

**Water Supply Reserve Account – Grant and Loan Program**  
**Water Activity Summary Sheet**  
**May 18-19, 2016**  
**Agenda Item 18(b)**

**Applicant & Fiscal Agent:** Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation

**Water Activity Name:** Upper Rio Grande Assessment

**Water Activity Purpose:** Nonconsumptive

**County:** Rio Grande, San Juan, Hinsdale, Mineral

**Drainage Basin:** Rio Grande

**Water Source:** Rio Grande and Tributaries

**Amount Requested/Source of Funds:** \$67,000 Rio Grande Basin Account (total grant request)

**Matching Funds:** Applicant & 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Match: \$133,000 (cash) = 66.5% of the total project cost (\$200,000)  
(refer to *Funding Summary/Matching Funds* section below)

<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>
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Staff recommends approval of up to \$67,000 from the Rio Grande Basin Account to help fund the project titled: Upper Rio Grande Assessment.
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**Water Activity Summary:** WSRA funds, if approved will be expended to assess the ecological condition of the mainstem of the Rio Grande, major tributaries, and upland ecosystems within the project area, identify causes of concern, and develop a list of prioritized projects that will improve the function of uplands, and aquatic and the riparian ecosystems. The assessment will concurrently identify projects that involve infrastructure as related to recreational, environmental, agricultural, and municipal/industrial needs in the basin. This effort will be a stakeholder driven watershed assessment that encompasses the Upper Rio Grande Basin, from the headwaters to the town of South Fork. There are many environmental challenges facing the Upper Rio Grande watershed, including extended drought, forest fires, extensive beetle kill, water quality impairments, endangered species, degraded habitat, and other anthropogenic impacts. While the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable and stakeholders recognize the vital need to implement projects to address these concerns, the current condition of the Upper Rio Grande watershed is largely undocumented, which this effort aims to remedy.

**Discussion:** The proposed project aligns well with many of the Goals and Measurable Outcomes in the Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan (#1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, & 14), while simultaneously furthering the goals of Colorado's Water Plans as highlighted by the five stated goals in Section 6.6: Environmental and Recreational Projects and Methods

**Issues/Additional Needs:** No issues or additional needs have been identified.

**Threshold and Evaluation Criteria:** The application meets all four Threshold Criteria.

**Tier 1-3 Evaluation Criteria:** n/a

**Funding Summary/Matching Funds:**

<b><u>Source</u></b>	<b><u>Cash</u></b>	<b><u>In-kind</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
REACT	\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000
CDPHE	\$33,000	\$0	\$33,000
Subtotal Non-WSRA Match	\$133,000	\$0	\$133,000
Rio Grande Basin WSRA Account	\$67,000	n/a	\$67,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>

**CWCB Project Manager:** Craig Godbout

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:** 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.

**Final Deliverable:** 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.

Rio Grande Basin Roundtable  
623 Fourth Street  
Alamosa, CO 81101  
[cwcd1971@hotmail.com](mailto:cwcd1971@hotmail.com)

March 17, 2016

Mr. Craig Godbout and CWCB Board Chair  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman St., Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203

Re: WSRA Application for the Upper Rio Grande Assessment

Dear Mr. Godbout,

On behalf of the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable (Roundtable), please accept this letter of support for the Upper Rio Grande Assessment (Assessment) sponsored by the Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation. The Water Supply Reserve Account Application for the Assessment was evaluated by the Roundtable and was approved by voting members at the March 8, 2016 BRT meeting. The Assessment received support from all but one of the BRT members. The member opposed funding the Assessment because they do not think it will help provide additional real water supplies for agriculture, which he feels should be the Rio Grande BRT's primary goal. That being said the Roundtable does support this project's application for WSRA funding.

The Roundtable recognizes that the Assessment will be a valuable tool that will inform future decision-making and project development in the Rio Grande Basin. The Assessment will document the ecological condition of the uplands and key riparian areas in the upper Rio Grande Watershed, identify causes of concern and prioritize projects that will address environmental, agricultural, municipal, and industrial water needs. The Assessment and prioritized projects will meet the following Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan Goals (Rio Grande BIP):

- 1.. Protect, preserve, and/or restore the sustainability of the Rio Grande Basin watersheds by focusing on watershed health and ecosystem function.
2. Protect and preserve the doctrine of prior appropriation and vested water rights, and fully utilize Colorado's compact entitlements as specified under the Rio Grande and Costilla Creek Compacts.
4. Operate, maintain, rehabilitate, and create necessary infrastructure to meet the Basin's long-term water needs including storage.
6. Support the development of projects and methods that have multiple benefits for agricultural, municipal and industrial, and environmental and recreational water needs.
7. Meet new demands for water, to the extent practicable, without impacting existing water rights and compact obligations.
9. Make progress towards meeting applicable water quality standards throughout the Basin.
10. Promote water management and administrative practices that are adaptive, flexible, and



# COLORADO WATER CONSERVATION BOARD



## WATER SUPPLY RESERVE ACCOUNT APPLICATION FORM

Today's Date: March 1, 2016

Upper Rio Grande Assessment

### Name of Water Activity/Project

Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation

### Name of Applicant

Rio Grande Basin  
Roundtable

Amount from Statewide Account:

\$0.00

Amount from Basin Account(s):

\$67,000

Total WSRA Funds Requested:

\$67,000

### Approving Basin Roundtable(s)

*(If multiple basins specify amounts in parentheses.)*

FEIN: 75-3169057

### Application Content

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### Required Exhibits

- A. Statement of Work, Budget, and Schedule
- B. Project Map
- C. As Needed (i.e. letters of support, photos, maps, etc.)

### Appendices – Reference Material

- 1. Program Information
- 2. Insurance Requirements
- 3. WSRA Standard Contract Information (Required for Projects Over \$100,000)
- 4. W-9 Form (Required for All Projects Prior to Contracting)



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### **Instructions**

To receive funding from the Water Supply Reserve Account (WSRA), a proposed water activity must be approved by the local Basin Roundtable **AND** the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). The process for Basin Roundtable consideration and approval is outlined in materials in Appendix 1.

Once approved by the local Basin Roundtable, the applicant should submit this application **with a detailed statement of work including budget and schedule as Exhibit A** to CWCB staff by the application deadline.

