

**Water Supply Reserve Fund  
Water Activity Summary Sheet  
March 10-11, 2021  
Consent Agenda Item 2(e)**

**Applicant & Grantee:** City of Thornton

**Water Activity Name:** Thornton Northern Properties Stewardship Plan (NPSP):  
Land Use and Water Optimization Study

**Water Activity Purpose:** Agricultural, Needs Assessment, and Nonconsumptive  
(Environmental) - Study

**County:** Larimer & Weld Counties

**Drainage Basin:** South Platte

**Water Source:** South Platte River

**Amount Requested:** \$25,000 Metro Basin Account  
\$25,000 South Platte Basin Account  
\$50,000 Statewide Account  
\$100,000 Total Request

**Matching Funds:** **Basin Account Match = \$50,000**

- 100% of statewide request (meets 10% min)

**Applicant & 3rd Party Match = \$200,000 (cash)**

- 400% of the statewide request (meets 10% min)

**Total Match (Basin request & Applicant Match) = \$350,000**

- 700% of the statewide request (meets 50% min)

<b>Staff Recommendation:</b>
Staff recommends approval of up to \$25,000 from the Metro Basin Account, up to \$25,000 from the South Platte Basin Account and up to \$50,000 from the Statewide Account to help fund the project: Thornton Northern Properties Stewardship Plan (NPSP): Land Use and Water Optimization Study

**Water Activity Summary:** In 1985 and 1986, the City of Thornton purchased farmland in Larimer and Weld Counties and the water rights associated with the farms. The water rights will provide Thornton's long-range supply of municipal water. As of 2018, Thornton owns 18,751 acres in Larimer and Weld Counties. In Weld County Thornton owns one hundred four (104) farms on 17,161 acres and in Larimer County Thornton owns eight (8) farms on 1,590 acres. While the City of Thornton has been working to meet requirements imposed by the Water Court decree, the city is raising funds to support a voluntary, community-driven effort that is not required by the decree or county permitting processes.

If approved, the applicant would use WRSF funds to establish a collaborative, community-driven effort to: (a) advance a land-use planning process that bridges social, economic,

environmental, water, and land use silos; and (b) explore ways the continued irrigation provision in Thornton's decree can help agriculture continue to thrive.

Grant funds would be used to develop two products: A Regional Land Use Assessment and a Water Optimization Study.

**Discussion:** The project aligns with the Metro Roundtable's Implementation of Identified Projects and Processes (IPP). Thornton's Northern Project is an IPP, and the study proposed will allow Thornton to elevate what could be a typical buy and dry / pipeline IPP into a project that aligns with the Metro Roundtable's vision. The project will also help advance the following Measurable Outcomes in the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan: Agricultural MO#1: Support strategies that reduce traditional permanent dry-up of irrigated acreage; Agricultural MO#4: Develop local tools and political/community support for tools to sustain irrigated farmland; IPP Implementation MO#1: Maximize implementation of the updated IPP list.

The proposed project is also consistent with Colorado's Water Plan grant criteria the Statewide Long-term Goal of Meet Colorado's Agricultural Needs by "*1) Ensuring that irrigated agriculture remains a viable statewide economic driver and supports food security, jobs and rural communities and protects private property rights*".

**Issues/Additional Needs:** The applicant will need to secure matching funds prior to contracting. No other issues or additional needs have been identified.

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

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

<b>Funding Sources/Match</b>	<b>Cash</b>	<b>In-Kind</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Status</b>
City of Thornton	\$75,000	\$0	\$75,000	Secured
CWCB Water Plan Grant	\$100,000	\$0	\$100,000	Pending
Dept. of Local Affairs	\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000	Pending
<b>Sub Total Matching Funds</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	
WSRF Metro Basin Account	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000	Secured
WSRF South Platte Basin Account	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000	Secured
WSRF Statewide Account	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000	
<b>Sub-Total WSRF Funds</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	
<b>Total Project Costs</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>	

**CWCB Project Manager:** Alex Funk



Last Update: September 18, 2020

<b>Colorado Water Conservation Board</b>
<b>Water Supply Reserve Fund Grant Application</b>

Instructions
<p>All WSRF grant applications shall conform to the current <a href="#">2020 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines</a>.</p> <p>To receive funding from the WSRF, a proposed water activity must be recommended for approval by a Roundtable(s) <b>AND</b> the approved by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). The process for roundtable consideration and recommendation is outlined in the 2020 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines. The CWCB meets bimonthly.</p> <p>If you have questions, please contact the WSRF Grant Program Manager (for all Roundtables) or your Roundtable Liaison:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Ben Wade  <a href="mailto:ben.wade@state.co.us">ben.wade@state.co.us</a>            303-866-3441 x3238 (office)</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Sam Stein  <a href="mailto:Sam.stein@state.co.us">Sam.stein@state.co.us</a>            303-866-3441 (office)</p> </div> </div>

WSRF Submittal Checklist (Required)
<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> This request was recommended for CWCB approval by the sponsoring roundtable.</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> I have read and understand the <a href="#">2020 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines</a>.</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Grantee will be able to contract with CWCB using the <a href="#">Standard Contract</a>.<sup>1</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"><b>Application Documents included:</b></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit A: Statement of Work<sup>2</sup> (<i>Word – see Template</i>)</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit B: Budget &amp; Schedule<sup>2</sup> (<i>Excel Spreadsheet – see Template</i>)</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Letters of Matching and/or Pending 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Commitments<sup>2</sup></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Map<sup>2</sup></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Photos/Drawings/Reports</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Letters of Support</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"><b>Contracting Documents<sup>3</sup></b></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Detailed/Itemized Budget<sup>3</sup> (<i>Excel Spreadsheet – see Template</i>)</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Insurance<sup>4</sup> (<i>General, Auto, &amp; Workers' Comp.</i>)</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Good Standing<sup>(4)</sup></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> W-9 Form<sup>4</sup></p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Contractor Form<sup>4</sup> (<i>If applicant is individual, not company/organization</i>)</p> <p>YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Funds Transfer (ETF) Form<sup>4</sup></p>

<sup>1</sup>Click "Grant Agreements". For reference only/do not fill out or submit/required for contracting

<sup>2</sup> Required with application if applicable.

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

<sup>4</sup> 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	October 1	Basin Account
March	December 1	Basin/Statewide Account/Water Plan Grant Match <sup>1</sup>
May	February 1	Basin Account
July	April 1	Basin Account
September	June 1	Basin/Statewide Account
November	August 1	Basin Account

<sup>1</sup> If either the basin or statewide match includes matching funds from a pending Water Plant Grant, both must be submitted by December 1st deadline for March Board meeting review.

