

COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD
Invasive Phreatophyte Control Program
Grant Guidance
Re-revised May 2015

I. Background

A. Introduction

The purpose of this Guidance and Procedures is to establish and describe the criteria and competitive process for the issuance and administration of grants from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (“Board” or “CWCB”) for the Invasive Phreatophyte Control Program (IPCP). The Board is the state executive branch agency responsible for state water policy and planning. The Board’s mission is to conserve, develop, protect, and manage Colorado’s water for present and future generations. Its major programs include Watershed & Flood Protection, Water Supply Planning; Finance; Stream and Lake Protection; and Intrastate & Federal. Targeted control of invasive phreatophytes and riparian restoration meets the objectives of many of these programs and is consistent with the Board’s overall mission. More information about the CWCB and its sections can be found at <http://cwcb.state.co.us>.

B. History

The IPCP grant program is intended to provide cost share assistance to eligible entities to control and/or eradicate Tamarisk (also known as salt cedar), Russian Olive, Siberian/Chinese Elm, or other riparian invasive phreatophytes that have degraded the state’s riparian areas, restricted channel capacity thereby increasing flood risk, and resulted in increased non-beneficial consumptive use of water.

The CWCB has had substantial involvement in developing a well planned strategy to solve Colorado’s invasive phreatophyte problem. In 2003 then Governor Owens issued Executive Order D002-03 which directed the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) and the Colorado Department of Agriculture (“CDA”), and any other state agency “... to take measures necessary to eradicate tamarisk on public lands within 10 years ... (and to) submit a report ... outlining a viable plan”. In January 2004 DNR submitted the required plan to the Governor's office and it was accepted. The plan recommended a local watershed based approach to invasive phreatophyte control, with the state providing technical assistance and coordination. The CWCB took on this challenge for DNR and has been moving ahead. In 2006 and 2007 CWCB funded a statewide mapping and inventorying of invasive phreatophyte infestations. In 2007 the *Colorado Headwaters Invasives Partnership* (CHIP) plan was completed for the Colorado, Gunnison, and Dolores rivers and endorsed by Governor Ritter. Currently, companion plans for the Arkansas, Purgatoire, Republican, South Platte, White, San Juan, and Yampa rivers are in various stages of completion. All are being completed utilizing, in part, the prior mapping work and other grants for technical assistance from the CWCB. On Oct. 11, 2006 the President signed the *Salt Cedar and Russian Olive Control Demonstration Act, PL 109-320*. Sponsors included Rep. Udall and Rep. Salazar, and Sen. Allard and Sen. Salazar. The Act authorizes federal matching funds for large-scale demonstration projects which Colorado entities hope to access if and when those funds are appropriated. In September 2012 the Colorado Water Conservation Board approved the Invasive Phreatophyte Control Program.

C. Authorization

House Bill 15-1006, passed by the 2015 Colorado General Assembly, appropriates funding for the Invasive Phreatophyte Control Program..

HB 15-1006, SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add 37-60-132 as follows:

37-60-132. Invasive phreatophyte control program - creation - fund - repeal. (1) THE BOARD SHALL EXPEND MONEYS FROM THE COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD CONSTRUCTION FUND TO AWARD GRANTS UNDER THE INVASIVE PHREATOPHYTE CONTROL PROGRAM, CREATED HEREIN, FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INVASIVE PHREATOPHYTES, INCLUDING TAMARISK AND RUSSIAN-OLIVE, WITHIN THE RIPARIAN AREAS OF THE STATE. THE BOARD MAY AWARD GRANTS TO PUBLIC ENTITIES, PRIVATE ENTITIES, AND PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS PROPOSING PROJECTS UTILIZING BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INVASIVE PHREATOPHYTES TO DECREASE THEIR CONSUMPTION OF WATER AND PROTECT THE RIPARIAN HABITAT NATIVE TO EACH BASIN IN WHICH PROJECTS ARE PROPOSED.

The entire HB 15-1006 can be viewed as an appendix to this document.