WSRA applications are due with the roundtable letter of support 60 calendar days prior to the bi-monthly Board meeting at which it will be considered. Board meetings are held in January, March, May, July, September, and November. Meeting details, including scheduled dates, agendas, etc. are posted on the CWCB website at: <http://cwcb.state.co.us> Applications to the WSRA Basin Account are considered at every board meeting, while applications to the WSRA Statewide Account are only considered at the March and September board meetings.

When completing this application, the applicant should refer to the WSRA Criteria and Guidelines available at: <http://cwcb.state.co.us/LoansGrants/water-supply-reserve-account-grants/Documents/WSRACriteriaGuidelines.pdf>. In addition, the applicant should also refer to the [Supplemental Scoring Matrix](#) applied to Evaluation Criteria Tiers 1-3 for Statewide Account requests .

The application, statement of work, budget, and schedule **must be submitted in electronic format** (Microsoft Word or text-enabled PDF are preferred) and can be emailed or mailed on a disk to:

Craig Godbout - WSRA Application  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman St., Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203  
[Craig.godbout@state.co.us](mailto:Craig.godbout@state.co.us)

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact Craig Godbout at: 303-866-3441 x3210 or [craig.godbout@state.co.us](mailto:craig.godbout@state.co.us).

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### Part I. - Description of the Applicant (Project Sponsor or Owner);

1.	Applicant Name(s):	Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation		
	Mailing address:	623 Fourth St Alamosa, CO 81101		
	FEIN #:	75-3169057		
	Primary Contact:	Emma Regier	Position/Title:	Coordinator
	Email:	emmaregier@gmail.com		
	Phone Numbers:	Cell: 316.217.5129	Office:	719.589.2230
	Alternate Contact:	Heather Dutton	Position/Title:	SLVWCD Manager
	Email:	heatherrdutton@gmail.com		
	Phone Numbers:	Cell: 719.850.1480	Office:	719.589.2230

2. Eligible entities for WSRA funds include the following. What type of entity is the Applicant?

- ☐ Public (Government) – municipalities, enterprises, counties, and State of Colorado agencies. Federal agencies are encouraged to work with local entities and the local entity should be the grant recipient. Federal agencies are eligible, but only if they can make a compelling case for why a local partner cannot be the grant recipient.
- ☐ Public (Districts) – authorities, Title 32/special districts, (conservancy, conservation, and irrigation districts), and water activity enterprises.
- ☐ Private Incorporated – mutual ditch companies, homeowners associations, corporations.
- ☐ Private individuals, partnerships, and sole proprietors are eligible for funding from the Basin Accounts but not for funding from the Statewide Account.
- ☒ Non-governmental organizations – broadly defined as any organization that is not part of the government.

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### 3. Provide a brief description of your organization

The Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation (Foundation), a 501(c)(3) Colorado non-profit organization, is the fiscal agent for the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project (RGHRP). The mission of the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project is “to restore and conserve the historical functions and vitality of the Rio Grande in Colorado for improved water quality, optimal agricultural water use, riparian habitat, wildlife and aquatic species habitat, recreation, and community safety, while meeting the requirements of the Rio Grande Compact.”

The RGHRP was formed to implement the recommendations of a study completed in 2001. The 2001 Study was prompted by local stakeholders due to a realized deterioration of the historic functions of the Rio Grande, which include providing high quality water, healthy riparian areas, fish and wildlife habitat, and a functioning floodplain. The 2001 Study analyzed the condition of the riparian area and structures along a 91-mile reach of the Rio Grande and provided recommendations for improvement. The 2001 Study was sponsored by the San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District and funded with a \$250,000 grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). In 2004, the need was identified for a well-defined Rio Grande Watershed Restoration Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan). Completed in 2007, the Strategic Plan highlighted the importance of continued efforts to implement the recommendations from the 2001 Study. Since establishment, the RGHRP has accrued a successful record of performing projects on the Rio Grande through collaboration with landowners and local, state, and federal entities.

The RGHRP has four Programs: The Streambank Stabilization and Riparian Restoration Program, the In-Stream Infrastructure Improvement Program, the Watershed Stewardship Program, and the Outreach and Education Program. Through the Streambank Stabilization and Riparian Restoration Program, the RGHRP has administered seven (7) cost-share restoration projects on sixty (60) sites with \$1.8 million grant funding raised. The projects have improved river function using a multi-faceted approach to riparian restoration and streambank stabilization, and have resulted in the treatment of approximately eleven (11) miles of streambanks. Including contributions from partners and landowners, the total value of these projects is \$2.2 million. The techniques used include bank and channel shaping, revegetation, installation of rock and log structures, and implementation of grazing best management practices. These Projects reduce sediment loading by stabilizing the streambanks, improve the riparian and upland habitat by increasing willow and riparian vegetation cover, and enhance the fishery. Additionally, the capacity of the Rio Grande to transport sediment that has entered the system from upstream reaches is increased. Finally, improvements to riparian habitat and floodplain function improve the condition of wetlands located throughout the riparian areas within the Project boundaries. The RGHRP works with the Colorado Watershed Assembly’s Colorado Measurable Results Program (MRP) to complete long-term monitoring of the Projects.

Through the In-Stream Infrastructure Improvement Program, the RGHRP is working with ditch companies to address concerns surrounding aging and inefficient diversion and headgate structures. The first of these projects was the Plaza Planning Project – Phase 1 (Phase 1) in the Sevenmile Plaza area of Rio Grande County. The RGHRP worked with stakeholders to determine the primary issues in the area, identify remediation methods, and develop an implementation plan, The Plaza Plan, to improve the health and function of the Rio Grande in the Sevenmile Plaza area. The identified issues include streambank instability in the 2.8-mile project reach, a degraded wetland, and aging, hazardous, and inefficient diversion structures. Implementation of the Plaza Plan is underway through the Plaza Project – Phase 2: The McDonald Ditch Implementation Project (Phase

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2) and the Plaza Project Phase 3: The Prairie Ditch Implementation Project (Phase 3). Phase 2 includes the replacement of the McDonald Ditch diversion dam. This project is close to completion with a new diversion and headgate in place with automated measuring gates and floodgates. Phase 3 includes the replacement of the aging Prairie Ditch diversion and headgate. This project is also nearing completion with the new diversion structure complete and the headgate under construction. Both new diversions will make irrigation more efficient and additionally include passage for fish and improvements to community safety. These efforts will improve continuity and function of the Rio Grande.

