns.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven K. Moorhead
Executive Director, Water Returns

Water Returns Outreach Grant Request
Landscape/Irrigation Evaluations and Reporting
PROJECT SUMMARY

Applicant: Water Returns, a Green Legacies [non-profit] Sustainable Program

Project Name: Landscape/Irrigation Evaluation Program Expansion

Goal: In partnership with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) and our Client Partner water providers in the Colorado Springs area, Water Returns will provide 60 landscape and/or irrigation consultations and evaluations over a 2-year period, in order to assist water customers achieve conservation objectives. The evaluations will provide customers with both a means to save water immediately and receive further assistance for large renovations to their irrigation systems and landscapes. The consultations and evaluations will also provide a way to monitor the water use impact of improving irrigation and landscapes, which can be included in water providers' HB 1051 reporting.

Funds Requested: \$29,900

Matching Contributions: \$41,850

Total Project Cost: \$71,750

Contact: Steve Moorhead
 Executive Director, Water Returns
smoorhead@greenlegacies.org
 719-534-9960

Project Background and Summary

Water Returns is a Sustainable Program of Green Legacies (its parent 501 (c) 3). Our organization has served small water providers since 2008, when we began providing homeowner training for Cherokee Water District to conserve irrigation related water use. Since that time we have provided over 400 hours of training to homeowners, helped a Pueblo high school and Briargate Business Campus save an average of 30% annually in water use, assisted USAA in updating its campus irrigation system, changing its landscape to water conserving plant materials and installing a Xeriscape demonstration garden, and helped several homeowners' associations cope with the high cost of water by improving their irrigation systems and changing their landscaping. We have hosted the Irrigation Association's Landscape Irrigation Auditor Training and have conducted irrigation audits for several commercial properties, as well as irrigation inspections for 20 homeowners and landscape consultations for 35 property owner customers. Additionally, we are an integral part of implementing Water Conservation Plans for the City of Fountain, Security Water District and Donala Water District.

The proposed project will build upon our experience and client relationships to provide more extensive services to the customers of our water providers and other Client Partners. As stated above, we have conducted about 55 landscape/irrigation evaluations and consultations over the last few years. We propose to provide more consultations and evaluations of both irrigation systems and landscapes, using a graduated system that offers a level of service commensurate with the customer's perceived need and commitment to sustainability.

Water Returns' unique relationship with water customers is founded on the semi-annual (spring and fall) training classes sponsored by the water provider Client Partners and conducted by Water Returns and our Service Partners. We spend two hours with attendees, providing instruction, answering landscape questions and offering hands-on assistance. This training is intended to also serve as a screening for potential on-site consultation candidates. Applicants will be asked to complete a survey, designed to assess both their need and commitment. The survey will also request permission to monitor water use, should a project be implemented, and to inspect the project upon completion. At the conclusion of each class a drawing will be held from completed surveys, with up to 10 winners receiving onsite consultations for their landscapes and/or irrigation systems and a report of findings and recommendations.

Based on both the consultation findings and survey, approximately 30 candidates will be selected (during the 2014 and spring 2015 classes) to receive additional services, which will usually take the form of one of the following: 1) comprehensive 2-hour team evaluation of the home's landscape and irrigations system, with a report of findings and recommendations, 2) 3-hour small group Coaching Session, working with up to five homeowners per session to sketch out design ideas and outline a plan of action for their projects, or 3) a professionally designed landscape and/or irrigation plan, incorporating the Seven Principles of Xeriscape and the homeowner's answers to scripted questions intended to guide the design process. These additional services will be partially funded by the water provider Client Partner and offered at a substantial discount through Water Returns. For purposes of this grant and study, only projects for which the cost is partially underwritten by the water provider and managed/inspected by Water Returns according to its design standards will be chosen for monitoring.

It is the goal of this project that, in addition to **advancing neighborhood water conservation through completion of on-site consultations, expanded services and follow-up implementation assistance**, another **source of reliable data** be made available to CWCB and others, to assist in statewide evaluation of the impacts of water conservation programs. We believe this approach will provide reliable data because our homeowners will be screened for need and commitment and the assessment, planning and implementation of their projects will be overseen by Water Returns, using its proven project management protocol.

Need for the Project

The need for this effort is twofold. At the **neighborhood level**, most homeowners simply do not know the basics of good landscaping, which include sustainable practices. A trained evaluator, conducting an onsite visit – walking the homeowner's landscape with him or her and identifying problems and opportunities, can contribute to the homeowner's education about water conservation more readily than in a classroom setting. Our experience has shown that homeowners sincerely appreciate this personal hands-on approach. On the **statewide level**, the need for reliable data on the impacts of water conservation programs is glaring. Water providers still lack sufficient facts upon which to depend for decision making about water planning in the coming decades.