II. Grant Approval Criteria

A. Competitive Process

The Board will select the projects to fund from those applicants best meeting the basic application (II.B.) and evaluation criteria (III. A.-B.). The Board reserves the right to negotiate with successful applicants to modify the scope and/or budget of their projects to better meet CWCB objectives and fund availability. A minimum of four member evaluation team consisting of a CWCB staff member, a Colorado Department of Agriculture staff member, a Tamarisk Coalition representative, and an environmental or volunteer organization representative will review the applications and select projects for grant funding.

B. Basic Application Criteria

Failure to meet any of these elements will result in rejection of the application. Please describe how the project complies with the basic criteria.

Describe the plan to control invasive phreatophytes in priority infested areas through “integrated pest management” (IPM). Please refer to “Tamarisk Best Management Practices in Colorado Watersheds” for more information regarding management strategies and techniques, including IPM.(Nissen, Scott; Sher, Anna; Norton, Andrew; Tamarisk Best Management Practices in Colorado Watersheds. Colorado State University 2010, http://www.tamariskcoalition.org/sites/default/files/resource-center-documents/Nissen_BMP_Order_Form.pdf)

Describe a plan for secondary/subsequent weed control post invasive phreatophyte removal. Describe the restoration and re-vegetation plan. Treatment sites on disconnected floodplains associated with incised channels require a plan that ensures long term channel stability. Passive re-vegetation plans will be considered if sufficient justification is provided as to how the approach will be effective. Please refer to “Best Management Practices for Revegetation after Tamarisk Removal in the Upper Colorado River Basin” for more information regarding restoration strategies. (Sher, Anna; Lair, Ken; DePrenger-Levin, Michelle; Dohrenwend, Kara; Best Management Practices for Revegetation after Tamarisk Removal in the Upper Colorado River Basin. Denver Botanic Gardens 2010.)

Describe the long term monitoring and maintenance plan. Monitoring of project effectiveness shall continue beyond project completion for a minimum of five years. Development of a monitoring plan, including a budget item for monitoring, must be included as part of each application. Recommended monitoring protocols and datasheets can be found on the Tamarisk Coalition website at:

<http://www.tamariskcoalition.org/resource-center/monitoring-%2526-reporting>.

An annual monitoring letter report shall be provided to the CWCB each year for a minimum of five years after project completion. The reasonable estimated costs of monitoring during the initial five year period will be credited as a component of the applicant's matching fund obligation at project closeout and final payment. Maintenance of restored areas shall continue for a minimum of five years beyond project completion. A maintenance plan will be developed and included as part of each funded project. The reasonable estimated costs of maintenance during the initial five year period will be credited as a component of the applicant's matching fund obligation closeout and final payment.

The application must include a letter of support from the appropriate basin roundtable chair.

All proposals will be reviewed to identify any needed collaboration with the Colorado Department of Agriculture's (CDA) biocontrol program. CDA will provide maps of areas where biocontrol agents are prevalent and should be avoided.

C. Multi-Objective IPCP Projects

Projects that meet the mandatory criteria described above and that can integrate other objectives that contribute to restoring ecological processes and protecting life and property will be given a higher funding priority.

Multi-objective IPCP projects may include one or more of the following elements:

- Restore stream channel capacity and reduce flood hazards
- Provide habitat for aquatic and terrestrial species
- Intensive restoration of riparian areas
- Reduce erosion
- Improve water quality
- Enhance recreational access
- Reduce groundwater consumption by invasive phreatophytes
- Enhance native habitat for current or prospective Endangered Species Act listed species
- Removal of ornamental invasive phreatophyte populations or individuals
- Replacement of ornamental invasive phreatophytes with native trees
- Protect water quality by complying with the "Forestry Best Management Practices to Protect Water Quality in Colorado 2010". This publication can be found at:
<http://csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/ForestryBMP-CO-2010.pdf>

D. Eligible Entities

State of Colorado departments and agencies, local governments, conservation and water conservancy districts, weed management districts, established non-profit organizations, watershed coalitions, private individuals, and Colorado's two Ute Tribes are eligible. Federal agencies are not eligible to receive grant funds, however projects may be conducted on private, state, or federal lands with appropriate permissions and under the sponsorship of an eligible entity. Partnership projects that include treatment of private lands and which cross jurisdictional boundaries in a coordinated manner to promote a comprehensive watershed approach are encouraged. The CWCB will strive to achieve geographic diversity by approving qualifying projects west and east of the continental divide.