Water Activity Summary		
Name of Applicant	City of Thornton	
Name of Water Activity	Thornton Northern Properties Stewardship Plan (NPSP): Land Use and Water Optimization Study	
Approving Roundtable(s)		Basin Account Request(s) <sup>1</sup>
South Platte Basin		\$25,000
Metro Basin		\$25,000
Basin Account Request Subtotal		\$50,000
Basin Account Request Subtotal Approved by Roundtable		\$50,000
Statewide Account Request <sup>(1)</sup>		\$50,000
Total WSRF Funds Requested (Basin & Statewide)		\$100,000
Total Project Costs		\$400,000

<sup>1</sup> Please indicate the amount recommended for approval by the Roundtable(s)

Grantee and Applicant Information	
Name of Grantee(s)	City of Thornton
Mailing Address	9500 Civic Center Drive, Thornton, CO 80229



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Grantee and Applicant Information	
FEIN	846009903
<b>Grantee's Organization Contact<sup>1</sup></b>	Emily Hunt
Position/Title	Deputy Infrastructure Director
Email	Emily.Hunt@thorntonco.gov
Phone	(720)977-6504
<b>Grant Management Contact<sup>2</sup></b>	Pia Gerstle
Position/Title	Water Resources Analyst II
Email	Pia.Gerstle@thorntonco.gov
Phone	(720)977-6506
<b>Name of Applicant (if different than grantee)</b>	
Mailing Address	
Position/Title	
Email	
Phone	

<sup>1</sup> Person with signatory authority

<sup>2</sup> 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>Located 10 miles north of downtown Denver and adjacent to Interstate 25, Thornton is a diverse community with a strong commitment to quality of life and environmental issues. With a 2020 population of 143,890, it is the 6th largest city in Colorado. Thornton is currently growing at a rate of 1.57% annually and its population has increased by 21.15% since the 2010 census. Within the city's organization is the Water Resources Division, which ensures water supply for Thornton, and the Agricultural Stewardship Office, which manages the city's agricultural property. The Water Resources Division and Agricultural Stewardship Office will lead this effort.</p>

Type of Eligible Entity (check one)	
X	<b>Public (Government):</b> 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.
	<b>Public (Districts):</b> authorities, Title 32/special districts (conservancy, conservation, and irrigation districts), and water activity enterprises
	<b>Private Incorporated:</b> mutual ditch companies, homeowners associations, corporations
	<b>Private Individuals, Partnerships, and Sole Proprietors:</b> are eligible for funding from the Basin Accounts but not for funding from the Statewide Account.
	<b>Non-governmental organizations:</b> broadly, any organization that is not part of the government



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Type of Eligible Entity (check one)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Covered Entity:</b> as defined in <a href="#">Section 37-60-126 Colorado Revised Statutes</a>

Type of Water Activity (check one)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Study
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Needs Assessment	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education & Outreach	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	Explain:

Location of Water Activity	
Please provide the general county and coordinates of the proposed activity below in <b>decimal degrees</b> . The Applicant shall also provide, in Exhibit C, a site map if applicable.	
County/Counties	Larimer County, Weld County
Latitude	40°34'50.0"
Longitude	104°44'25.5"

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.</p> <p>The Applicant shall also provide, in Exhibit A, a detailed Statement of Work, Budget, and Schedule.</p>



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Water Activity Overview
<p>In 1985 and 1986 the City of Thornton purchased farmland in Larimer and Weld Counties and the water rights associated with the farms. The water rights will provide Thornton's long-range supply of municipal water. As of 2018, Thornton owns 18,751 acres in Larimer and Weld Counties. In Weld County Thornton owns one hundred four (104) farms on 17,161 acres and in Larimer County Thornton owns eight (8) farms on 1,590 acres. While the City of Thornton has been working to meet requirements imposed by the Water Court decree, the city is raising funds to support a voluntary, community-driven effort that is not required by the decree or county permitting processes.</p> <p>Thornton is seeking WSRF funds to establish a collaborative, community-driven effort to: (a) advance a land-use planning process that bridges social, economic, environmental, water, and land use silos; and (b) explore ways the continued irrigation provision in Thornton's decree can help agriculture continue to thrive.</p> <p>Thornton will accomplish this through the development of two products: A Regional Land Use Assessment and a Water Optimization Study.</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)	
	Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)	
	Efficiency Savings (indicate acre-feet/year OR dollars/year)	
	Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)	
	Length of Pipe/Canal Built or Improved (linear feet)	
18,751 acres	Other	Explain: Total area of study for both Land Use and Water Optimization Study

Water Activity Justification
<p>Provide a description of how this water activity supports the goals of <a href="#">Colorado's Water Plan</a>, the most recent <a href="#">Statewide Water Supply Initiative</a>, and the respective <a href="#">roundtable Basin Implementation Plan and Education Action Plan</a> <sup>(1)</sup>. 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).</p> <p>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 <a href="#">2020 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines</a>).</p>



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### Water Activity Justification

#### Colorado's Water Plan (CWP)

Thornton's NPSP plan will address several measures outline in the CWP:

Chapter 6: Water Supply Management —Section 6.1: Scenario Planning and Developing an Adaptive Water Strategy, Page 6-8

No and Low Regret Strategies:

In this context, a "regret" is an action in which Colorado enters a future where there are:

1. Water shortages due to an insufficient number of implemented necessary projects and methods;
2. Significant consequences to Colorado's agriculture, environment, or economy because Colorado's water community did not implement projects and methods consistent with Colorado's water values; or
3. Too many unneeded and costly projects.

Chapter 6: Water Supply Management — Section 6.1: Scenario Planning and Developing an Adaptive Water Strategy Page, 6-10

- Minimize the transfer of statewide agricultural acres and implement agricultural sharing projects
- Establish low to medium conservation strategies
- Implement projects and methods that support environmental and recreational uses
- Strive for high success rates for projects and methods that are already planned

Chapter 6: Water Supply Management — Section 6.1: Scenario Planning and Developing an Adaptive Water Strategy 6-14

"Support the implementation of the No and-Low-Regrets strategy: The CWCB, in partnership with other state agencies, will commit state financial, technical, and regulatory resources to the near-term implementation of prioritized water management projects as specified in the No and-Low-Regrets actions. As part of this work, and in partnership with the basin roundtables, the CWCB will evaluate progress toward achieving the No-and-Low-Regrets actions."

The conversion of water from agricultural to municipal use will have varying effects on current land uses for the Thornton Northern Properties. However, the purpose of the Water Optimization Study is to "Consider how to optimize limited water supplies, retain a resilient agricultural base, and thoughtfully transition irrigated lands to nonirrigated agricultural or environmental purposes by exploring how the continued irrigation provision in Thornton's decree can help farmers, conservation groups, and other interested parties restore irrigation on prime farmlands with non-Thornton water and acquire that ground." This will be accomplished by:

#### A. Assemble Baseline Datasets

1. Determining the trajectory of dry-up on the WSSC system given the high percentage of municipal ownership
2. Identifying agricultural land preservation priority areas independent of dry-up trajectories
3. Assessing land, water, and conservation values through a WSSC-specific market-data report
4. Assimilating dry-up, agricultural land preservation priority, and market data

#### B. Assess Optimization Alternatives

1. Exploring application of the continued-irrigation provision
2. Identifying conservation markets that could support optimization





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### Water Activity Justification

#### C. Develop Financial Models and Case Studies for Preferred Alternative

In addition, Thornton's NPSP plan addresses the CWP criteria for state support by meeting the following objectives:

#### **Chapter 9: Alignment of State Resources and Policies — Section 9.4: Framework For A More Efficient Permitting Process, Page 9-43/44**

**Does the project proponent demonstrate a commitment to collaboration?**

**Does the project proponent demonstrate sustainability?**

**Does the project proponent establish the fiscal and technical feasibility of the project?**

Both the Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study will utilize a comprehensive outreach effort. In fact, the plans are designed to be led by a stakeholder committee that is comprised of the local municipalities, conservation groups, agricultural groups, land owners and residents of the effected properties. This committee will:

1. Establish project goals, objectives, and milestones
2. Agree to planning strategies
3. Develop measures of success and metrics for evaluation
4. Agree to communication, decision-making, and confidentiality protocols

Focus Area groups that are formed from the stakeholder committee will give detailed and specific input into sections of each plan including agricultural, conservation, recreation and water rights topics.

