

Water Supply Reserve Fund – Grant and Loan Program
Water Activity Summary Sheet
July 19-20, 2017
Agenda Item 15(f)

Applicant & Grantee: Mountain Studies Institute
Water Activity Name: Animas River Community Forum 2017
Water Activity Purpose: Educational Implementation
County: La Plata
Drainage Basin: Southwest / Animas
Water Source: N/A
Amount Requested: \$28,919 Southwest Basin Account
Matching Funds: Applicant Match (cash & in-kind) = \$52,696

- 182% of Basin Account request (meets 25% min)
- 65% of total project cost of \$81,615

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of up to \$28,919 from the Southwest Basin Account to help fund the project titled: Animas River Community Forum 2017.
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Water Activity Summary: This WSRF grant, if approved, will support the Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) in consolidating lessons learned from the Gold King Mine (GKM) emergency into a longer term structure for outreach, information exchange, and coordinated monitoring based on multi-partner cooperation on the Animas River. The ARCF's initial focus during the first year was to provide a forum for coordinating community response and recovery efforts from the GKM spill. During the last meeting of 2016, the Forum's partners reflected on the value of the Forum and determined the next steps were to complete the Data Gaps Assessment through a report to the community, while continuing to hold bi-monthly meetings to facilitate information exchange and relationship building. The Forum has made a decision to be active for a second year and will assess its utility and future function at the GKM spill's two-year anniversary (Aug. 2017). Specifically, the ARCF will execute four main tasks this year: (1) coordinate information exchange among watershed partners at bi-monthly meetings; (2) develop and distribute an "Animas River Report Card" to promote community awareness of river health and resiliency issues; (3) increase awareness between the efforts and issues being addressed in the headwaters by Silverton and San Juan County and the efforts and concerns downstream in Durango, La Plata County, and the Southern Ute Tribe (increasingly important given the recently designated Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund site); and (4) maintain a coordinator to guide the group and manage actions and goals.

Discussion: As described in the Southwest Basin Roundtable Chair's Recommendation Letter, this project supports a variety of Southwest Basin Implementation Plan goals, strategies, and outcomes including education, outreach, water quality monitoring, and multi-party collaboration. Many partners have collaborated for this effort including: Animas Watershed Partnership, Animas Stakeholders Group, San Juan Basin Health, Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife, Mountain Studies Institute, local and regional elected officials from San Juan and La Plata Counties, Durango,

and Silverton, Trout Unlimited, Colorado Departments of: Mining, Reclamation. ARCF's overall objective is to: promote communication, coordination, and collaborative action; foster public confidence; support resiliency in our communities; and enhance planning, improved public safety, and health for the future of all while honoring the institutional authorities and decision making of governmental and community organizations.

This project assists in satisfying Colorado's Water Plan Critical Goals and Actions as identified in *Chapter 10.3.H: Education, Outreach, and Innovation* to inform Coloradans about water issues to encourage engagement within the largest, most populated, and complex river in the Southwest Basin. The efforts associated with the forum advance the Environmental and Recreational goals of Colorado's Water Plan by maintaining watershed health through the protection and restoration of watersheds that could affect critical infrastructure and/or environmental and recreational areas as well as working to understand, protect, maintain, and improve conditions of streams, wetland, and riparian areas to promote self-sustaining fisheries and functional riparian habitat to promote long-term sustainability and resiliency.

The CWCB previously awarded a grant in the amount of \$37,850 to Mountain Studies Institute for year one (2016) of the Animas River Community Forum.

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

Eligibility Requirements: The application meets requirements of all eligibility components: General Eligibility, Entity Eligibility, Water Activity Eligibility, and Eligibility Based on Match Requirements.

Evaluation Criteria: This activity has undergone review and staff has determined it satisfies the Evaluation Criteria outlined in Colorado's Water Plan, Section 9.4. Please refer to Basin Roundtable Chair's Recommendation Letter and the Application for a detailed response.

Funding Summary / Matching Funds:

<u>Funding Source</u>	<u>Cash</u>	<u>In-Kind</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Status</u>
Southwestern Water Conservation District	\$14,840	\$0	\$14,840	Secured
CO Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000	Secured
Other grants and private contributions	\$7,160	\$0	\$7,160	<i>Pending</i>
Forum Partner Volunteer Time	\$0	\$15,408	\$15,408	Secured
VISTA Volunteer Time	\$0	\$12,048	\$12,048	Secured
Meeting Room Rentals	\$0	\$1,240	\$1,240	Secured
Subtotal Matching Funds	\$24,000	\$28,696	\$52,696	
WSRF Southwest Basin Account	\$28,919	\$0	\$28,919	
Total Project Costs	\$52,919	\$28,696	\$81,615	

CWCB Project Manager: Megan Holcomb