



Last Update: July 31, 2018

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Supply Reserve Fund Grant Application

Instructions

All WSRF grant applications shall conform to the current [2016 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines](#).

To receive funding from the WSRF, a proposed water activity must be recommended for approval by a Roundtable(s) **AND** the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). The process for Roundtable consideration and recommendation is outlined in the 2016 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines. The CWCB meets bimonthly according to the schedule on page 2 of this application.

If you have questions, please contact the WSRF Grant Program Manager (for all Roundtables):

Craig Godbout
craig.godbout@state.co.us
303-866-3441 x3210 (office)
303-547-8061 (cell)

WSRF Submittal Checklist (Required)

✓	I acknowledge this request was recommended for CWCB approval by the sponsoring roundtable.
✓	I acknowledge I have read and understand the 2016 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines .
✓	I acknowledge the Grantee will be able to contract with CWCB using the Standard Contract . ⁽¹⁾
Application Documents	
✓	Exhibit A: Statement of Work ⁽²⁾ (<i>Word – see Template</i>)
✓	Exhibit B: Budget & Schedule ⁽²⁾ (<i>Excel Spreadsheet – see Template</i>)
✓	Letters of Matching and/or Pending 3 rd Party Commitments ⁽²⁾
✓	Map ⁽²⁾
✓	Photos/Drawings/Reports
✓	Letters of Support
Contracting Documents ⁽³⁾	
	Detailed/Itemized Budget ⁽³⁾ (<i>Excel Spreadsheet – see Template</i>)
✓	Certificate of Insurance ⁽⁴⁾ (<i>General, Auto, & Workers' Comp.</i>)
✓	Certificate of Good Standing ⁽⁴⁾
✓	W-9 Form ⁽⁴⁾
	Independent Contractor Form ⁽⁴⁾ (<i>If applicant is individual, not company/organization</i>)
	Electronic Funds Transfer (ETF) Form ⁽⁴⁾

(1) Click "Grant Agreements". For reference only/do not fill out or submit/required for contracting

(2) Required with application if applicable.

(3) Additional documentation providing a Detailed/Itemized Budget maybe required for contracting. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with the CWCB Project Manager to determine specifics.

(4) Required for contracting. While optional at the time of this application, submission can expedite contracting upon CWCB Board approval.

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Schedule		
CWCB Meeting	Application Submittal Dates	Type of Request
January	December 1	Basin Account; BIP
March	February 1	Basin/Statewide Account; BIP
May	April 1	Basin Account; BIP
July	June 1	Basin Account; BIP
September	August 1	Basin/Statewide Account; BIP
November	October 1	Basin Account/BIP

Desired Timeline	
Desired CWCB Hearing Month:	September 2020
Desired Notice to Proceed Date:	December 1, 2020

Water Activity Summary		
Name of Applicant	Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation	
Name of Water Activity	Conejos River Partnership Project - Phase 1	
Approving Roundtable(s)	Basin Account Request(s) ⁽¹⁾	
Rio Grande Interbasin Roundtable	\$25,000	
Basin Account Request Subtotal	\$25,000	
Statewide Account Request ⁽¹⁾	\$225,000	
Total WSRF Funds Requested (Basin & Statewide)	\$250,000	
Total Project Costs	\$627,000	

(1) Please indicate the amount recommended for approval by the Roundtable(s)



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Grantee and Applicant Information	
Name of Grantee(s)	Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation
Mailing Address	623 Fourth St, Alamosa, CO 81101
FEIN	75-3169057
Grantee's Organization Contact ⁽¹⁾	Emma Reesor
Position/Title	Executive Director
Email	emma@riograndeheadwaters.org
Phone	(719) 589-2230
Grant Management Contact ⁽²⁾	<i>Same as organization contract</i>
Position/Title	
Email	
Phone	
Name of Applicant (if different than grantee)	<i>Same as grantee</i>
Mailing Address	
Position/Title	
Email	
Phone	

(1) Person with signatory authority

(2) Person responsible for creating reimbursement invoices (Invoice for Services) and corresponding with CWCB staff.