Through the Watershed Stewardship Program, the RGHRP works with partners to complete forest restoration and wildfire hazard mitigation projects. In the summer of 2013, the West Fork Complex Fire burned over 110,000 acres of critical natural resources in the upper Rio Grande watershed. In response, the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (RWEACT) was formed. The RGHRP has taken the lead in coordinating RWEACT's natural resources committee and implementing projects in the aftermath of the fire. For example, the RGHRP and Colorado School of Mines deployed 6 water quality monitoring probes through the watershed to observe the effects of the wildfire on riparian areas and aquatic health. The RGHRP continues to monitor water quality. Additionally, the RGHRP designed and implemented 10 experimental plots within the burned area to investigate methods to improve vegetative cover, increase soil water holding capacity, and reduce hill slope erosion. Data gathered from monitoring the plots will influence the methods used in future wildfire restoration projects. Finally, the RGHRP partnered with the US Forest Service in 2015 to implement a noxious weed management project that inventoried and treated noxious weed infestations in and around the West Fork Complex Fire burn scar.

The RGHRP administers a robust Outreach and Education Program. Informative press releases are submitted to local and regional media with notable project updates. Talks and tours are routinely given to local schools, community groups, and water related organizations. Volunteer events encourage community members to get involved and connected with the Rio Grande. The RGHRP website provides project updates and information. Additionally, the RGHRP holds a Water Leaders course each spring in conjunction with other partners to educate community members on water issues in the San Luis Valley. Content of the Outreach and Education program includes details about projects, partnerships, funding entities, and the importance of protecting and conserving the Rio Grande.

4. If the Contracting Entity is different then the Applicant (Project Sponsor or Owner), please describe the Contracting Entity here.

The Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation is the Contracting Entity, on behalf of the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project.

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5. Successful applicants will have to execute a contract with the CWCB prior to beginning work on the portion of the project funded by the WSRA grant. In order to expedite the contracting process the CWCB has established a standard contract with provisions the applicant must adhere to. A link to this standard contract is included in Appendix 3. Please review this contract and check the appropriate box.

<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>
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The Applicant will be able to contract with the CWCB using the Standard Contract

<input type="checkbox"/>
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The Applicant has reviewed the standard contract and has some questions/issues/concerns. Please be aware that any deviation from the standard contract could result in a significant delay between grant approval and the funds being available.

6. The Tax Payer Bill of Rights (TABOR) may limit the amount of grant money an entity can receive. Please describe any relevant TABOR issues that may affect the applicant.

The Applicant, The Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation, is not subject to TABOR limitations, as it is a Colorado nonprofit organization operating under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

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### Part II. - Description of the Water Activity/Project

1. What is the primary purpose of this grant application? (Please check only one)

☒ Nonconsumptive (Environmental or Recreational)

☐ Agricultural

☐ Municipal/Industrial

☐ Needs Assessment

☐ Education

☐ Other Explain:

2. If you feel this project addresses multiple purposes please explain.

The purpose of this Project is to assess the ecological condition of the mainstem of the Rio Grande and major tributaries within the project area, identify causes of concern, and develop a list of prioritized project that will improve the function of uplands, and aquatic and riparian ecosystems. Projects identified in the Upper Rio Grande Assessment will address environmental, recreational, agricultural, and municipal/industrial water needs.

3. Is this project primarily a study or implementation of a water activity/project? (Please check only one)

☒ Study ☐ Implementation

4. To catalog measurable results achieved with WSRA funds can you provide any of the following numbers?

New Storage Created (acre-feet)

New Annual Water Supplies Developed, Consumptive or Nonconsumptive (acre-feet)

Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)

Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)

Length of Pipe/Canal Built or Improved (linear feet)

Efficiency Savings (acre-feet/year OR dollars/year – **circle one**)

Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)

1 Other -- Explain:  Watershed Assessment for Upper Rio Grande Basin



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4. To help us map WSRA projects please include a map (Exhibit B) and provide the general coordinates below:

Latitude:

37°49'46.83"N

Longitude:

106°55'3.48"W

5. Please provide an overview/summary of the proposed water activity (no more than one page). Include a description of the overall water activity and specifically what the WSRA funding will be used for. A full **Statement of Work** with a detailed budget and schedule is required as **Exhibit A** of this application.

**Overall Water Activity:** The Upper Rio Grande Assessment (URGA) is a stakeholder driven watershed assessment that encompasses the Upper Rio Grande Basin, from the headwaters to the town of South Fork. There are many environmental challenges facing the Upper Rio Grande Watershed, including extended drought, forest fires, extensive beetle kill, water quality impairments, endangered species, degraded habitat, and other anthropogenic impacts. While the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable and stakeholders recognize the vital need to implement projects to address these concerns, the current condition of Upper Rio Grande Watershed is largely undocumented. This Project will result in a comprehensive assessment of the Upper Rio Grande watershed that partners, including watershed groups, federal, state, and local entities, and private landowners, can use to prioritize, secure funding, and implement collaborative, multi-benefit projects that improve the health of the Upper Rio Grande Watershed.

The goals of the URGA are to assess the ecological condition of the mainstem of the Rio Grande, major tributaries, and upland ecosystems within the project area, identify causes of concern, and develop a list of prioritized projects to that will improve the function of uplands, and aquatic and the riparian ecosystems. The assessment will concurrently identify projects that involve infrastructure as related to recreational, environmental, agricultural, and municipal/industrial needs in the basin.

The URGA and projects prioritized in the URGA will meet the following Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan Goals:

1. Protect, preserve, and/or restore the sustainability of the Rio Grande Basin watersheds by focusing on watershed health and ecosystem function.
2. Protect and preserve the doctrine of prior appropriation and vested water rights, and fully utilize Colorado's compact entitlements as specified under the Rio Grande and Costilla Creek Compacts.
4. Operate, maintain, rehabilitate, and create necessary infrastructure to meet the Basin's long-term water needs including storage.
6. Support the development of projects and methods that have multiple benefits for agricultural, municipal and industrial, and environmental and recreational water needs.
7. Meet new demands for water, to the extent practicable, without impacting existing water rights and compact obligations.
9. Make progress towards meeting applicable water quality standards throughout the Basin.
10. Promote water management and administrative practices that are adaptive, flexible, and responsive to optimize multiple benefits.
11. Protect, preserve, and enhance terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitats throughout the basin.
12. Conserve, restore, and maintain wetlands and riparian areas for the benefit of a healthy watershed.
13. Work to sustain active river flows throughout the year in cooperation with water users and administrators to restore and sustain ecological function of the rivers and floodplain habitats within the context of exciting water rights and compact obligations.