The stakeholder and focus groups will be provided with additional resources from the Land Use Plan and Water Optimization Study to help make informed decisions on sustainable development alternatives. This information will include:

1. Land-Use Market Analysis (Residential, Commercial, Agricultural, Conservation, Industrial, Government demand/values)
2. Landscape Analysis
3. Associated plans and historical documents

#### **South Platte Basin/Metro Basin Implementation Plan**

##### **S.4.2 Strategic Overview, Page S-10**

The three major guidelines the basin Roundtables have utilized in determining solutions to meeting the projected municipal and industrial water supply shortfall are:

1. Minimize adverse impacts to agricultural economies
2. Develop new multipurpose projects that either offset transfers from agricultural uses or provide additional water to reduce current agricultural shortages
3. Proactively identify and implement methods to protect and enhance environmental and recreational water uses

Thornton's NPSP Land Use Study has several elements that are designed specifically to ensure that the agricultural and economic impacts for different land use recommendations are considered. Specifically, the plan will:

1. Assimilate market information with issue-specific information by developing a range of preferred land uses for specific geographies
2. Using the site data and issue-specific working group findings, develop multiple regional land use vision



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Water Activity Justification
<p>alternatives</p> <p>3. Develop a set of preferred regional land use alternatives after refining alternatives with the steering committee</p> <p>In this way, both empirical data and community specific needs are used to determine which land uses will minimize adverse impacts to the local agricultural economy. The Land Use Plan will also utilize the Water Optimization Study to develop alternatives that preserve prime agricultural lands while transferring water away from properties that can be utilized for other highest and best uses.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Access Basin Implementation Plans or Education Action Plans from Basin drop down menu.

Matching Requirements: Basin Account Requests	
<b>Basin (only) Account</b> grant requests require a 25% match (cash and/or in-kind) from the Applicant or 3 <sup>rd</sup> party and shall be accompanied by a <b>letter of commitment</b> as described in the <a href="#">2020 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines</a> (submitted on the contributing entity's letterhead). Attach additional sheet if necessary.	
Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match (note cash or in-kind)
City of Thornton	\$75,000
Department of Local Affairs (Pending submittal)	\$125,000
Colorado Water Conservation Board – Water Plan Grant (Pending submittal)	\$100,000
Total Match	\$300,000
If you requested a Waiver to the Basin Account matching requirements, indicate the percentage you wish waived.	

Matching Requirements: Statewide Account Requests	
<b>Statewide Account</b> grant requests require a 50% match as described in the <a href="#">2020 WSRF Criteria and Guidelines</a> . At least of 10% of the required Statewide Account Grant request match shall be cash from Basin Account funds whether that is from one or multiple basins; and the remaining 40% of the required match may be provided from any source, including other grants, cash from the Basin Account, or any combination of cash, in-kind services, or in-kind materials. and shall be accompanied by a <b>letter of commitment</b> . Attach additional sheet if necessary.	
Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match (note cash or in-kind):
Metro Basin Roundtable	\$25,000



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Matching Requirements: Statewide Account Requests	
South Platte Basin Roundtable	\$25,000
City of Thornton	\$75,000
Department of Local Affairs (Pending submittal)	\$125,000
Colorado Water Conservation Board – Water Plan Grant (pending Submittal)	\$100,000
Total Match	\$350,000
If you requested a Waiver to the Statewide Account matching, indicate % you wish waived. (Max 50% reduction of requirement).	

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><b><u>Weld County Comprehensive Plan – Sept. 2020</u></b></p> <p>Weld County is finalizing an update to their Comprehensive Plan. Specific to water rights and land use, the Comp Plan outlines the following goals that directly reflect the need for Thornton's NPSP Land Use and Water Optimization Studies.</p> <p>Sec. 22-4-30. – Water Goals and Policies</p> <p>A.WA.Goal 1. Support the development of water that is put to beneficial use, along with associated infrastructure.</p> <p>4.WA.Policy 1.4. Land use regulations should not interfere with the transfer of water rights and/or their associated uses.</p> <p>a.Recommended Strategy WA.1.4.a. Develop land use policies that increase the productivity of the lands dried up as a result of water transfers.</p> <p>5.WA.Policy 1.5. Encourage alternatives to the "dry-up" (or fallowing) of agricultural land, a practice that otherwise takes agricultural land out of production, often permanently.</p> <p>a.Recommended Strategy WA.1.5.a. Develop policies for dried-up lands so that they are managed to prevent dust, erosion and the prevalence of weeds.</p> <p>6.WA.Policy 1.6. Encourage "dry-up agreements" that allow the use of alternate water sources to keep the land in production.</p> <p>8.WA.Policy 1.8. Foster formal, regular communication with water suppliers throughout the County.a.Recommended Strategy WA.1.8.a. Maintain a solid understanding of the long-term water supplies available for County residents, farmers and industry. Monitor any plans for significant transfers of water out of the County, and describe the amount of land that is planned to be taken out of agricultural production due to water transfers.b.Recommended Strategy WA.1.8.b. Host a yearly meeting with water suppliers.</p> <p><b><u>Larimer County Comprehensive Plan – July 2019</u></b></p>



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### Related Studies

Similar to Weld County, Larimer County just recently completed an update to their Comp Plan. The plan specifically refers to Thornton's northern properties. An entire goal was created in the Watersheds and Natural Resource Snapshot Chapter: #5 Competition for water between agricultural, industry, riparian, and residential use and development is pronounced, resulting in the loss of cultivated farmland and affordable housing. In that Chapter it states "Furthermore, the role of local governments in contributing to solutions that protect agricultural water use is limited and other agencies including the Colorado Water Conservation Board and local water districts have more clearly defined roles. Nevertheless, Larimer County has a role to play. In particular, a fundamental role of the county is to assist in the protection of important farmlands." Once again, Thornton's NPSP Land Use and Water Optimization Studies will provide Larimer County an opportunity to be a part of the planning as water is redirected for municipal use.

#### City of Thornton Northern Properties Stewardship Plan Land Use Analysis – Oct. 2020

In preparation for the larger Land Use and Water Optimization Studies, the City of Thornton is currently finalizing a land use analysis document. Between August 2019, when the NPSP was launched, and October 2020, consultant-led efforts included: (1) internal planning with City of Thornton representatives, (2) interviews with Larimer and Weld County subject matter experts (SMEs), (3) preliminary landscape analyses, and (4) meetings with individuals and small groups.

Internal planning at the City of Thornton established project parameters. Subject matter expert interviews with Larimer and Weld County stakeholders informed possible NPSP approaches and undertakings. Landscape analyses provided GIS data to guide future research, community discussions, and decision-making. Follow-up meetings with municipal and county government representatives, state agency personnel, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and others helped establish NPSP next steps which included the Land Use Plan and Water Optimization Study.