Description of Grantee
Provide a brief description of the grantee's organization (100 words or less).
<p>The Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation, a non-profit organization, is the fiscal agent for the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project (RGHRP). The mission of the RGHRP is "to restore and conserve the historical functions and vitality of the Rio Grande in Colorado for improved water quality, agricultural water use, riparian habitat, wildlife and aquatic species habitat, recreation, and community safety, while meeting the Rio Grande Compact." The RGHRP was formed to implement the recommendations of the 2001 Study. Since formed, the RGHRP has improved the condition of the Rio Grande by partnering with landowners, diverse stakeholders, and multiple ditch companies.</p>



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Type of Eligible Entity (check one)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public (Government): municipalities, enterprises, counties, and State of Colorado agencies. Federal agencies are encouraged to work with local entities. Federal agencies are eligible, but only if they can make a compelling case for why a local partner cannot be the grant recipient.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public (Districts): authorities, Title 32/special districts (conservancy, conservation, and irrigation districts), and water activity enterprises
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private Incorporated: mutual ditch companies, homeowners associations, corporations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private Individuals, Partnerships, and Sole Proprietors: are eligible for funding from the Basin Accounts but not for funding from the Statewide Account.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Non-governmental organizations: broadly, any organization that is not part of the government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Covered Entity: as defined in Section 37-60-126 Colorado Revised Statutes

Type of Water Activity (check one)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Study
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Implementation

Category of Water Activity (check all that apply)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nonconsumptive (Environmental)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nonconsumptive (Recreational)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agricultural	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Municipal/Industrial	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Needs Assessment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education & Outreach	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other	Explain: This project also benefits water rights administration, specifically administration of the Rio Grande Compact.

Location of Water Activity	
Please provide the general county and coordinates of the proposed activity below in decimal degrees . The Applicant shall also provide, in Exhibit C, a site map if applicable.	
County/Countries	Conejos
Latitude	37.102062
Longitude	-106.002297

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Water Activity Overview
<p>Please provide a summary of the proposed water activity (200 words or less). Include a description of the activity and what the WSRF funding will be used for specifically (e.g. studies, permitting, construction). Provide a description of the water supply source to be utilized or the water body affected by the activity. Include details such as acres under irrigation, types of crops irrigated, number of residential and commercial taps, length of ditch improvements, length of pipe installed, area of habitat improvements. If this project addresses multiple purposes or spans multiple basins, please explain. The Applicant shall also provide, in Exhibit A, a detailed Statement of Work, Budget, and Schedule.</p>
<p>The North Eastern, New JB Romero, Sabine School Section, Fuerticitos, and Elledges ditches divert water from the Conejos River to supply water to 1,129 acres of agricultural land. Each ditch is facing issues of aging and inefficient diversion infrastructure and the river is impacted by channel instability. The proposed WSRF request will address these identified issues by funding the rehabilitation of each diversion structure and surrounding river channel, providing multiple benefits to the Conejos River and its water users.</p> <p>The project will include in the following activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Replacement of the diversions and headgates servicing the Sabine School Section, Fuerticitos, and Elledges ditches; 2) Consolidation and replacement of the North Eastern Ditch and New JB Romero Ditch diversions and headgates; 3) Enhancement of aquatic habitat adjacent to the five structures through fish barrier removal; 4) Streambank stabilization and riparian restoration surrounding each diversion structure. <p>The project will directly benefit shareholders of the five ditches by improving diversion efficiency and reducing maintenance by replacing aging diversion dams and headgates. The project will also enhance water quality by reducing sediment input, improve riparian condition, and improve aquatic habitat by ensuring diversions are passable by fish. When complete, the project will help ensure the Conejos River continues to support diverse human, agricultural, and ecological communities.</p>

Measurable Results		
To catalog measurable results achieved with WSRF funds please provide any of the following values.		
	New Storage Created (acre-feet)	
	New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive	
	Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)	
2112	Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)	
	Efficiency Savings (indicate acre-feet/year OR dollars/year)	
23.9	Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)	
	Length of Pipe/Canal Built or Improved (linear feet)	
5	Other	Explain: Replacement of diversion dam and headgates for five ditches: New JB Romero Ditch, North Eastern Ditch, Sabine School Section Ditch, Fuerticitos Ditch, and Elledges Ditch.



