



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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208 East Lincoln Avenue
Post Office Box 68
Breckenridge, Colorado 80424

November 13, 2014

Jim Pokrandt
Colorado Basin Roundtable - Chairperson
Colorado River Water Conservation District
PO Box 1120
Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Dear Mr. Pokrandt,

Enclosed please find Summit County Government's application for a Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Water Supply Reserve Account Grant (WSRA). Summit County, Town of Breckenridge, U.S. Forest Service, Blue River Watershed Group (BRWG), Trout Unlimited, and numerous other partners are seeking necessary funding to restore aquatic habitat, wetlands, and riparian areas along sections of the Swan River that were historically dredge mined. This project has been a priority goal of these diverse stakeholders for over a decade that needs WSRA support to be realized.

This large-scale restoration project represents a strong collaborative effort between multiple local, state, and federal land management agencies, private landowners, and non-profit organizations. The primary project goal is to restore the ecological integrity of the watershed by reconnecting approximately 19 miles of stream and riparian habitat that are currently segregated by the dredge spoils that dominate the valley floor. Restoring natural functions to this stream will create connected habitat for a meta-population of Colorado River cutthroat trout, which has both statewide and national significance.

CWCB's previous support for the Swan River Restoration Project has been instrumental in facilitating project planning and design. Most recently, a WSRA grant awarded to BRWG supported the successful completion of schematic level planning, phasing and designs for the 2.9 mile project corridor. This current grant request will fund construction to restore ecological functions, fishing and other recreational opportunities, and visual quality of approximately 3,500 feet (0.7 miles) of the Swan River on land jointly owned by Summit County and Breckenridge.

On behalf Summit County and all of our project partners, the Board of County Commissioners enthusiastically request that the WSRA program fund this grant application and support implementation of the Swan River restoration design that CWCB was so integral in developing. The strong collaborative efforts among the partners have provided this project with unique momentum and positive direction. Construction of this first project phase is critical to restoration



November 11, 2014

Jim Pokrandt
Colorado Basin Roundtable - Chairperson
Colorado River Water Conservation District
PO Box 1120
Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Dear Mr. Pokrandt,

The Town of Breckenridge strongly supports Summit County Government's grant application to the Colorado Water Conservation Board for the Swan River Restoration Project in the Upper Blue River basin in Summit County.


For over fifteen years, the Town and Summit County Government have worked to acquire open space parcels in the Swan River drainage to preserve and enhance the open space values along the river. These acquisition efforts have been supplemented by recent river restoration planning and well-timed grading efforts, yielding a river valley ready for significant restoration efforts.

Restoring the Swan River would realize a long-term goal for our community's open space programs. Specifically, it would improve water quality, in-stream flows, riparian vegetation, and overall river health, with the potential of reestablishing a meta-population of the Colorado River cutthroat trout in the future.

The Town of Breckenridge is one of several active partners in the Swan River restoration project, which includes Summit County Government, the U.S. Forest Service, the Blue River Watershed Group, Trout Unlimited, private landowners, and others. This broad-based group is united in its vision to restore the Swan River and overcome a legacy of mine-related impacts that have severely degraded the Swan River's function and community value.

Please support Summit County Government's grant application for the Swan River Restoration Project. Your contribution will ensure that the long-envisioned Swan River restoration becomes a reality.

Sincerely,


Tim Gagen
Town Manager



November 10, 2014

Jim Pokrandt
Colorado Basin Roundtable – Chairperson
Colorado River Water Conservation District
P.O. Box 1120
Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Dear Mr. Pokrandt:

The Blue River Watershed Group (BRWG) has been collaborating with the U.S. Forest Service, Summit County, the Town of Breckenridge, the Friends of the Dillon Ranger District, Trout Unlimited, the Colorado Department of Reclamation Mining and Safety and two landowners to restore a two mile portion of the Swan River that was essentially destroyed by dredge mining in the early 1900's. We have sponsored two design studies partially funded by the Colorado Water Conservation Board on how best to restore the stream. This effort is being done in the context of a large-scale collaborative effort to restore the entire upper Swan River watershed, which is in perfect alignment with our charter.

This area is a real challenge because of the mining essentially destroyed the stream. There are still tons of dredge rock in place of the stream. Fortunately in the lower reach of the damaged area there has been enough rock removed to begin some actual stream restoration. The Summit County Open Space and Trails department owns the lower segment and has been preparing it for restoration. This lower stretch will include a stream barrier which will be important in our ultimate goal of reconnecting 17 miles of stream in the upper reaches so they can be used to reintroduce a meta-population of Colorado River cutthroat trout. This phase one effort provides an opportunity to begin restoration of a significantly damaged area.

The BRWG asks that you please consider funding the Summit County Open Space and Trails CWCB application to help us begin restoration in 2015. We as a group have been working hard to put together the funds to initiate work and would greatly appreciate your support for this demanding, but potentially very rewarding project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James W. Shaw".

James W. Shaw
Treasurer



November 12, 2014

Jim Pokrandt
Colorado Basin Roundtable - Chairperson
Colorado River Water Conservation District
PO Box 1120
Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

Dear Mr. Pokrandt,

Friends of the Dillon Ranger District (FDRD), a non-profit that leverages the power of community volunteers to assist with land management projects in the White River National Forest, has followed the lead of the United States Forest Service (USFS) in a collaborative effort to restore the entire upper Swan River Valley. As FDRD works closely with the USFS in their planning goals, we also view this watershed restoration as a top priority. Because of this fact, we strongly endorse Summit County's application for a Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Water Supply Reserve Account Grant.

The restoration of the upper Swan River is considered of utmost importance due to the jeopardized health of the water quality and the fragmented trout habitat. The native cutthroat trout are continuing to struggle due to habitat disturbance and the introduction of invasive species occupying essential space and resources. The restoration of the 2-mile stretch of dredged riverbeds would provide a contiguous 17-mile stretch of habitat for native cutthroat trout, enhancing the overall health of this ecosystem. This project would also deliver additional benefits to other native species living in Summit County by providing more habitat.

As an organization, we ask that you please consider this project vital to the health of the Swan River watershed. The award of this grant funding will allow phase one to go on as planned by beginning to restore this integral ecosystem to its natural state. FDRD has already begun some restoration work by enlisting the help of area community members and Boy Scout troops to plant native trees and shrubs in affected areas. This work will continue in the 2015 season and we are excited to be a part of such an important project to our water quality and local fisheries. If you have any questions or concerns regarding FDRD's involvement, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Respectfully yours,

Michael Connolly

Executive Director, Friends of the Dillon Ranger District
michael@fdrd.org