Water Returns' Approach

Water Returns is uniquely poised to provide services that lead to reliable data. We already provide consultation and evaluation services to customers of small water providers. We make every effort to understand the needs of each homeowner and to build a relationship of trust, so the homeowner is encouraged to take his/her evaluation findings to the next step – implementation. Our relationships with our Service Partners and Client Partners allow us to offer financial and service incentives to homeowners in a targeted manner, increasing the degree of successful field implementation and useful case study data.

Water Returns will approach this project as it does all landscape/irrigation projects it undertakes, that being through application of our Assessment, Planning and Implementation path to landscape fitness, in accordance with Water Returns' standards, based on Colorado Water Wise's Best Management Practices (BMPs):

Assessment – site and use analysis, as well as assessing the homeowner's need and commitment to sustainable landscape practices.

Planning – designing, scheduling and budgeting for the project.

Implementation – contracting, procurement and project management.

We anticipate, based on experience, that about 80 percent of homeowners will be content with an on-site consultation and the other 20 percent will want expanded Assessment, Planning and/or Implementation services. For purposes of this project, only applicants with existing landscape or irrigation systems will be eligible for sponsored assistance, enabling us to compare before and after water use accurately.

To date, Water Returns has accomplished all its work without the benefit of funding outside our Partner community. Our unique business model leverages the in-kind contributions of our Service Partners (list attached) to meet the conservation needs of our Client Partners and their customers at a greatly reduced cost (averaging \$60 per hour). Besides affiliation with an organization that represents their water-conserving values (Water Returns), our Service Partners receive recognition in our promotional materials and resources and enjoy the opportunity to develop professional relationships with our Client Partners, who share these same values.

Water Returns also benefits from its Affiliate Partners, such as Colorado State University Extension Office in El Paso County, who help expand our credibility, scope of technical services and advocacy for our shared goals and values.

The Green Legacies Board of Directors is dedicated to water conservation and its members contribute longstanding leadership in this field, such as Curtis Mitchell, Utilities Director for the City of Fountain, and Linda Firth, owner of Water Matters! We are highly invested in expanding the nature and breadth of water conservation practices implemented at the neighborhood level and supporting our Partner water providers in becoming leaders in water conservation.

With this proposal, Water Returns requests CWCB funding to **1) build on its current success with homeowners, water providers and others by providing a unique blend of landscape and irrigation system evaluation that promotes water conservation, and 2) provide a source for reliable reporting of landscape water savings directly attributable to evaluation and implementation of landscape and irrigation improvements.**

The target audience for the work funded by this grant is homeowners, specifically homeowners with existing landscapes, so that effective comparisons can be made with prior water use. Evaluations will be provided only to customers of our Client Partners within the scope of this grant.

The Budget, Scope of Work and Project Schedule on the following pages detail the associated tasks, costs and matching in-kind contributions. As stated previously, we have included a list of both our Client Partners and Service Partners who will participate in this project. Please note in the Budget, a rate of \$100 per hour has been used for both Steve Moorhead and Linda Firth, whereas \$150 per hour has been used to represent the value of both Service Partner and Client Partner in-kind services. In our experience, this has been shown to be an accurate figure for both.

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Landscape/Irrigation Evaluations and Reporting
SCOPE OF WORK

A Case Study to be completed by Water Returns, its Service Partners (listed at the end of this application) and its Client Partners: Security Water District, Donala Water District and the City of Fountain.

Task 1 – *Recruit and train two part time evaluators* – Part time evaluator candidates will be identified through recommendations made by current Client Partners, Service Partners, Advocate Partners and current and former volunteers for Water Returns. Candidates will be interviewed by Steve Moorhead and Linda Firth; and two will be selected for training. Evaluation training will be conducted by Service Partners along with Steve Moorhead and Linda Firth. Training will include several site visits, and will foster familiarity with Water Returns' evaluation criteria.

Task 2 *Survey class attendees, select recipients for onsite consultations*

Task 2a - A survey will be designed and tested by Linda Firth to initially assess a potential participant's need for and commitment to an improved landscape. The survey design will follow research guidelines for qualitative research used in public administration. Most responses will be shown on a Likert scale, with several opportunities for narrative response. The survey will be tested by six utility customers and revised as necessary.