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Water Activity Justification

Provide a description of how this water activity supports the goals of [Colorado's Water Plan](#), the most recent [Statewide Water Supply Initiative](#), and the respective [Roundtable Basin Implementation Plan and Education Action Plan](#) ⁽¹⁾. The Applicant is required to reference specific needs, goals, themes, or Identified Projects and Processes (IPPs), including citations (e.g. document, chapters, sections, or page numbers).

For applications that include a request for funds from the Statewide Account, the proposed water activity shall be evaluated based upon how well the proposal conforms to Colorado's Water Plan criteria for state support (CWP, Section 9.4, pp. 9-43 to 9-44;) (Also listed pp. 4-5 in [2016 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines](#)).

The Conejos River Partnership Project – Phase 1 (Phase 1) will improve the ability of the Conejos River to meet consumptive and non-consumptive needs by replacing poorly functioning diversion and headgates for five ditches, stabilizing streambanks, improving riparian and aquatic habitat, and improving the ability of water administrators to effectively administer water rights. As such, the project will address agricultural, environmental, recreational, and water administration needs facing the Rio Grande Basin and State of Colorado.

Phase 1 will meet the following Basin Implementation Plan Goals (Rio Grande BIP, Chapter 3):

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.
5. Manage water use to sustain optimal agricultural economy throughout the Basin's communities.
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 existing water rights and compact obligations.

In addition to meeting many of the Rio Grande Basin Goals, Phase 1 also meets the Colorado Water Plan (CWP) Goals and Criteria in the following ways:

- By replacing multiple aging diversions and headgates on the Conejos River, Phase 1 supports agricultural goals to "maintain agriucultural viability" and "support agricultural conservation and efficiency" (CWP, Section 10.3, pp. 10-10) . Further, these activities directly address the CWP's critical agricultural action to "update and improve Colorado's aging agricultural infrastructure, especially where improvements provide multiple benefits"



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Water Activity Justification

- Through restoration of riparian areas and fish habitat improvements, the project supports the goal to “Protect Healthy Environments: Understand, protect, maintain, and improve conditions of streams, lakes, wetlands, and riparian areas to promote self-sustaining fisheries and functional riparian and wetland habitat to promote long-term resiliency” (CWP, Section 10.3, pp. 10-12).

Phase 1 will help meet the agricultural gap and environmental needs identified in the recent Technical Update to the 2015 Water Plan (Technical Update, formerly SWSI). The Technical Update quantified agricultural water needs and supply gaps. The Technical Update also resulted in the Environmental Flow Tool, which assesses potential future risks associated with predicted changes in streamflow. Phase 1 will mitigate the agricultural water gap by improving diversion efficiency and mitigate potential stressors due to streamflows by improving fish passage and low-flow channel conditions.

Phase 1 was identified as a priority project through the Conejo River Stream Management Plan (SMP) and is a result of planning and collaboration between the Conejos Water Conservancy District (CWCD), multiple ditches, RGHRP, the Colorado Division of Water Resources (CDWR), Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), and area landowners, farmers and ranchers. Participation from diverse stakeholders ensures that both consumptive and non-consumptive needs are being met through the design and implementation of each project component. In addition, project partners have raised a significant amount of funding through the Colorado RESTORE grant program and partner contributions totaling 60% of the project cost. Without the requested WSRF funds, project partners would likely not be able to raise sufficient dollars out of pocket or from other grant sources in time to retain the grants currently secured. As such, WSRA funds are critical to complete Phase 1.

By replacing multiple aging diversion dams and headgates on the Conejos River, Phase 1 allows for agriculture demands to be met by increasing the ability of irrigators to divert their appropriated water rights when they are in priority. These actions will protect water users and landowners along the Conejos River from loss by replacing aging diversion and headgate infrastructure, repairing the river channel, and restoring habitat within the riparian corridor, thereby preserving the values inherent in the San Luis Valley’s rural and agricultural communities.

