

Water Supply Reserve Account – Grant and Loan Program
Water Activity Summary Sheet
September 21-22, 2016
Agenda Item 19(m)

Applicant & Fiscal Agent: Trout Unlimited

Water Activity Name: San Luis Valley Wetland Wildlife Conservation Assessment

Water Activity Purpose: Needs Assessment

County: All within the San Luis Valley

Water Source: Rio Grande & tributaries

Amount Requested/Source of Funds: \$39,000 Rio Grande Basin Account

Matching Funds: Applicant/3rd Party Match: \$45,000 = 53% of the total project cash amount of \$84,000
(refer to *Funding Summary/Matching Funds* section below)

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of up to \$39,000 from the Rio Grande Basin Account to help fund the project titled: San Luis Valley Wetland Wildlife Conservation Assessment.
--

Water Activity Summary: This project addresses multiple goals including needs assessment and non-consumptive purposes. Task1 (Assessment – see Exhibit A) will provide natural resource agencies with a framework to determine how limited water resources (non-consumptive uses) may be more efficiently and effectively utilized (within adjudication) on public lands by agencies and organizations. A compilation of historic and current information related to wetland extent, water use, and wildlife use does not currently exist and will be a key component for setting future conservation goals among agencies. This information also will help land trusts and other entities with willing landowners seeking conservation easements to more accurately determine priorities and conservation values.

Objectives

- Assess historic versus current wetland/riparian and land use changes since the 1870s.
- Identify priority species and their limiting resources across natural resource agencies.
- Identify surface and groundwater resources for each land management agency.
- Develop conservation goals and objectives along with a framework for future cooperative efforts to manage and monitor water and habitats on public lands across the SLV.
- Develop priority habitat conservation goals and potential water and wetland infrastructure projects.

Discussion: The Assessment and prioritized project will meet the following Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan Goals (RGBIP):

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.
3. Sustain the confined and unconfined aquifers in accordance with Senate Bill 04-222 and operate within the State Engineer's new Rules and Regulations for the SLV.
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.
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.
14. Maintain and enhance water dependent recreational activities.

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:

<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Cash</u>	<u>In-kind</u>	<u>Total</u>
SLV Conservation Connection Initiative	\$42,000	\$0	\$42,000
Bird Conservancy of the Rockies	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
CPW, BLM, USFWS, NRCS, NPS	\$0	\$144,000	\$144,000
Subtotal Matching Funds	\$45,000	\$144,000	\$189,000
WSRA Rio Grande Basin Account	\$39,000	n/a	\$39,000
Total Project Costs	\$84,000	\$144,000	\$228,000

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.