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### 14. Maintain and enhance water dependent recreational activities.

Additionally, this project aligns with goals stated in the Colorado Water Plan. Section 6.6 of the Plan emphasizes, “the policy of the State of Colorado is to identify and implement environmental and recreational projects and methods” with long-term goals of promoting the restoration, recovery, and resiliency of aquatic and riparian habitat and species, supporting the development of multipurpose projects and methods, and maintaining watershed health. In Section 10, Colorado’s Water Plan “sets a measurable objective to cover 80 percent of the locally prioritized lists of rivers with stream management plans, and 80 percent of critical watersheds with watershed protection plans, all by 2030”. The URGA helps meet these statewide goals and measureable objectives by creating a comprehensive watershed assessment that will cover the headwaters of the Rio Grande and identify and prioritize collaborative, multi benefit projects that will address watershed health.

**Use of Funds:** The Foundation is requesting \$67,000 from Rio Grande Basin WSRA, or 34% of the total project cost of \$200,000. Matching funds are as follows: \$100,000 or 50% from the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (RWEACT); and \$33,000 or 13% from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Funds will be used to support data collection by local entities and hire a contractor that will collaborate with project partners to pull together data to complete the URGA.

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### Part III. – Threshold and Evaluation Criteria

1. Describe how the water activity meets these **Threshold Criteria**. (Detailed in Part 3 of the Water Supply Reserve Account Criteria and Guidelines.)

- a) The water activity is consistent with Section 37-75-102 Colorado Revised Statutes.<sup>1</sup>

The Assessment is consistent with Section 37-75-102 C.R.S. because this Project does not supersede, abrogate, or otherwise impair the State's current system of allocating water within Colorado or in any manner repeal or amend the existing water rights adjudication system. This project does not affect the State constitution's recognition of water rights as a private usufructuary property right nor is it intended to restrict the ability of the holder of a water right to use or to dispose of that water right in any manner permitted under Colorado law.

- b) The water activity underwent an evaluation and approval process and was approved by the Basin Roundtable (BRT) and the application includes a description of the results of the BRT's evaluation and approval of the activity. At a minimum, the description must include the level of agreement reached by the roundtable, including any minority opinion(s) if there was not general agreement for the activity. The description must also include reasons why general agreement was not reached (if it was not), including who opposed the activity and why they opposed it. Note- If this information is included in the letter from the roundtable chair simply reference that letter.

This information is included in the letter from the Rio Grande Inter-Basin Roundtable Chairman, Nathan Coombs.

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<sup>1</sup> 37-75-102. Water rights - protections. (1) It is the policy of the General Assembly that the current system of allocating water within Colorado shall not be superseded, abrogated, or otherwise impaired by this article. Nothing in this article shall be interpreted to repeal or in any manner amend the existing water rights adjudication system. The General Assembly affirms the state constitution's recognition of water rights as a private usufructuary property right, and this article is not intended to restrict the ability of the holder of a water right to use or to dispose of that water right in any manner permitted under Colorado law. (2) The General Assembly affirms the protections for contractual and property rights recognized by the contract and takings protections under the state constitution and related statutes. This article shall not be implemented in any way that would diminish, impair, or cause injury to any property or contractual right created by intergovernmental agreements, contracts, stipulations among parties to water cases, terms and conditions in water decrees, or any other similar document related to the allocation or use of water. This article shall not be construed to supersede, abrogate, or cause injury to vested water rights or decreed conditional water rights. The General Assembly affirms that this article does not impair, limit, or otherwise affect the rights of persons or entities to enter into agreements, contracts, or memoranda of understanding with other persons or entities relating to the appropriation, movement, or use of water under other provisions of law.

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- c) The water activity meets the provisions of Section 37-75-104(2), Colorado Revised Statutes.<sup>2</sup> The Basin Roundtable Chairs shall include in their approval letters for particular WSRA grant applications a description of how the water activity will assist in meeting the water supply needs identified in the basin roundtable's consumptive and/or non-consumptive needs assessments.

This information is included in the letter from the Rio Grande Inter-Basin Roundtable Chairman, Nathan Coombs.

- d) Matching Requirement: For requests from the **Statewide Fund**, the applicants will be required to demonstrate a **25 percent** (or greater) match of the total grant request from the other sources, including by not limited to Basin Funds. A minimum match of 5% of the total grant amount shall be from Basin funds. A minimum match of 5% of the total grant amount must come from the applicant or 3rd party sources. Sources of matching funds include but are not limited to Basin Funds, in-kind services, funding from other sources, and/or direct cash match. Past expenditures directly related to the project may be considered as matching funds if the expenditures occurred within 9 months of the date the contract or purchase order between the applicant and the State of Colorado is executed. Please describe the source(s) of matching funds. (NOTE: These matching funds should also be reflected in your Detailed Budget in **Exhibit A** of this application)

Matching funds are as follows: \$100,000 or 50% from the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (RWEACT); and \$33,000 or 13% from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). The Foundation is requesting \$67,000 from Rio Grande Basin WSRA, or 34% of the total project cost of \$200,000.

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<sup>2</sup> 37-75-104 (2)(c). Using data and information from the Statewide Water Supply Initiative and other appropriate sources and in cooperation with the on-going Statewide Water Supply Initiative, develop a basin-wide consumptive and nonconsumptive water supply needs assessment, conduct an analysis of available unappropriated waters within the basin, and propose projects or methods, both structural and nonstructural, for meeting those needs and utilizing those unappropriated waters where appropriate. Basin Roundtables shall actively seek the input and advice of affected local governments, water providers, and other interested stakeholders and persons in establishing its needs assessment, and shall propose projects or methods for meeting those needs. Recommendations from this assessment shall be forwarded to the Interbasin Compact Committee and other basin roundtables for analysis and consideration after the General Assembly has approved the Interbasin Compact Charter.