Through streambank stabilization, riparian and aquatic habitat restoration, and improvements to diversion structures to allow for fish passage, Phase 1 will result in multiple environmental benefits including improved streambank stability, water quality, riparian and aquatic habitat. Currently, the Sabine School Section Ditch, Fuerticitos Ditch and Elledges Ditch act as partial or complete fish barriers. Through this project, each diversion will be replaced with structures that allow for fish passage according to CPW’s recommendations. Aquatic and riparian habitat will be further enhanced through streambank stabilization, channel shaping, floodplain reconnection, and riparian revegetation. Additionally, the Project is located in the management area for the San Luis Valley Regional Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and the Yellow-billed Cuckoo. In accordance with the HCP, the riparian restoration activities will improve streambank habitat for these threatened species and help with recovery efforts.

Finally, as the Rio Grande Basin faces water shortages and prolonged periods of drought, the need for accurate water management becomes increasingly crucial. Phase 1 will assist in administration of the Conejos River by improving diversion efficiency and measurement capabilities for five ditches. Increased diversion efficiency and more accurate measurements will enable DWR to administer water rights more efficiently and effectively, thereby assist the Division Engineer in water management and meeting the Rio Grande Compact. Additionally, improved infrastructure will complement efforts to maintain hydrologic connectivity on the South Branch Conejos River. Increased efficiencies within the Conejos River system will allow water managers to maximize flows in the South Branch, providing benefits for wildlife and water rights holders.

(1) Access Basin Implementation Plans or Education Action Plans from Basin drop down menu.

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Matching Requirements: Basin Account Requests	
Basin (only) Account grant requests require a 25% match (cash and/or in-kind) from the Applicant or 3 rd party and shall be accompanied by a letter of commitment as described in the 2016 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines (submitted on the contributing entity's letterhead). Attach additional sheet if necessary.	
Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match (note cash or in-kind)
Total Match	
If you requested a Waiver to the Basin Account matching requirements, indicate the percentage you wish waived.	

Matching Requirements: Statewide Account Requests	
Statewide Account grant requests require a 50% match as described in the 2016 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines. A minimum of 10% match shall be from Basin Account funds (cash only). A minimum of 10% match shall be provided by the applicant or 3 rd party (cash, in-kind, or combination). The remaining 30% of the required match may be provided from any other source (Basin, applicant, or 3 rd party) and shall be accompanied by a letter of commitment . Attach additional sheet if necessary.	
Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match (note cash or in-kind):
RESTORE Colorado Grant	\$350,000 (cash)
Landowner contributions	\$12,000 (cash)
Shareholder contributions	\$5,000 (in-kind)
Conejos Water Conservancy District	\$10,000 (cash)
Rio Grande Basin Account Request	\$25,000 (cash)
Total Match	\$402,000
If you requested a Waiver to the Statewide Account matching, indicate % you wish waived. (Max 50% reduction of requirement).	

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Related Studies
<p>Please provide a list of any related studies, including if the water activity is complimentary to or assists in the implementation of other CWCB programs.</p> <p>The Conejos River Partnership Project – Phase 1 was identified and prioritized in the Conejos River Stream Management Plan (SMP). As part of the Conejos River SMP, a diversion infrastructure assessment was completed to assess conditions and provide improvement recommendations for each Conejos River surface water diversion. The five ditches included in the CRPP were all listed as top priorities for improvement in the SMP. This multi-benefit project meets a number of the goals listed in the Conejos River SMP including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal A. Improve function and reduce maintenance of irrigation infrastructure, both for water users and river health. • Goal B. Maintain or improve bank and channel stability, especially near important wildlife habitat and critical infrastructure such as homes, diversion structures, roads, and bridges. • Goal C. Maintain and improve the function of floodplains, associated alluvial aquifers, and natural channel processes. • Goal D. Maintain and improve the extent and condition of riparian areas. • Goal F. Maintain or improve water quality, with a focus on mine reclamation projects and compliance with state water quality standards. • Goal G. Maintain or improve long term sustainability of Conejos River fisheries and associated aquatic habitat. <p>The Conejos River SMP itself directly supports the CWP.</p>