### 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

1. City of Thornton
2. Drought Management Planning Grant
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. POGG1 2018-955 or POGGI PDAA 201800000955
6. \$30,000, or 28% of the project cost

### 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.

None



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<https://cwcb.colorado.gov/>

<b>Colorado Water Conservation Board</b>	
<b>Water Supply Reserve Fund</b>	
<b><u>Exhibit A - Statement of Work</u></b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>December 1, 2020</b>
<b>Water Activity Name:</b>	<b>Thornton Northern Properties Stewardship Plan (NPSP): Land Use and Water Optimization Study</b>
<b>Grant Recipient:</b>	<b>City of Thornton</b>
<b>Funding Source:</b>	<b>South Platte Basin Roundtable</b>
<b>Water Activity Overview:</b> (Please provide brief description of the proposed water activity (no more than 200 words). Include a description of the overall water activity and specifically what the WSRF funding will be used for. (PLEASE DEFINE ALL ACRONYMS).)	
<p>In 1985 and 1986 the City of Thornton purchased farmland in Larimer and Weld Counties and the water rights associated with the farms. The water rights will provide Thornton's long-range supply of municipal water. As of 2018, Thornton owns 18,751 acres in Larimer and Weld Counties. In Weld County Thornton owns one hundred four (104) farms on 17,161 acres and in Larimer County Thornton owns eight (8) farms on 1,590 acres. While the City of Thornton has been working to meet requirements imposed by the Water Court decree, the city is raising funds to support a voluntary, community-driven effort that is not required by the decree or county permitting processes.</p> <p>Thornton is seeking WRSF funds to establish a collaborative, community-driven effort to: (a) advance a land-use planning process that bridges social, economic, environmental, water, and land use silos; and (b) explore ways the continued irrigation provision in Thornton's decree can help agriculture continue to thrive.</p> <p>Thornton will accomplish this through the development of two products: A Regional Land Use Assessment and a Water Optimization Study.</p>	
<b>Objectives:</b> (List the objectives of the project. (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS).)	



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1. A Regional Land Use Assessment. The City of Thornton will engage Larimer and Weld county communities and stakeholders to identify and document regional land use objectives.
2. Optimal Property Use Determinations. The City of Thornton will utilize the Land Use Assessment—in combination with local stakeholder input—to inform prospective future uses of its properties.
3. Property Management and Divestiture Strategies. The City of Thornton will explore land management and divestiture strategies that enable it to be effective stewards of city assets while meeting the present and future needs of local communities. It will explore five thematic opportunities raised by subject matter Experts (SMEs), in addition to other opportunities that evolve through the planning process:
  - i. sustaining irrigation on key properties using alternative, non-Thornton, water sources;
  - ii. building partnerships to support innovative property transitions;
  - iii. advancing conservation planning and financing efforts;
  - iv. strategically siting development and industry; and
  - v. implementing crop and cover transition BMPs.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
<b>Task 1 –Steering Committee Formation with Issue Specific Sub -Groups</b>
<b>Description of Task:</b> <p>Establish a Regional Planning Partnership –</p> <p>This task will consist of creating a steering committee that encompasses all of the affected municipal, conservation, agricultural, land owners and other partners. This committee will be in place for the duration of the project and will help guide alternatives development and final land use assessments for the plan. Other sub-groups will be identified (particularly for the Water Optimization Study) that will help address issue specific planning items.</p> <p>A Chairperson for the steering committee will be chosen and will NOT be a representative of the City of Thornton.</p>
<b>Method/Procedure:</b> <p>Establish Outreach &amp; Engagement Structure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Identify the range of interested parties/participants</li><li>b) Outline the specific issues to be explored</li><li>c) Establish project goals, objectives, and milestones</li><li>d) Agree to planning strategies</li><li>e) Develop measures of success and metrics for evaluation</li><li>f) Agree to communication, decision-making, and confidentiality protocols</li></ol>
<b>Grantee Deliverable:</b> (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)



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Tasks
The planning team will compile a contact list for the stakeholders and create a stakeholder engagement plan that will be utilized throughout the plan.
<b>CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)</b>
The planning team will produce a stakeholder engagement summary as part of the final document that will list steering committee members, meetings and outcomes.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
<b><u>Task 2 – Review Existing Plans &amp; Assemble Baseline Data Sets</u></b>
<b>Description of Task:</b>
<b>Assemble Baseline Datasets –</b>  Much of this task will be identifying and incorporating all necessary background and technical data to be utilized for the land use plan and water optimization study.
<b>Method/Procedure:</b>
Review Existing Plans and Assemble Data a) Define project planning area b) Collect applicable plans and reports c) Consider preliminary landscape analysis findings Conduct Land-Use Market Analysis to examine: a) Agricultural demand/values b) Residential demand/values c) Commercial demand/values d) Industrial demand/values e) Government demand/values f) Conservation demand/values Assemble Baseline Datasets a) Determine the trajectory of dry-up on the WSSC system given the high percentage of municipal ownership i) Research historic conditions (all land historically WSSC irrigated) ii) Map existing dry-up (all land dried to date on WSSC) iii) Identify prospective future dry-up (all non-agricultural ownership of irrigation water) iv) Document findings in geospatial format b) Identify agricultural land preservation priority areas independent of dry-up trajectories i) Establish variables to consider, which may include:



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Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) Soil data</li><li>(2) Water quality data</li><li>(3) Industry clusters</li><li>(4) Land continuity</li><li>(5) Land tenure</li><li>(6) Other</li></ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ii) Document findings in geospatial format</li></ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>c) Assess land, water, and conservation values through a WSSC-specific market-data report<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Assemble an appropriate range of property sales data (e.g., 5-10 years, 20+ acres, etc.)</li><li>ii) Examine the range of agricultural and non-agricultural land and water values</li><li>iii) Assess conservation easement (and, if applicable, ecosystem service/mitigation market) values in WSSC and proximal geographies</li><li>iv) Produce a narrated report with tabular results and summaries</li></ul></li><li>d) Assimilate dry-up, agricultural land preservation priority, and market data.</li></ul>
<b>Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)</b>
The City of Thornton will assemble summary data in a geospatial format for steering committee review. All of the information will also be included in the final land use plan.
<b>CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)</b>
The City of Thornton will provide the data summary to the CWCB once it is completed. It will also be included in the final Regional Land Use Assessment.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
<b><u>Task 3 – Engage Issue Specific Work Groups</u></b>
<b>Description of Task:</b>
Using the issue specific work groups identified in Task 1, the planning team will meet with individual groups to discuss specific land and water use issues. These groups could include agriculture, conservation, economic development, etc.
<b>Method/Procedure:</b>
Engage Issue-Specific Working Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Form subcommittee working groups to explore land use alternatives and examine specific issues</li><li>b) Develop communication strategy to inform interested parties about working groups' activities, findings, progress, and consensus decisions</li><li>c) Conduct targeted public engagement with working groups</li><li>d) Document desires and needs of each issue specific working groups</li></ul>