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2. For Applications that include a request for funds from the **Statewide Account**, describe how the water activity/project meets all applicable **Evaluation Criteria**. (Detailed in Part 3 of the Water Supply Reserve Account Criteria and Guidelines and repeated below.) Projects will be assessed on how well they meet the Evaluation Criteria. **Please attach additional pages as necessary.**

**Evaluation Criteria** – the following criteria will be utilized to further evaluate the merits of the water activity proposed for funding from the Statewide Account. In evaluation of proposed water activities, preference will be given to projects that meet one or more criteria from each of the three “tiers” or categories. Each “tier” is grouped in level of importance. For instance, projects that meet Tier 1 criteria will outweigh projects that only meet Tier 3 criteria. The applicant should also refer to the Supplemental Scoring Matrix applied to Evaluation Criteria Tiers 1-3 for Statewide Account requests. WSRA grant requests for projects that may qualify for loans through the CWCB loan program will receive preference in the Statewide Evaluation Criteria if the grant request is part of a CWCB loan/WSRA grant package. For these CWCB loan/WSRA grant packages, the applicant must have a CWCB loan/WSRA grant ratio of 1:1 or higher. Preference will be given to those with a higher loan/grant ratio.

Project funds are being requested from the Rio Grande Basin Account only.

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### Part IV. – Required Supporting Material

1. **Water Rights, Availability, and Sustainability** – This information is needed to assess the viability of the water project or activity. Please provide a description of the water supply source to be utilized, or the water body to be affected by, the water activity. This should include a description of applicable water rights, and water rights issues, and the name/location of water bodies affected by the water activity.

**Water Body Affected:** The water body affected by the URGA is the Rio Grande and major tributaries to the Rio Grande in the upper watershed. The Rio Grande watershed in Colorado covers 8,200 square miles (Exhibit B. Maps – Figure 1). The river flows 200 miles through Colorado, originating near the Continental Divide. Numerous tributaries converge on the east slope of the Continental Divide from elevations near 13,000 feet to form the Rio Grande mainstem. The river flows to the east through the Rio Grande National Forest and then through private property for approximately 55 miles, where it passes near the town of Creede, located at approximately 8,850 feet. The Rio Grande continues its relatively steep descent for another 22 miles to the confluence with the South Fork of the Rio Grande at approximately 8,200 feet elevation, where the town of South Fork is located. The Rio Grande enters the San Luis Valley, the largest intermountain basin in Colorado, at the town of South Fork.

The URGA will assess the condition of the mainstem of the Rio Grande and major tributaries, from the headwaters to the town of South Fork. For a detailed map of all the tributaries to be included in the project see Exhibit B. Maps – Figure 2

**Water Rights:** The URGA will not change or affect any water rights or their allocation.

2. Please provide a brief narrative of any related studies or permitting issues.

The URGA will tie into the 2001 Study, a similar riparian assessment that analyzed the condition of the riparian area and structures along a 91-mile reach of the Rio Grande from the town of South Fork to the Alamosa – Conejos County line. The 2001 Study was sponsored by the San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District and funded with a \$250,000 grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). The study evaluated the condition of the river's functions as they related to:

- a. The condition of riparian habitat and fisheries;
- b. Accessibility of the river to existing irrigation structures and their condition and performance;
- c. The protection of lives and property;
- d. The protection of channel and flood plain from flood damage;
- e. The maintenance of river channel and over bank capacity;
- f. The ability to meet the Rio Grande Compact requirements.

The URGA will include rigorous data collection, along with incorporating existing data and studies in the assessment. This existing data will include:

- Willow Creek Reclamation Committee's Watershed Monitoring and Water Quality data
- Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team's Water Quality Study
- USFS Forest Plan Assessment Data
- USFS Beetle Kill and Burn Severity Layers and the BAER Report from the West Fork Complex Fire



## Water Supply Reserve Account – Application Form

Revised October 2013

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- Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Aquatic Population Data and User Information
- National Resource Conservation Service Data
- Colorado Natural Heritage Area Reports

No permits will be required for this project.

### 3. Statement of Work, Detailed Budget, and Project Schedule

The statement of work will form the basis for the contract between the Applicant and the State of Colorado. In short, the Applicant is agreeing to undertake the work for the compensation outlined in the statement of work and budget, and in return, the State of Colorado is receiving the deliverables/products specified. **Please note that costs incurred prior to execution of a contract or purchase order are not subject to reimbursement.** All WSRA funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis after review invoices and appropriate backup material.

**Please provide a detailed statement of work using the template in Exhibit A.** Additional sections or modifications may be included as necessary. Please define all acronyms and include page numbers.

## **Water Supply Reserve Account – Application Form**

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### **REPORTING AND FINAL DELIVERABLE**

**Reporting:** 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 statement of work including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues.

**Final Deliverable:** 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.

### **PAYMENT**

Payment will be made based on actual expenditures and invoicing by the applicant. Invoices from any other entity (i.e. subcontractors) cannot be processed by the State. The request for payment must include a description of the work accomplished by major task, and estimate of the percent completion for individual tasks and the entire water activity in relation to the percentage of budget spent, identification of any major issues and proposed or implemented corrective actions. The last 10 percent of the entire water activity budget will be withheld until final project/water activity documentation is completed. 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 help promote the development of a common technical platform.

## Water Supply Reserve Account – Application Form

Revised October 2013

The above statements are true to the best of my knowledge:

Signature of Applicant:



Print Applicant's Name: Emma Regier

Project Title: Upper Rio Grande Assessment

Date: March 1, 2016

Return an electronic version (hardcopy may also be submitted) of this application to:

Craig Godbout – WSRA Application  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman St., Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203  
303-866-3441, ext. 3210 (office)  
303-547-8061 (cell)  
[craig.godbout@state.co.us](mailto:craig.godbout@state.co.us)

responsive to optimize multiple benefits.

11. Protect, preserve, and enhance terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitats throughout the basin.
12. Conserve, restore, and maintain wetlands and riparian areas for the benefit of a healthy watershed.
13. Work to sustain active river flows throughout the year in cooperation with water users and administrators to restore and sustain ecological function of the rivers and floodplain habitats within the context of existing water rights and compact obligations.
14. Maintain and enhance water dependent recreational activities.