Previous CWCB Grants				
List all previous or current CWCB grants (including WSRF) awarded to both the Applicant and Grantee. Include: 1) Applicant name; 2) Water activity name; 3) Approving RT(s); 4) CWCB board meeting date; 5) Contract number or purchase order				
Applicant Name	Water Activity Name	Approving RT	CWCB Board meeting date	Contract number
CRGRF	Rio Grande Riparian Stabilization Project – Phase 5	n/a	Jan-20	CTGG1 PDAA 2021-0020
CRGRF	Rio Grande, Conejos, and Saguache Stream Management Plans (WSRF Grant)	Rio Grande	Jun-19	POGG1 PDAA 202000002065
CRGRF	Park Creek Watershed Improvement Project	n/a	May-19	POGG1 PDAA 202000002111
CRGRF	Del Norte Riverfront Project	n/a	Nov-18	POGG1 PDAA 201900002852
CRGRF	Del Norte Riverfront Project – Phase 1	n/a	CWCB Severance Fund Grant	POGG1 PDAA 201800000980



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CRGRF	Rio Grande, Conejos River and Saguache Creek SMP (CWRP Grant)	n/a	Jan-18	POGG1 PDAA 201800000791
CRGRF	Five Ditches Project	Rio Grande	Sep-17	CTGG1 2018-971
CRGRF	Rio Grande State Wildlife Area Design Project	Rio Grande	May-17	POGG1 2017-0001
CRGRF	Upper Rio Grande Assessment	Rio Grande	May-16	POGG1 2017-268
CRGRF	Plaza Project: Phase 3 – Prairie Ditch	Rio Grande	Feb-14	CTGG12015-295
CRGRF	Plaza Project: Phase 2 – McDonald Ditch	Rio Grande	Sep-13	C150492
CRGRF	Plaza Project: Phase 1 – Plaza Plan	Rio Grande		
CRGRF	2009 Rio Grande Riparian Stabilization Project – Phase 4	Rio Grande		C150486
CRGRF	2008 Rio Grande Riparian Stabilization Project – Phase 3	Rio Grande		
CRGRF	Lower Rio Grande Assessment	CO Healthy Rivers Fund		POGG1 PDAA 20150000000000000260
CRGRF	Rio Grande Project – Cooperative with Southwest Conservation Corps	CO Healthy Rivers Fund		

Tax Payer Bill of Rights

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.

**Water Supply Reserve Fund
Water Activity Summary Sheet
September 16-17, 2020
Agenda Item 19(j)**

Applicant & Grantee: Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation

Water Activity Name: Conejos River Partnership Project – Phase 1

Water Activity Purpose: Environmental & Agricultural-Implementation

County: Conejos

Drainage Basin: Rio Grande

Water Source: Conejos River

Amount Requested: \$25,000 Rio Grande Basin Account
\$225,000 Statewide Account
 \$250,000 Total Request

Matching Funds: Basin Account Match = \$25,000

- 11% of statewide request (meets 10% min)

Applicant & 3rd Party Match (cash & in-kind) = \$377,000

- 150% of the statewide request (meets 10% min)

Total Match (Basin request & Applicant Match) = \$402,000

- 179% of the statewide request (meets 50% min)

Staff Recommendation:
<p>Staff recommends approval of up to \$25,000 from the Rio Grande Basin Account, and up to \$225,000 from the Statewide Account to help fund the project: Conejos River Partnership Project – Phase 1.</p>

Water Activity Summary: WSRF Funds, if approved will assist the Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation rehabilitate existing diversions and headgates servicing the Sabine School Section, Fuerticitos, and Elledges Ditches. Each ditch is facing issues of aging and inefficient diversion infrastructure and the river is impacted by channel instability. The proposed WSRF request will address these identified issues by funding the rehabilitation of each diversion structure and surrounding river channel, providing multiple benefits to the Conejos River and its water users. The project will include the following activities: Replacement of the diversions and headgates servicing the Sabine School Section, Fuerticitos, and Elledges ditches; Consolidation and replacement of the North Eastern Ditch and New JB Romero Ditch diversions and headgates; Enhancement of aquatic habitat adjacent to the five structures through fish barrier removal; Streambank stabilization and riparian restoration surrounding each diversion structure. The project will directly benefit shareholders of the five ditches by improving diversion efficiency and reducing maintenance by replacing aging diversion dams and headgates. The project will also enhance water quality by reducing sediment input, improve riparian condition, and improve aquatic habitat by ensuring diversions are passable by fish. When complete, the project will help ensure the Conejos River continues to support diverse human, agricultural, and ecological communities.