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Tasks
<b>Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)</b>
The planning team will compile information from the work groups into summary reports that will be used when forming land use alternatives.
<b>CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)</b>
The planning team will summarize the results of each work groups input provide them to CWCB. The summaries will also be included in the final land use report.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
<b><u>Task 4 – Alternatives Development</u></b>
<b>Description of Task:</b>
The planning team will utilize the market information and input from the steering committee to start to develop land use alternatives. Concurrently, the planning team will look at water optimization alternatives and create case studies that will be used to help develop land use alternatives.
<b>Method/Procedure:</b>
Assimilate Market Information with Issue-Specific Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Develop a range of preferred land uses for specific geographies</li><li>b) Present findings to the project steering committee</li><li>c) Present findings in a targeted public workshop for review, input, and discussion</li></ul> Water Optimization Alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Explore application of the continued-irrigation provision<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Determine the legal extents and limitations of the provision</li><li>ii) Determine court/administrative provision enactment process/cost</li><li>iii) Identify WSSC and non-WSSC water sources that could enable continued irrigation</li></ul></li><li>b) Identify conservation markets that could support optimization, which may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Conservation easement payments</li><li>ii) Wetland/habitat mitigation dollars</li><li>iii) Water quality trading markets</li><li>iv) Carbon markets</li><li>v) NRCS EQIP</li></ul></li></ul> Develop Financial Models and Case Studies for Preferred Water Optimization Alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Identify 2-4 case study scenarios</li><li>b) Develop case study scenario models</li><li>c) Vet models with advisory committee and others as appropriate</li><li>d) Assess feasibility of different models/approaches</li><li>e) Determine implementation obstacles and conditions/requirements to overcome obstacles</li></ul> Develop Regional Land Use Vision Alternatives



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Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Using the site data and issue-specific working group findings, develop multiple regional land use vision alternatives</li><li>b) Convene the issue specific working groups to help formulate alternatives</li><li>c) Present the alternatives to the public in an at-large public workshop for review and comment</li></ul>
<b>Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)</b>
The planning team will create several land use alternatives based on the water optimization study and other data.
<b>CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)</b>
The planning team will provide CWCB with a report that will include the land use alternatives and case studies. The alternatives will also be compiled into the final land use plan.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
<b><u>Task 5 – Refine Land Use Alternatives</u></b>
<b>Description of Task:</b>
The planning team will refine the land use alternatives after receiving input from the steering committee.
<b>Method/Procedure:</b>
Refine Land Use Alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Present the information to the steering committee in a workshop format</li><li>b) Develop a set of preferred regional land use alternatives that should inform the NPSP</li><li>c) Graphically and in report form describe the preferred alternative</li></ul>
<b>Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)</b>
The planning team will develop a preferred land use alternative plan with maps and associated studies.
<b>CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)</b>
The planning team will provide a summary of the final alternatives to the CWCB and will include the final alternatives in the final land use report.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)



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Tasks
<b><u>Task 6 – Develop and Issue Final Report</u></b>
Description of Task: The planning team will compile all final data into a final report that can be utilized by the CWCB and the affected municipalities and organizations.
Method/Procedure: Develop and Issue Final Report a) Meet with the steering committee to assimilate all the information and provide direction for the preparation of the final Regional Land Use Assessment Document b) Make all written and graphic revisions to the final Assessment Document c) Conduct final public engagement to present the final Assessment Document (this could be done multiple times in each municipality)
Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task) The planning team will create a final report that will detail all of the outreach and studies completed, alternatives developed, and final land use plan.
CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task) The planning team will provide CWCB with a final report that will detail all of the outreach and studies completed, alternatives developed, and final land use plan.

Budget and Schedule
<b><u>Exhibit B - Budget and Schedule:</u></b> This Statement of Work shall be accompanied by a combined <a href="#">Budget and Schedule</a> that reflects the Tasks identified in the Statement of Work and shall be submitted to CWCB in <a href="#">excel format</a> . A separate <a href="#">excel formatted</a> Budget is required for engineering costs to include rate and unit costs.

Reporting Requirements
<b>Progress Reports:</b> The grantee shall provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of issuance of a purchase order, or the execution of a contract. The progress report shall describe the status 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. The CWCB may withhold reimbursement until satisfactory progress reports have been submitted.
<b>Final Report:</b> At completion of the project, the grantee shall provide the CWCB a Final Report on the grantee's letterhead that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarizes the project and how the project was completed.</li><li>• Describes any obstacles encountered, and how these obstacles were overcome.</li><li>• Confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled.</li><li>• Includes photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.</li></ul>



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## Reporting Requirements

### Payments

Payment will be made based on actual expenditures, must include invoices for all work completed and must be on grantee's letterhead. The request for payment must include a description of the work accomplished by task, an estimate of the percent completion for individual tasks and the entire Project in relation to the percentage of budget spent, identification of any major issues, and proposed or implemented corrective actions.

The CWCB will pay the last 10% of the entire water activity budget when the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the water activity and purchase order or contract will be closed without any further payment. Any entity that fails to complete a satisfactory Final Report and submit to CWCB within 90 days of the expiration of a purchase order or contract may be denied consideration for future funding of any type from CWCB.

### Performance Requirements

Performance measures for this contract shall include the following:

(a) Performance standards and evaluation: Grantee will produce detailed deliverables for each task as specified. Grantee shall maintain receipts for all project expenses and documentation of the minimum in-kind contributions (if applicable) per the budget in Exhibit B. Per Grant Guidelines, the CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the budget when the final deliverable is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the final deliverable has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

(b) Accountability: Per the Grant Guidelines full documentation of project progress must be submitted with each invoice for reimbursement. Grantee must confirm that all grant conditions have been complied with on each invoice. In addition, per the Grant Guidelines, Progress Reports must be submitted at least once every 6 months. A Final Report must be submitted and approved before final project payment.

(c) Monitoring Requirements: Grantee is responsible for ongoing monitoring of project progress per Exhibit A. Progress shall be detailed in each invoice and in each Progress Report, as detailed above. Additional inspections or field consultations will be arranged as may be necessary.

(d) Noncompliance Resolution: Payment will be withheld if grantee is not current on all grant conditions. Flagrant disregard for grant conditions will result in a stop work order and cancellation of the Grant Agreement.

Last Update: November 30, 2020



**COLORADO**

Colorado Water  
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

## Colorado Water Conservation Board

### Water Supply Reserve Fund

#### EXHIBIT B - BUDGET AND SCHEDULE - Direct & Indirect (Administrative) Costs

Date: 11/30/2020

Water Activity Name: Thornton Northern Properties Stewardship Plan (NPSP): Land Use and Water Optimization Study

Grantee Name: City of Thornton

<u>Task No.</u> <sup>(1)</sup>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Start Date</u> <sup>(2)</sup>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Matching Funds</u> (cash & in-kind) <sup>(3)</sup>	<u>WSRF Funds</u> (Basin & Statewide combined) <sup>(3)</sup>	<u>Total</u>
1	Steering Comm. Formation & Meetings	Mar-21	Jun-22	\$18,610	\$5,000	\$23,610
2	Review Existing Plans & Assemble Data	Mar 2021	Aug 2021	\$107,620	\$30,000	\$137,620
3	Engage Issue Specific Work Groups	May 2021	Dec 2021	\$10,665	\$5,000	\$15,665
4	Alternatives Development	Aug 2021	Feb 2022	\$102,305	\$35,000	\$137,305
5	Refine Land Use Alternatives	Mar 2022	April 2022	\$11,035	\$10,000	\$21,035
6	Develop and Issue Final Report	May 2022	Jun 2022	\$24,990	\$10,000	\$34,990
7	Project Management	March 2021	June 2022	\$24,745	\$5,000	\$29,745
<b>Total</b>				\$299,970	\$100,000	\$399,970

(1) The single task that include costs for Grant Administration must provide a labor breakdown (see Indirect Costs tab below) where the total WSRF Grant contribution towards that task does not exceed 15% of the total WSRF Grant amount.