In addition to meeting many of the Rio Grande BIP goals, this project aligns the Colorado Water Plan's policy to identify and implement environmental and recreational projects and methods, and to cover priority watersheds with watershed protection plans.

Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "N. Coombs".

Nathan Coombs  
Chair, Rio Grande Basin Roundtable

**Exhibit A**  
**Statement of Work**  
**Date: March 1, 2016**

**WATER ACTIVITY NAME – Upper Rio Grande Assessment**

**GRANT RECIPIENT – Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation**

**FUNDING SOURCE – WSRA Rio Grande Basin Account**

**INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The Upper Rio Grande Assessment (URGA) is a stakeholder driven watershed assessment that encompasses the Upper Rio Grande Basin, from the headwaters to the town of South Fork. The goals of the URGA are to assess the ecological condition of the mainstem of the Rio Grande, major tributaries, and upland ecosystems within the project area, identify causes of concern, and develop a list of prioritized projects to that will improve the function of uplands, and aquatic and the riparian ecosystems. The assessment will concurrently identify projects that involve infrastructure as related to recreational, environmental, agricultural, and municipal/industrial needs in the basin.

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the URGA are to:

1. Assess the condition of the Upper Rio Grande, including major tributaries, from the headwaters to the town of South Fork by collecting data characterizing riparian habitat, aquatic habitat, geomorphology, recreation, flow regimes, water quality, adjacent uplands, and infrastructure.
2. Analyze and compile data into a comprehensive watershed assessment.
3. Identify causes of degradation and priority projects within the project area.

**TASKS**

**TASK 1 – Riparian Habitat Assessment**

Description of Task

Assess the condition of riparian habitat throughout project reach through site visits, targeted surveying and data collection. Determine the percent of vegetative cover in riparian areas and along streambanks, assess impacts to vegetation from fire, flooding, recreation, livestock grazing, and landuse activities. Establish trends, if possible.

Method/Procedure

A hired contractor will collect data to assess the condition of riparian habitat throughout the project reach.

Deliverables

Data relating to the condition of riparian habitat throughout the project area. Specific data will include percent of vegetative cover in riparian areas and along streambanks, species composition,

impacts to vegetation from fire, flooding, recreation, livestock grazing, and landuse activities and establish trends in riparian habitat condition. Data will be analyzed and incorporated into the overall assessment

## **TASK 2 – Geomorphology Assessment**

### Description of Task

Assess streambank stability throughout project area, with a focus on burned areas and areas of high recreation. Identify bed material and areas of sedimentation from high erosion, and categorize streams using basic Rosgen Stream Classification types. Measure floodplain function.

### Method/Procedure

A hired contractor will collect and use data to assess the geomorphology of the project area.

### Deliverable

Data relating to the geomorphology throughout the project area. Data will be analyzed and incorporated into the overall assessment

## **TASK 3 – Aquatic Habitat**

### Description of Task

Assess the condition of aquatic habitat and populations at shocking sites, Colorado Parks and Wildlife survey sites, and targeted survey areas.

### Method/Procedure

Project partners, with Trout Unlimited as the lead, will complete this task. Partners will complete macroinvertebrate sampling, fish shocking, and identify suitable habitat to support native fish populations. Utilize Existing data from CPW and RWEACT's Water Quality Study will be utilized and macroinvertebrate sampling will be paired with fish shocking.

### Deliverable

Data relating to the condition of aquatic habitat and populations at shocking sites and targeted survey areas. Specific data will include macroinvertebrate sampling, fish shocking, and habitat suitability analysis. Data will be analyzed and incorporated into the overall assessment.

## **TASK 4 – Recreation**

### Description of Task

Assess the environmental impacts and economic contribution of recreation in the Upper Rio Grande.

### Method/Procedure

A hired contractor will collect and use data to assess the effects of recreation in the project area. Existing USFS Forest Plan Assessment Data and CPW User Info will be used in this task.

### Deliverable

Data relating to high use recreation areas including rafting, fishing, hiking, horse riding, and OHV use. Data will be analyzed to prioritize improvements to recreational facilities to ensure sustainability and reduce environmental impacts from recreation. Additionally, economic contribution from river-based recreation data will be assessed and quantified.



## **TASK 5 – Flow Regimes**

### Description of Task

Assess the timing of flows on the Rio Grande Mainstem, Beaver Creek, the South Fork, and Clear Creek to maximize beneficial environmental and recreational impacts.

### Method/Procedure

Project partners, including Trout Unlimited, SLVID, DWR, SLVWCD, and CPW, will identify opportunities for retiming reservoir releases in order to maximize beneficial environmental and recreational impacts.

### Deliverable

Data relating to timing of flows in specified reaches of the Rio Grande and applicable tributaries. Data will be analyzed and incorporated into the overall assessment for tasks such as extending the boating season, improving spawning conditions, cooling rivers in hot spells, and flushing sediment from fire, within the operating constraints of irrigators and other entities that utilize storage water.

## **TASK 6 – Water Quality**

### Description of Task

Assess water quality impairments with a focus on streams impacted by human-influenced point or non-point sources, WQCC issues, and fire on Miners Creek, Willow Creek, and streams below reservoirs.

### Method/Procedure

Project partner, Willow Creek Reclamation Committee, will analyze existing WCRC and RWEACT data as well as collect data on pH levels, metals, contaminant, TSS, and TDS data to monitor impacts on water quality.

### Deliverable

Data on pH levels, metals, contaminant, TSS and TDS. Data will be analyzed and incorporated into the overall assessment of the project area.

## **TASK 7 – Adjacent Uplands**

### Description of Task

Assess the adjacent uplands in the entire project area.

### Method/Procedure

A hired contractor will use mapping, USFS Assessments, and ground truthing to identify landuse activities, ecological conditions, including fire (historic and potential), beetle kill, and livestock grazing, and infrastructure that influences riparian areas.

### Deliverable

Data on condition of adjacent uplands on all reaches, including analysis of current USFS Assessments and Burn and Beetle Kill layers. Data will be incorporated into the overall assessment.

## **TASK 8 – Infrastructure**

### Description of Task

Assess the impacts of infrastructure on recreation and aquatic/riparian condition on project area below wilderness.

### Method/Procedure

A hired contractor will use the existing data from the BAER Report and other assessments, and collect current data on bridges, roads, diversions and commercial/residential property. The contractor will assess this information

### Deliverable

Data on bridges, roads, diversions and commercial/residential property related to recreation and aquatic/riparian condition. Data will be incorporated into the overall assessment.