Discussion: This effort will assist the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable their goals as called for in Chapter 3 of the Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan, while also assisting Colorado achieve its goals of maintaining agricultural viability as called for in Colorado's Water Plan.

Issues/Additional Needs: None.

Eligibility Requirements: The application meets requirements of all eligibility components.

Evaluation Criteria: Staff has determined this activity satisfies the Evaluation Criteria.

Funding Sources/Match	Cash	In-kind	Total	Status
Restore Colorado Grant	\$350,000	\$0	\$350,000	Secured
Conejos Water Conservancy District	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	Secured
Landowners	\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000	Secured
Shareholders	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	Secured
Sub-total	\$372,000	\$5,000	\$377,000	
WSRF Rio Grande Basin Account	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000	Secured
Sub-total	\$397,000	\$5,000	\$402,000	
WSRF Statewide Account	\$225,000	\$0	\$225,000	
Total Project Costs	\$622,000	\$5,000	\$627,000	

CWCB Project Manager: Chris Sturm



July 21, 2020

Becky Mitchell and CWCB Board of Directors
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman St., Rm. 721
Denver, CO 80203

Re: WSRF Application for the Conejos River Partnership Project – Phase 1

Dear Ms. Mitchell,

On behalf of the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable (Roundtable), please accept this letter of support for the Conejos River Partnership Project - Phase 1 (CRPP) sponsored by the Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation (CRGRF). The Water Supply Reserve Fund Application for the CRPP was evaluated by the Roundtable and was unanimously approved by voting members at the July 14, 2020 Roundtable meeting. The CRPP's WSRF application totals \$250,000 with \$25,000 requested from the basin account and \$225,000 requested from the state account. The Roundtable recommends fully funding the CRPP's WSRF request.

The Roundtable recognizes that the CRPP addresses agricultural, environmental, and water administration needs facing the Rio Grande Basin. The project will result in the replacement of aging diversions and headgates for five ditches on the Conejos River. The project will benefit shareholders on the North Eastern, New JB Romero, Sabine School Section, Fuerticitos, and Elledges ditches by improving diversion efficiency and reducing maintenance. Additionally, these improvements will include improvements to aquatic habitat and connectivity, streambank stabilization, and riparian restoration, which will improve river health, water quality, and wildlife habitat. These project methods and activities 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.
5. Manage water use to sustain optimal agricultural economy throughout the Basin's communities.
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 existing water rights and compact obligations.

In addition to meeting many of the BIP goals, the CRPP aligns with the Colorado Water Plan's Goals and Criteria by meeting community and agricultural water needs, while balance the needs of the environment, and recreation.

Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,



Nathan Coombs
Chair, Rio Grande Basin Roundtable



July 21, 2020

Becky Mitchell and CWCB Board of Directors
Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman St., Rm. 721
Denver, CO 80203

Re: WSRF Application for the Conejos River Partnership Project – Phase 1

Dear Ms. Mitchell,

On behalf of the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable (Roundtable), please accept this letter of support for the Conejos River Partnership Project - Phase 1 (CRPP) sponsored by the Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation (CRGRF). The Water Supply Reserve Fund Application for the CRPP was evaluated by the Roundtable and was unanimously approved by voting members at the July 14, 2020 Roundtable meeting.

The Roundtable recognizes that the CRPP addresses agricultural, environmental, and water administration needs facing the Rio Grande Basin. The project will result in the replacement of aging diversions and headgates for five ditches on the Conejos River. The project will benefit shareholders on the North Eastern, New JB Romero, Sabine School Section, Fuerticitos, and Elledges ditches by improving diversion efficiency and reducing maintenance. Additionally, these improvements will include improvements to aquatic habitat and connectivity, streambank stabilization, and riparian restoration, which will improve river health, water quality, and wildlife habitat. These project methods and activities meet the following Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan Goals:

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optimize multiple benefits.