Task 2b -The survey will then be offered at each training session (Donala, Security and Fountain) in the spring and fall of 2014 and spring of 2015; completion of a survey will constitute an attendee's entry into drawings (one drawing at each training session) for onsite consultations.

Task 3 – *Design and test necessary reporting formats* for:

- Onsite consultations – to be used in concert with surveys to determine which customers are eligible for further assistance, and/or which customers may be interested in pursuing landscape or irrigation system improvements
- Detailed irrigation evaluations
- Landscape improvement designs

These reports will be based on Water Returns' criteria for landscape fitness, and will rely on CWW's Best Management Practices. Report forms will be tested by Service and Client Partners for reliability.

Linda Firth will design and test reports for onsite consultations, Steve Moorhead will design and test those for detailed irrigation evaluations and landscape improvement designs.

Task 4 – *Determine level of assistance to be offered* to eligible applicants by Client Partners, if applicable – Steve Moorhead and Linda Firth will meet with client partners to discuss their willingness to offer limited financial assistance to participants who are interested in implementing results and recommendations of detailed irrigation evaluations or completing and implementing a landscape improvement design. Assistance could take the form of,

for example, credits to utility bills or rebates on equipment or plant material purchase. Because of varying budgetary impacts, these meetings will be conducted prior to each of the three sets of training classes.

Task 5 – *Schedule, conduct initial onsite consultations from spring and fall 2014 and spring 2015 training classes*

Task 5a– From winners of drawings at training classes, onsite consultations will be scheduled and performed by the evaluators with oversight from Linda Firth

Task 5b – Onsite consultations will be performed by Linda Firth, Steve Moorhead and the evaluators. Simple reports of findings will be provided to participants at time of consultation.

Task 5c – Consultation findings along with survey responses will be reviewed by Linda Firth, Steve Moorhead and Client Partners to determine which participants are eligible for “further assistance”, e.g., detailed irrigation evaluations and/or irrigation system improvements, and/or landscape improvement designs and/or installations.

Tasks 5a, 5b and 5c will be repeated for training classes held in spring 2014, fall 2014 and spring 2015.

Task 6 – *Fifty percent completion report submitted to CWCB*

Task 7 – ***Schedule/conduct “further assistance”***, (detailed irrigation evaluations, landscape design). This task will be completed by Steve Moorhead, Linda Firth and the evaluators. These participants will receive written, detailed irrigation evaluation reports and/or landscape designs. This task will be repeated for spring and fall 2014 and spring 2015.

Task 8 – *Seventy five percent completion report submitted to CWCB*

Task 9 – *Final Report submitted to CWCB, Client Partners and Service Partners*

Water Returns Grant Request
Landscape/Irrigation Evaluations and Reporting

Task	Grant Proposal				Matching Contributions				Project Total
	Hours	Rate/Hr	Labor	Grant	Source	In-Kind Hrs	Rate/Hr	\$ Value	
1 Recruit, train 2 parttime evaluators: Moorhead - 4 hrs, Firth - 4 hrs	8	\$100	\$800	\$800	Scv. Partners Train	3	\$150	\$450	\$1,250
2 Survey class attendees, select recipients for onsite consultations - 16 hrs total									
2a Design, test survey: Firth 4 hrs	4	\$100	\$400	\$400	Client Partners Test	2	\$150	\$300	\$700
2b Offer consultations at spring 2014, fall 2014, spring 2015 classes; process surveys, choose candidates for onsite consultations - 9 hrs Moorhead, 8 hrs Firth	17	\$100	\$1,700	\$1,700	Client Partners	9	\$150	\$1,350	\$3,050
3 Design and test reporting formats for a) initial onsite consultation, b) detailed irrigation evaluation, 3) landscape improvement design - Moorhead 12 hrs, Firth 8 hrs	20	\$100	\$2,000	\$2,000	Service Partners QC	3	\$150	\$450	\$2,450
4 Meetings with Client Partners to determine level of Client Partner assistance, participant eligibility - Firth 2 hrs, Moorhead 2 hrs.	6	\$100	\$600	\$600	Client Partners	20	\$150	\$3,000	\$3,600

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5 Schedule and conduct initial onsite consultations from spring 2014, fall 2014 and spring 2015 classes - 273 hrs. total : Moorhead, 21, Firth, 67, Evaluators, 185

5a Schedule onsite consultations for spring, fall 2014 and spring 2015 - Firth 5 hrs, evaluators 35 hrs

5	\$100	\$500	\$500						\$500
35	\$20	\$700	\$700						\$700

5b Conduct onsite consultations for spring, fall 2014 and spring 2015 - Moorhead 15 hrs, Firth 56 hrs, evaluators 150 hrs