Applicants should demonstrate:

- A commitment to collaborative approaches that involves locally and/or regionally based diverse interests within the watershed in question,
- Support from their local basin roundtable,
- Consideration was given to all interested persons in the watershed,
- There is a broad based involvement in and/or support for the grant application from relevant local, state, or federal governmental entities,
- There is an ability to provide the appropriate in-kind or cash match for the activities proposed.
- Congruence with CDA statewide management plans for noxious weed species.

Applicants must have the capacity to enter into a contract with the State of Colorado and be able to furnish a valid federal taxpayer ID number.

Applicants are responsible for determining their ability to accept grant funds from the CWCB pursuant to any limitations established by the TABOR Amendment (Taxpayer Bill of Rights) and any other relevant laws.

CWCB staff may initiate studies or demonstration projects utilizing up to 25% of the annually authorized IPCP funding amount.

CWCB may reserve 10% of the annually authorized IPCP funding for monitoring and evaluation of existing projects.

E. Project Size

No single project and/or entity will receive more than \$300,000 per grant cycle. No project requesting less than \$10,000 will be considered. **In no case will the CWCB pay for work accomplished prior to State Controller approval of a valid purchase document.** As explained below, limited credit against the 25% minimum matching funds requirement may be met by activities performed in the six month period prior to the application deadline. The CWCB will accept applications for multiple projects from the same applicant. The applications should be submitted separately. Please contact the CWCB to discuss further. Contact information can be found below.

F. Mandatory Cost Share

Projects will be funded by the CWCB on a cost-share basis.

CWCB funds may not exceed 75% of the total cost of each individual project. Total State of Colorado funding may not exceed 87.5% of the total cost.

CWCB funds should be leveraged to the maximum extent possible to take full advantage of other local, private or federal funding sources. Applicants with greater than 25% match for the total project cost will score higher in III. A.

Project costs may consist of a combination of in-kind and cash match, but no more than half of the 25% match may be in the form of in-kind services.

Cash Match: Actual expenditures paid directly with cash funds from the grantee to a vendor. Examples are supplies, services, and necessary equipment purchase or rental.

In-Kind Match: Services and labor provided by the paid staff of the grantee to perform all or part of the approved project scope of work, including necessary project administration. This can include standard direct and indirect personnel fringe benefits. Volunteer services provided at no cost to the applicant by firms or

individuals consistent with the approved scope of work will be valued for in-kind match at local prevailing wage rates. Project specific land acquisition or access agreement costs may also be claimed as in-kind contributions and credited against the 50% minimum requirement. Costs that CAN NOT be considered include: general organization operating costs such as utilities, operating supplies and services, amortized costs or rental costs for buildings and equipment used for the general operation of the organization, and general property and liability insurance costs, nor will overhead per cent charges to cover such items be allowed. These business expenses are NOT reimbursable costs and may not be claimed as matching contributions.

G. Application Submittal and Format

Applications must be submitted electronically meeting the following format requirements: font size: minimum 11 pt., margins: 1 inch maximum; number of pages: 5 (excluding summary sheet, maps and attachments). Applications may be emailed to chris.sturm@state.co.us. Applications exceeding 10mb in size should be mailed on CD or DVD to Chris Sturm, 1313 Sherman St., Rm 721 Denver, Co 80211. The entire application, including attachments, should be submitted as one file, e.g. word .doc/.docx or adobe .pdf format.