## **TASK 9 – Identify Causes of Degradation and Priority Projects**

### Description of Task

Assess the causes of degradation on all reaches in the project area.

### Method/Procedure

A hired contractor and the Project Partners will analyze data from all previous tasks to summarize the causes of current and future degradation. The Project Partners will use data to prioritize projects for implementation to improve the river health and show real ecological and/economic benefits.

### Deliverable

Synthesized data detailing current conditions causes of degradation, and prioritized projects in the Upper Rio Grande. Data will be presented in the final Upper Rio Grande Assessment Report.

## **TASK 10 – Project Administration**

### Description of Task:

Complete all necessary contracts, status reports, and internal and external documents. Ensure Tasks are completed within approved costs and timelines.

### Method/Procedure:

The RGHRP will administer the Upper Rio Grande Assessment. This includes completing contracts with the CWCB, project partners, and contractors; managing budgets and reimbursement requests; and completing reports. Additionally, the RGHRP will perform Project oversight; making certain implementation is timely and accurate.

### Deliverable:

All appropriate contracts, external and internal reports, and Project activities completed within planned period and anticipated costs.

**REPORTING AND FINAL DELIVERABLE**

Reporting: 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 statement of work including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues.

Final Deliverable: 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.

## BUDGET

Task	Description	Responsible Party	Total	Sources of Funds		
				CDPHE	RWEACT	RG Basin Account
1	Riparian Habitat	Contractor	\$32,250.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$32,250.00
2	Geomorphology	Contractor	\$23,250.00	\$ -	\$23,250.00	\$ -
3	Aquatic Habitat	TU	\$15,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$15,000.00
4	Recreation	Contractor	\$27,000.00	\$ -	\$27,000.00	\$ -
5	Flow Regimes	TU	\$4,000.00	\$ -	\$4,000.00	\$ -
6	Water Quality	WCRC	\$33,000.00	\$33,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
7	Adjacent Uplands	Contractor	\$15,500.00	\$ -	\$15,500.00	\$ -
8	Infrastructure	Contractor	\$24,000.00	\$ -	\$24,000.00	\$ -
9	Identify Causes of Degradation and Priority Projects	Contractor	\$10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$10,000.00
10	Project Administration	RGHRP	\$16,000.00	\$ -	\$6,250.00	\$9,750
			<b>\$200,000.00</b>	<b>\$33,000.00</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>	<b>\$67,000.00</b>

## SCHEDULE

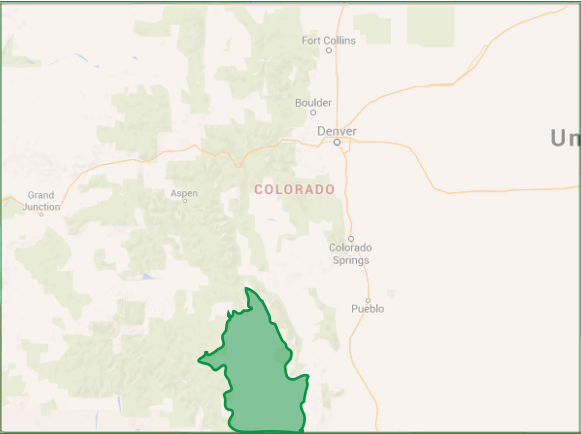
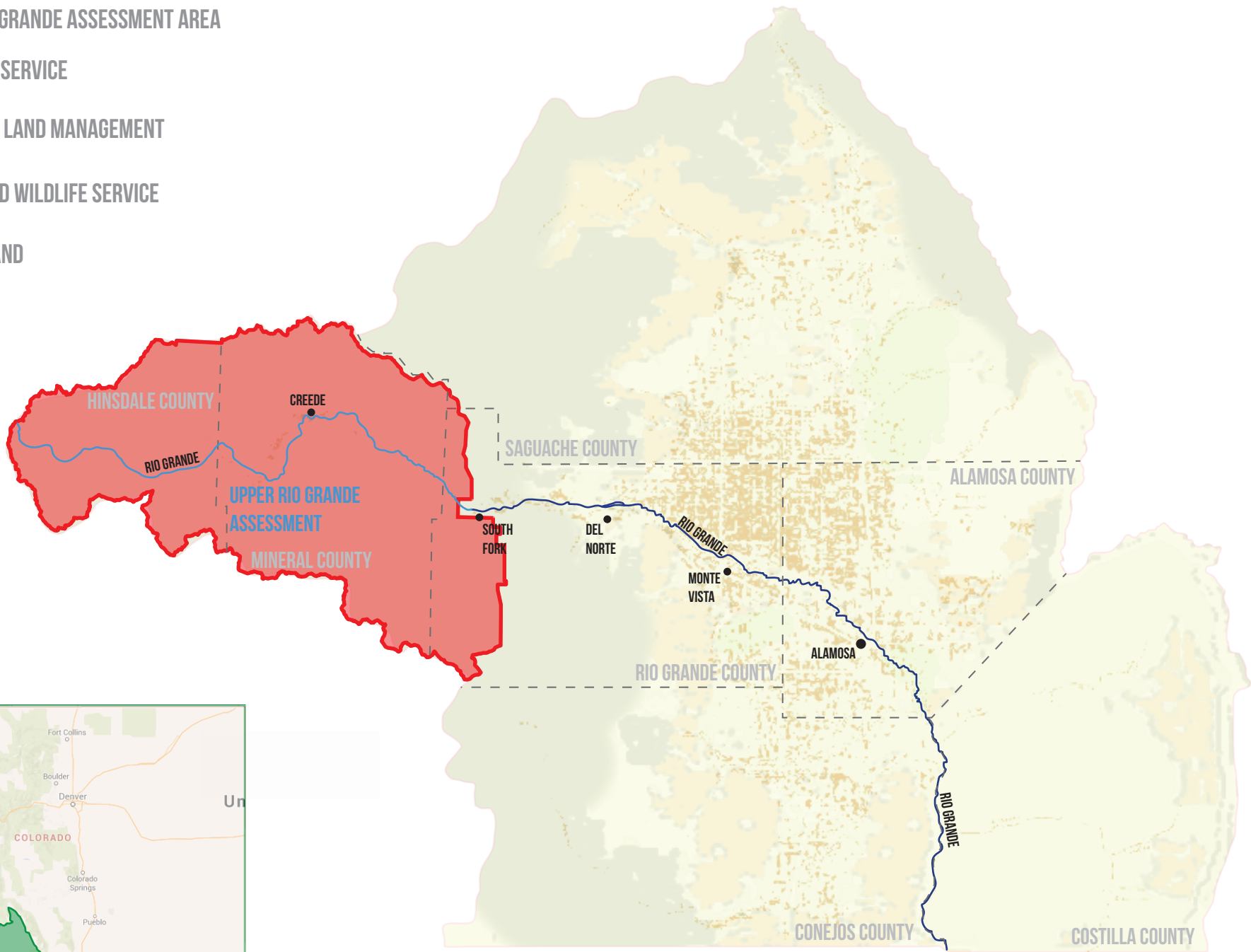
Task	Start Date	Finish Date
1 Riparian Habitat	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
2 Geomorphology	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
3 Aquatic Habitat	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
4 Recreation	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
5 Flow Regimes	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
6 Water Quality	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
7 Adjacent Uplands	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
8 Infrastructure	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
9 Identify Causes of Degradation and Priority Projects	July 1, 2016	July 1, 2017
10 Project Administration	July 1, 2016	November 1, 2018

