

August 14, 2015

Craig Godbout, Program Manager  
Water Supply Planning Section  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Denver, CO 80203

RE: *Bluff Lake Nature Center Aquatic Habitat Improvement Project* WSRA application

Dear Mr. Godbout:

The Metro Basin Roundtable (MBRT) recently underwent an evaluation and approval process for the *Bluff Lake Nature Center Aquatic Habitat Improvement Project* (the Project), presented by Bluff Lake Nature Center (BLNC), a 501(c)(3) Colorado nonprofit charity. On July 8, 2015, the project was preliminarily presented to the MBRT, and we invited BLNC back for our August meeting. On August 12, 2015, the Project was presented again to MBRT for review and approval.

The MBRT has determined that the Project will have important non-consumptive environmental and recreational benefits that align with several sections of the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan, including those referencing recreational opportunities and habitat protection in the Metro Corridor, those emphasizing habitat preservation and species protection, and those prioritizing wildlife viewing, hiking, and bird-watching. The goal of the Project is to create the conditions for a year-round lake by improving the infrastructure of Bluff Lake itself, the centerpiece of BLNC, an environmental education center, and the largest native habitat open space in our State's largest city. The four tasks outlined in the project—reinforcement of the 1884 dam forming Bluff Lake; the lining of the bottom of the lake with clay or similarly impermeable substances; the restoration of the adjacent wetlands; and the purchased of recycled water from Denver Water—all are designed to improve the aesthetics, environmental education opportunities, and habitat at this open space that draws 40,000 visitors per year, including 5,000 visitors for education programs. We are pleased that of the \$3.1 million needed to carry out this Project, \$2.9 million has already been raised in cash and in-kind donations, including a total more than \$1.1 million in funds allocated from two separate Natural Resources Damages Funds managed by a Co-Trusteeship comprised of representatives from the State's Attorney General's Office, Parks and Wildlife Division, and Department of Public Health and Environment. Because of all the work done to date on the planning and fundraising around this project, a grant from the Statewide funds would virtually complete the funding necessary to carry out the project.

At the August 12, 2015 MBRT meeting, a motion was made, seconded, and adopted to provide \$10,000 of support from the MBRT WSRA funds, and approval of the \$200,000 request for Statewide funds was also recommended. There was a quorum present at the August meeting and the vote was unanimous in favor of the funding request. Please call me with any questions you may have regarding the MBRT meetings or the project.

Sincerely yours,



Barbara Biggs, Chair

Metro Basin Roundtable