(2) Round values up to the nearest hundred dollars.

• Additional documentation providing a Detailed/Itemized Budget may be required for contracting. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with the CWCB Project Manager to determine specifics.

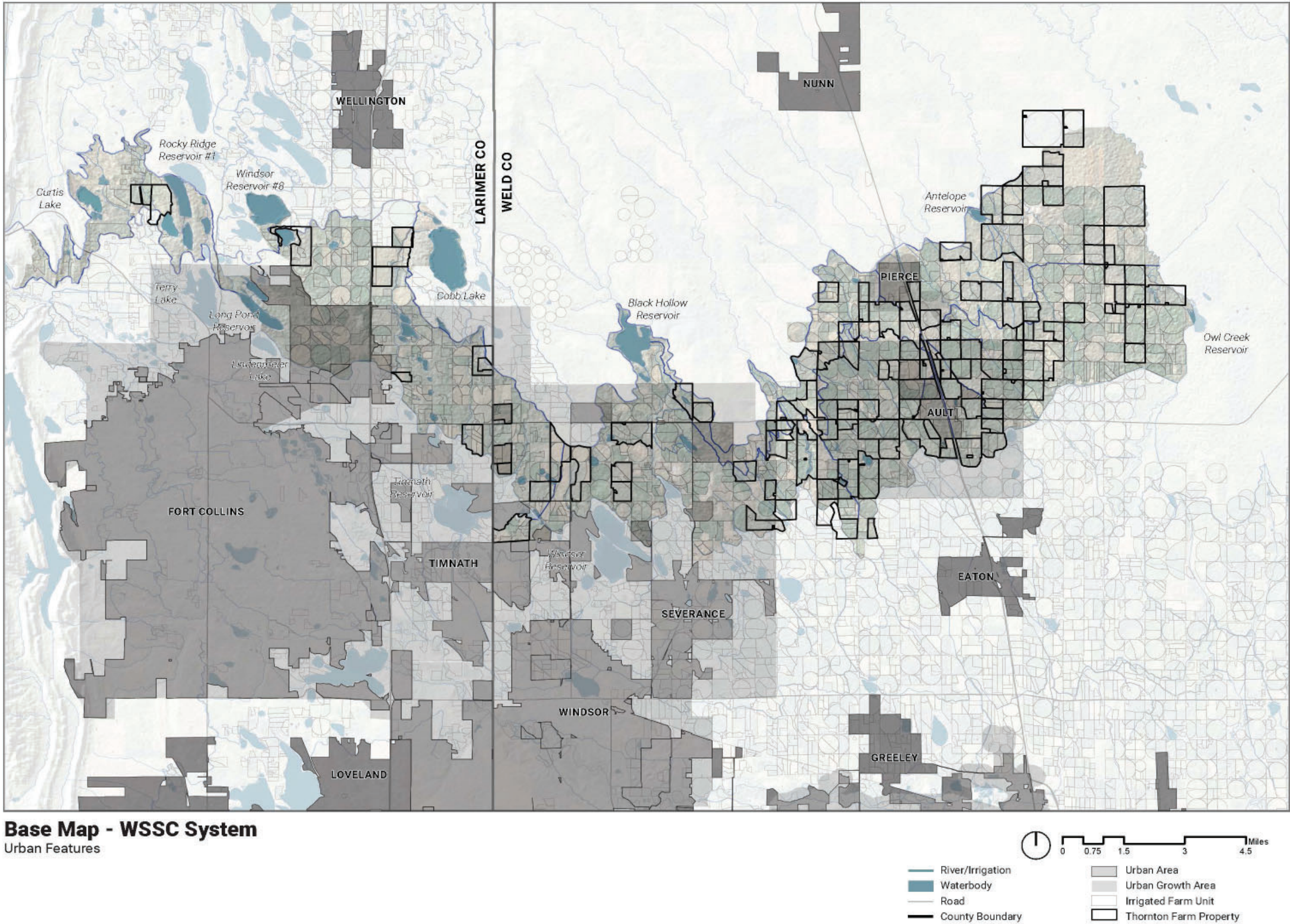
The CWCB will pay the last 10% of the entire water activity budget when the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of the CWCB staff project manager. Once the Final Report has been accepted, the final payment has been issued, the water activity and purchase order (PO) or contract will be closed without any further payment. Any entity that fails to complete a satisfactory Final Report and submit to the CWCB with 90 days of the expiration of the PO or contract may be denied consideration for future funding of any type from the CWCB.

• Additionally, the applicant shall provide a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of contract execution



# Exhibit C - Map 1 of 3

The Urban Features Base Map highlights municipal boundaries, designated urban Growth Management Areas (GMA) within or adjacent to the WSSC system, and the extent of irrigated farm units both within and beyond WSSC system boundaries. (Thornton farms are outlined in black.) 62% of Thornton farms lie within a GMA. This project looks to assemble members of growing communities who can drive the development of a Land Use Assessment that identifies what optimal future land uses on Thornton properties might be. This can, in turn, inform the City of Thornton's property management and disposal strategies.





# Exhibit C - Map 2 of 2

Approximately 57% (+21,000 acres) of WSSC-irrigated lands are designated as Prime Farmlands by the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and more than one-quarter of Prime Farmlands possess a majority of Class 1 and 2 soils—high-quality soils that have few, if any, production limitations. These soils can grow a wide variety of crops and, with good management practices, sustain production over a long period of time. The Water Optimization Study will examine how the continued irrigation provision in Thornton’s decree could be employed to optimize limited water supplies, retain permanent irrigation on prime Thornton farms using non-Thornton water, and support a more resilient agricultural base. The study will look at innovative conservation financing mechanisms that could help underwrite the work while creating advantageous environmental outcomes: environmental restoration, soil carbon enhancements, water quality improvements, etc.