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In addition to meeting many of the BIP goals, the CRPP aligns with the Colorado Water Plan's Goals and Criteria by meeting community and agricultural water needs, while balance the needs of the environment, and recreation.

Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nathan Coombs".

Nathan Coombs
Chair, Rio Grande Basin Roundtable



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Monte Vista Field Office
0722 South County Road 1E
Monte Vista, CO 81144
P 719.587.6908 | F 719.587.6934

June 30, 2020

Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman St., Room 721
Denver, CO 80203

Dear CWCB Board of Directors,

I am writing on behalf of Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) to express my support for the *Conejos River Partnership Project*. This project was identified and prioritized in the Conejos River Stream Management Plan (SMP) and is a partnership between the Conejos Water Conservancy District (CWCD), the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project, CPW, Division of Water Resources (DWR), private landowners, ditch companies, and others local stakeholders. I support this project, which is focused on river corridor restoration including fish passage improvements resulting from irrigation diversion structure improvements, restoration of stream geomorphology to improve aquatic habitat, floodplain function, and overall stream health.

This project is aligned with CPW's efforts in the San Luis Valley, particularly with regard to aquatic habitat restoration. The project will replace five irrigation diversion structures on the Conejos River between Mogote and the Rio San Antonio confluence, some of which act as fish barriers. This will result in improved efficiency and function of the diversion structures as well as enhanced fish passage and aquatic habitat surrounding the diversions. By improving diversion efficiency, this project also furthers the goal of maintaining hydrologic connectivity on the Conejos River - a goal which is shared by many water users including DWR and the CWCD. Additionally, the project will help restore native riparian vegetation, stabilize streambanks, and improve river-floodplain connection.

This project addresses multiple aquatic and riparian restoration needs and will benefit multiple water users. It will result in improved and well-connected aquatic and riparian habitat. The restoration activities will benefit Conejos River fisheries, farmers who utilize surface water for irrigation, DWR's water rights administration, and the overall health and function of the Conejos River. This and other restoration efforts work toward the larger goal of improving river health and function for multiple Conejos River water users.

I hope you will support this project.

Sincerely,

Estevan Vigil,
CPW Aquatic Biologist





COLORADO
Division of Water Resources
Department of Natural Resources
Water Division 3 - Main Office

June 30, 2020

Colorado Water Conservation Board
1313 Sherman St.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Conejos River Partnership Project

Dear CWCB Board,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of Division 3 of the Colorado Division of Water Resources (DWR) for the Conejos River Partnership Project. This project was born out of the Conejos River Stream Management Plan (SMP) and is a partnership between the Conejos Water Conservancy District, the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project, DWR, private landowners, ditch companies, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and other local stakeholders. The project aims to complete a series of irrigation infrastructure improvements and river restoration efforts on the Conejos River between Mogote and its confluence with the Rio Grande.

As the Division Engineer for Division 3, it is my responsibility to ensure that water in the Rio Grande Basin is administered accurately and in accordance with applicable decrees and the Rio Grande Compact. Improvements to structures identified in this project will aid in the administration of Conejos River water rights and the ability to meet Colorado's obligation under the Rio Grande Compact. The need for accurate water deliveries in the Rio Grande Basin is becoming increasingly crucial in the face of higher demand for water and periods of prolonged drought. The Conejos River Partnership Project will improve water administration through the rehabilitation of multiple degraded headgates and diversion structures. These improvements will allow for improved and more efficient water administration on the Conejos River.

I believe that the Conejos River Partnership Project is a great opportunity to upgrade aging infrastructure in order to meet multiple water needs. These efforts will ultimately provide benefits to water administration, irrigation, and Conejos River health and function. I hope you will consider this funding request and the benefits it will have to the Conejos River and Rio Grande Basin.

Sincerely,

Craig W. Cotten
Division Engineer, Division 3