The application must include:

Detailed map of the project area showing relevant watercourses, major land owners, infested areas and areas to be treated at a suitable scale.

Detailed project budget (template attached to application), including matching fund sources, and provisions for ongoing monitoring and maintenance. The budget will form the basis for a grant agreement with the CWCB and the structure for future invoices.

Project schedule demonstrating ability to complete all CWCB funded activities by June 30, 2018. At a minimum all CWCB funded control and re-vegetation work must be completed and monitoring and maintenance programs in place prior to final payment.

Letters of commitment from any entity identified as providing matching funds, allowing access to private property, or otherwise contributing to the essential feasibility of the proposed project.

III. Grant Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be scored based on the evaluation criteria below:

A. Organizational Capability

Identify the lead project sponsor and describe the other stakeholders' level of participation and involvement.
10 points

What is the applicant organization's history of accomplishments in the watershed? Provide several past project examples. List partner organizations and agencies with which applicant worked to implement past projects. 10 points

What information is the project sponsor using to develop the proposed plan or project? Include any relevant information regarding existing State approved invasive phreatophyte control plans, watershed plans, geomorphic assessments, flood studies, riparian conditions assessments, aquatic/terrestrial habitat conditions, wildlife studies, and/or river restoration reports. 10 points

What level of staffing will be directed toward the implementation of the proposed project/planning effort? Discuss the number of staff and amount of time dedicated for the project. Will volunteers be utilized, and if so, how? Will the project utilize labor from the Colorado Youth Corps or similar non-profit organization? Include brief resumes for each member of the active project team. 10 points

Specify in-kind services and cash contributions (match) amount for the proposed activities. The applicant must provide at least 25% match of the project's total cost. Discuss whether other funding sources are secured or pending. Applicants with greater than 25% match for the total project cost will score higher than applicants with the minimum match required. Discuss whether other funding sources are secured or pending. 10 points

Does the project incorporate an education component that increases public awareness of invasive phreatophyte issues? 5 points

B. Project Effectiveness

Demonstrate that the principles of integrated pest management (biocontrol, chemical, mechanical, etc.) are well utilized. Describe how the chosen control methods are most appropriate for the specific project area. How does the chosen control method(s) and subsequent restoration plan minimize the likelihood of re-infestation of invasive phreatophytes and secondary weeds? 20 points

Demonstrate that the project budget and schedule are realistic. Consider time required to obtain permits, i.e. 404 dredge/fill, county floodplain permits, herbicide application, NEPA, etc. All proposed CWCB funded tasks must be complete by June 30, 2018. The project start date for CWCB funded tasks should not occur before February 1, 2016. 10 points

Discuss the multi-objective aspects of the project and how they relate to invasive phreatophyte control. Describe similar activities in the watershed and how this project complements but does not duplicate those activities. Multi objectives may include (but are not limited to) channel stabilization, riparian re-vegetation, habitat improvement, recreation opportunity enhancement, natural hazard reduction, flood mitigation, and water supply delivery improvement. 15 points

IV. Grant Program Administration

A. Application Timeline

The timeline for the grant application cycle is:

Applications available: August 14, 2015

Deadline to submit applications: November 13, 2015

Applications selected for funding: December, 2015
Progress reports due: Every six months after notice to proceed

B. Contact Information

Interested parties are strongly encouraged to call the CWCB to discuss potential applications. For more information please contact:

Chris Sturm
Stream Restoration Coordinator, Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman St., Rm 721.
Denver, Co 80203
303 866 3441, ext. 3236
chris.sturm@state.co.us

C. Payment Procedure

The CWCB will make periodic payments no more often than monthly. All payments will be based on invoices for work completed and must include an accounting for the required matching funds applied during the invoice period. Eligible reimbursable expenses shall be limited to those items and rates in the approved budget which will be made a part of the grant contract between the applicant and the CWCB. Invoices must include supporting documentation justifying expenses, e.g. contractor invoices, timesheets, etc.

Ten percent of the total grant award will be withheld until the final report is submitted.