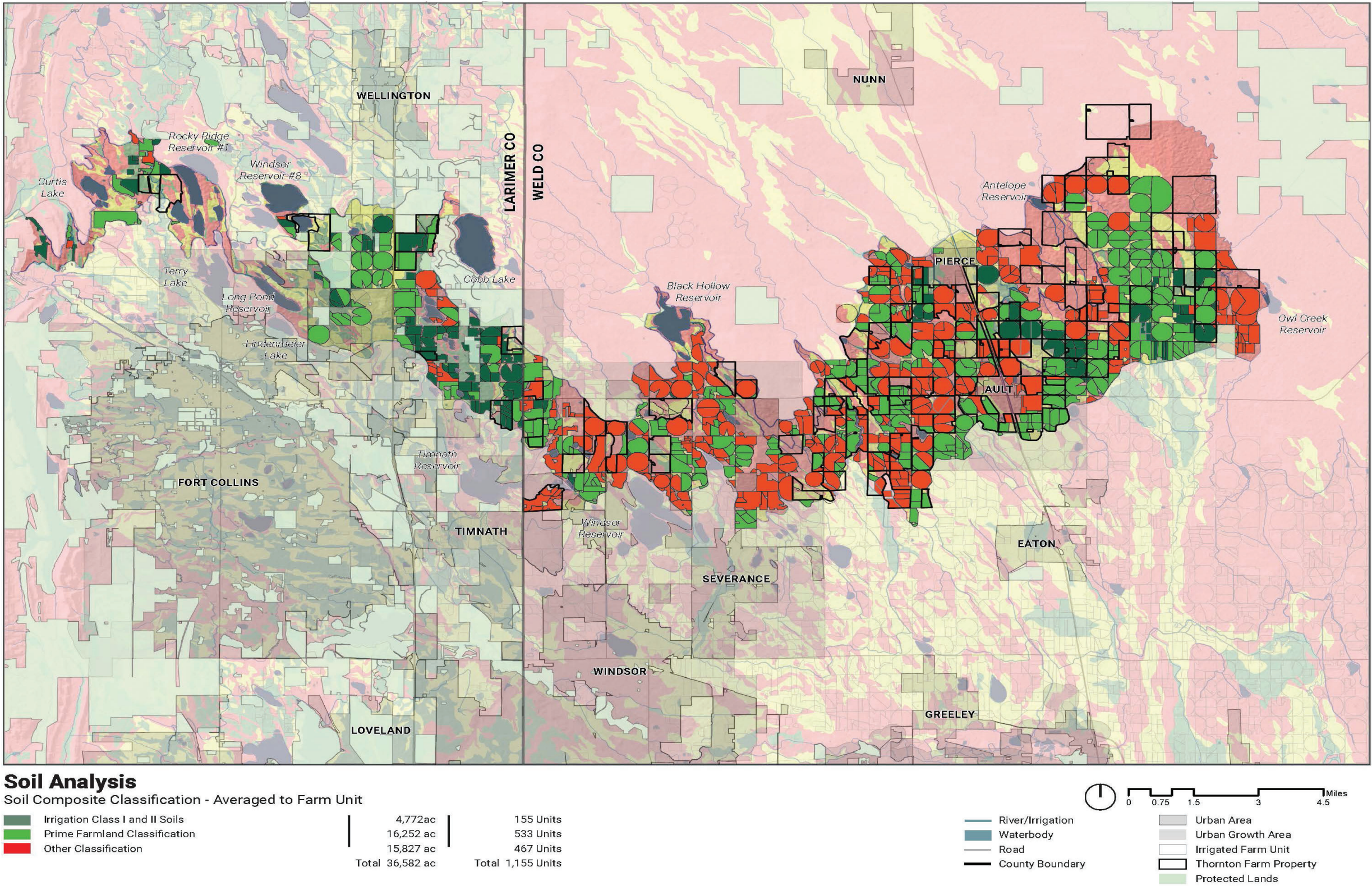
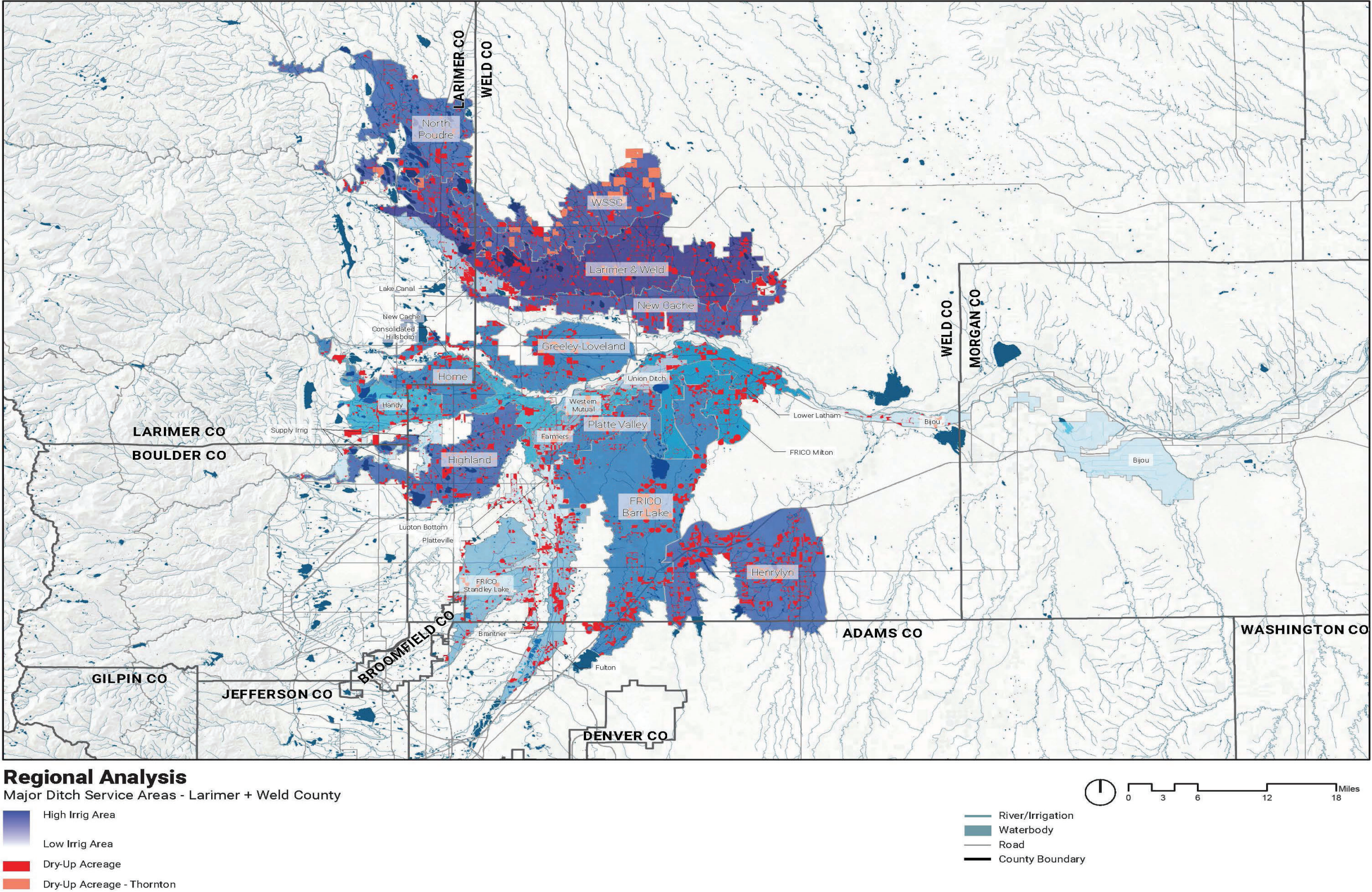




Exhibit C - Map 3 of 3

There are 194 ditch systems that deliver water to agricultural lands in Larimer and Weld counties. Twenty-four of these systems—identified in the Major Ditch Service Areas map—each irrigate more than 2,500 acres across the two counties (many ditches span and irrigate additional land in adjacent counties). The other 170 ditch systems each irrigate fewer than 2,500 acres within the two counties. WSSC is the second largest of these systems, irrigating approximately 37,000 acres as of 2015. An estimated 70,000 acres were dried across Larimer and Weld counties between 2001 and 2015, reducing the total amount of irrigated agricultural land from 392,000 acres to 322,000 acres—an 18% decrease. These numbers do not consider pending dry-up, which is harder to identify. For example, an estimated 65% of WSSC shares are owned by municipalities (Fort Collins, Greeley, Thornton), etc.); yet the majority of this water remains in the WSSC system and continues to irrigate farms. Thornton hopes both the Land Use Assessment and the Water Optimization Study will set new precedents—in this region and across the state—for linking land use planning and water supply planning in ways that have multiple benefits for multiple communities.