71	\$100	\$7,100	\$7,100	Service Partners QC	19	\$150	\$2,850	\$9,950
150	\$20	\$3,000	\$3,000					\$3,000

5c Review surveys, consultation findings, select participants for "further assistance" for spring, fall 2014 and spring 2015 - Moorhead 6, Firth 6

12	\$100	\$1,200	\$1,200	Client Partners Input	13	\$150	\$1,950	\$3,150
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6 50% completion report for CWCB - Moorhead 2 hrs, Firth 2 hrs

4	\$100	\$400	\$400					\$400
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7 Schedule/conduct/report on "further assistance" (detailed irrigation evaluations, landscape design) for spring and fall, 2014 and spring 2015 - evaluators 15 hrs, Moorhead 103 hrs, Firth 18

7a Schedule/conduct further assistance - Moorhead 54

54	\$100	\$5,400	\$5,400	Service Partners	180	\$150	\$27,000	\$32,400
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7b Prepare irrigation evaluations and landscape designs - Moorhead 45 hrs, Firth 8 hrs

53	\$100	\$5,300	\$5,300	Service Partners	30	\$150	\$4,500	\$9,800
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8 75% completion report to CWCB - Moorhead 2 hrs, Firth 2 hrs

4	\$100	\$400	\$400					\$400
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9 Final Report to CWCB and Partners - Moorhead 2 hrs, Firth 2 hrs

4	\$100	\$400	\$400					\$400
447		\$29,900	\$29,900				\$41,850	\$71,750

(1) We have used an average \$150/hr rate for Service Partners and Client Partners; the actual rate and equivalent value for the Partner associated with each Task may vary

(2) Participating Client Partner water providers included in this outreach effort are Security Water District, Donala Water District and the City of Fountain.

**Water Returns Grant Request
Landscape/Irrigation Evaluations and Reporting
Project Schedule**

Task	Completion Date
Task 1 Recruit, train 2 evaluators	May 30 2014
Task 2 Survey class attendees, select recipients for onsite consultations	May 30 2015
Task 3 Design and test reporting formats for onsite consultations, irrigation evaluations, landscape improvement designs	June 30 2014
Task 4 Meetings with Client Partners to determine level of assistance	April 15 2015
Task 5 Schedule and conduct onsite consultations from 2014 and 2015 training classes	June 30 2015
Task 6 Fifty percent report to CWCB	December 30 2014
Task 7 Schedule, conduct and report on "further assistance" activities	December 30 2015
Task 8 Seventy five percent completion report to CWCB	June 15 2015
Task 9 Final report to CWCB and Partners	December 30 2015

Note that, as a consequence of consolidating activities, task 2 for example, although beginning in May of 2014 will not be completed until after the third training class set in spring of 2015

**Water Returns Outreach Grant Request
Landscape/Irrigation Evaluations and Reporting
PROJECT TEAM AND PARTNERS**

Project Team

Steve Moorhead, President of C4 Projects, will serve as Project Manager, providing oversight to Linda Firth, the part time evaluators and Service Partners, and provide direct services to the Client Partners involved in the project. Steve is the Board President of Green Legacies and Executive Director of Water Returns and serves as chief liaison for all Client Partners and Service Partners. Steve has over twenty years' experience in project and collaboration management, specifically in the area of sustainable landscape development over the last 10 years.

Linda Firth, principal in Water Matters! and Board Vice President of Water Returns, will assist Steve in executing the project, overseeing the evaluators' work, design of the survey and forms and interaction with Client Partners. Linda has over thirty years' experience designing and managing conservation projects, both along the Front Range and nationally.

Two part-time evaluators will be recruited and trained. Their work will be closely supervised by Steve, Linda and the Service Partners.

Water Returns Client Partners committed to participation in this project and providing financial support and in-kind services:

City of Fountain
Security Water and Sanitation Districts
Donala Water and Sanitation District

Water Returns Service and Advocate Partners providing in-kind services:

Brickman Group	Higher Ground Designs
BTM Services	Mountain Desert Investments
C&C Sand	Mountain Splendor Services
Collaborative Design Group	Natural Design Solutions
Colorado State Extension Office, El Paso County	Newland Scaping
Dakota Ridge Partners	Phelan Gardens
Davey Tree	Springscapes
Greensong Enterprises	Sundown Landscaping & Irrigation
Heidrich's Colorado Tree Farm	Tall Timbers Tree and Shrub