## PAYMENT

Payment will be made based on actual expenditures and invoicing by the applicant. Invoices from any other entity (i.e. subcontractors) cannot be processed by the State. The request for payment must

include a description of the work accomplished by major task, and estimate of the percent completion for individual tasks and the entire water activity in relation to the percentage of budget spent, identification of any major issues and proposed or implemented corrective actions. The last 5 percent of the entire water activity budget will be withheld until final project/water activity documentation is completed. All products, data and information developed as a result of this grant must be provided to the CWCBC 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 help promote the development of a common technical platform.

- UPPER RIO GRANDE ASSESSMENT AREA
- US FOREST SERVICE
- BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
- US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
- PRIVATE LAND
- WELL



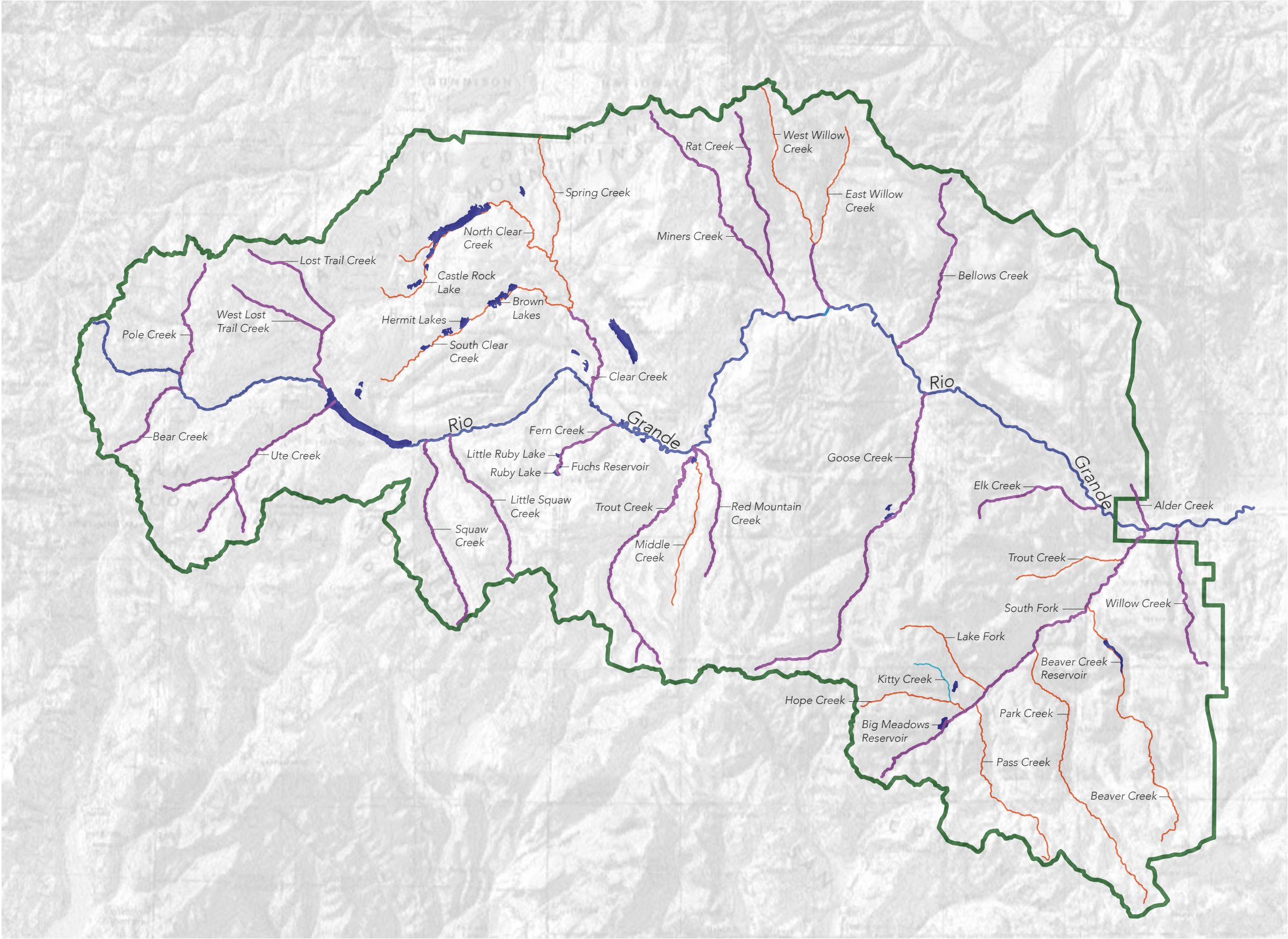
SAN LUIS VALLEY, CO

RIO GRANDE BASIN WATERSHED

Exhibit B. Maps – Figure 1



# UPPER RIO GRANDE ASSESSMENT



KEY

RGNF Boundary Selection

Order 4 Rio Grande Mainstem

Order 3 reach

Order 2 reach

Order 1 reach