## Exhibit C - Photos 3 of 3



Grasslands east of Fort Collins



Irrigated agriculture lands near Fort Collins



## Exhibit C - Photos 3 of 3



Float pump near Ault



Irrigated grasslands near Ault



## Exhibit C - Photos 3 of 3



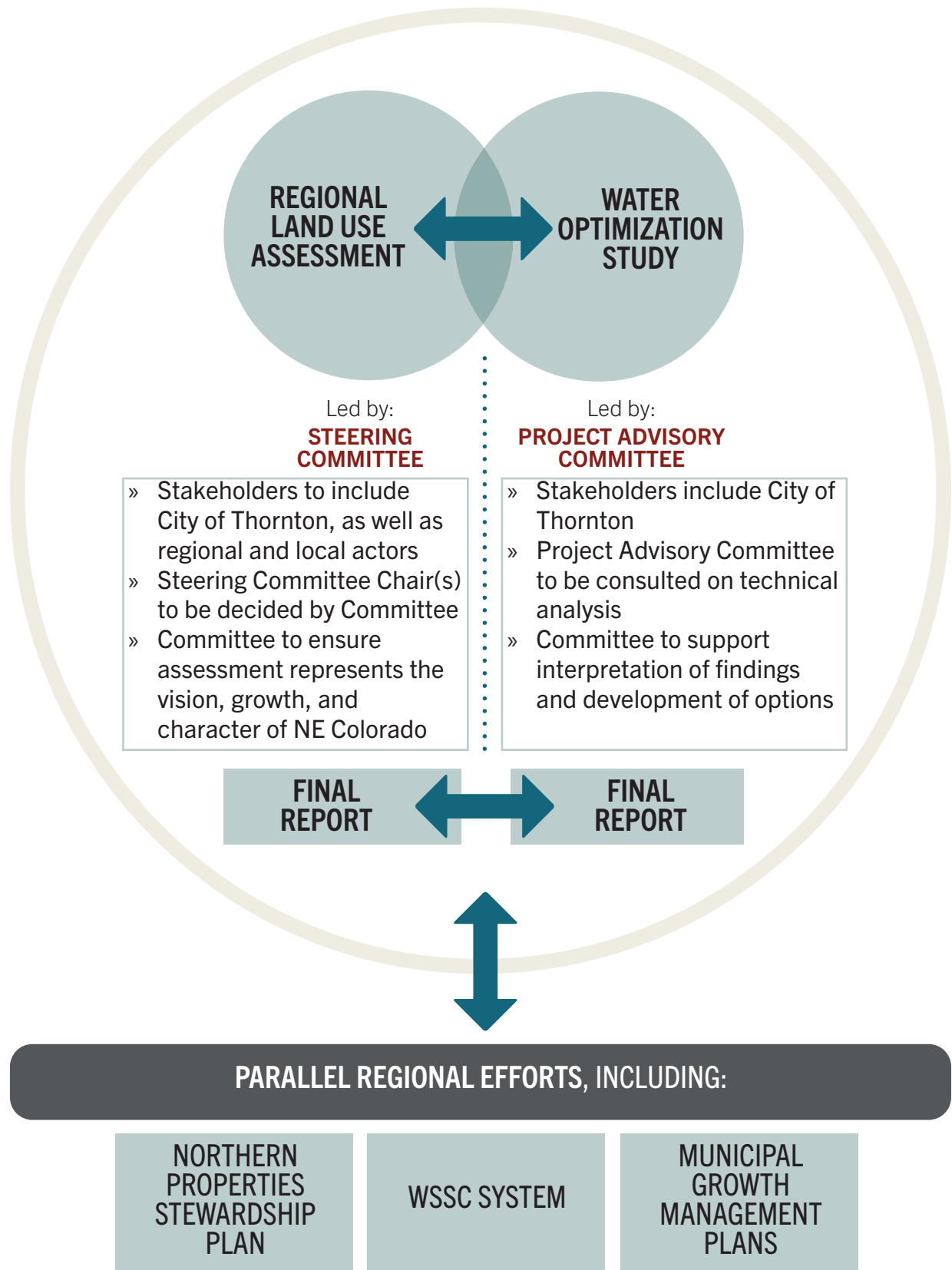
Grasslands near Ault



Irrigated agriculture lands near Ault

# Exhibit C - Process Diagram

## REGIONAL LAND USE ASSESSMENT + WATER OPTIMIZATION STUDY AS A PRODUCT OF STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES



Kevin Reidy and Ben Wade  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman St., Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203  
November 16, 2020

Dear Kevin and Ben:

At the November 12, 2020 meeting of the Metro Roundtable (MRT), the MRT voted to approve a Metro WSRF Basin Grant of \$25,000, to support a Statewide WSRF Grant of \$50,000, and to support a Water Plan Grant for the City of Thornton's Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study.

This project will identify potential future land uses on Thornton's agricultural properties in Larimer and Weld Counties by exploring the local land use context and community and stakeholder goals. As Thornton begins to physically convey its water out of the Poudre River Basin to the city for municipal uses in Thornton, this project aims to offer innovative and creative solutions to an on-going challenge being faced around the state of Colorado, while satisfying different and unique interests in the region.

Thornton's WSRF application meets the MRT WSRF Guidelines and WSRF Grant Program Criteria. The project fits with the MRT's Implementation of Identified Projects and Processes. Thornton's Northern Project is an IPP, and the study proposed will allow Thornton to elevate what could be a typical buy and dry / pipeline IPP into a project that aligns with MRT's vision. The project will also help advance the following Measurable Outcomes in the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan: Agricultural MO#1: Support strategies that reduce traditional permanent dry-up of irrigated acreage; Agricultural MO#4: Develop local tools and political/community support for tools to sustain irrigated farmland; IPP Implementation MO#1: Maximize implementation of the updated IPP list. Finally, the project is consistent with Colorado's Water Plan grant criteria the Statewide Long-term Goal of Meet Colorado's Agricultural Needs by ... 1) Ensuring that irrigated agriculture remains a viable statewide economic driver and supports food security, jobs and rural communities and protects private property rights.

Upon review and consideration of Thornton's proposal, the MRT unanimously voted to approve the full \$25,000 of MRT Basin WSRF grant, and to support Thornton's Statewide \$50,000 WSRF grant application and its Water Plan Grant application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barbara Biggs", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Barbara Biggs, Chair  
Metro Roundtable



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

November 23, 2020

Dear Ben:

At the November 10, 2020 meeting of the South Platte Basin Roundtable (SPBRT), the SPBRT voted to approve a South Platte WSRF Basin Grant of \$25,000 and to support a Statewide WSRF Grant of \$50,000 for the City of Thornton's Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study.

This project will identify potential future land uses on Thornton's agricultural properties in Larimer and Weld Counties by exploring the local land use context and community and stakeholder goals. As Thornton begins to physically convey its water out of the Poudre River Basin to the city for municipal uses in Thornton, this project aims to offer innovative and creative solutions to an on-going challenge being faced around the state of Colorado, while satisfying different and unique interests in the region.

Thornton's WSRF application meets the SPBRT WSRF Guidelines and WSRF Grant Program Criteria. The project will help advance the following Measurable Outcomes in the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan: Agricultural MO#1: Support strategies that reduce traditional permanent dry-up of irrigated acreage; Agricultural MO#4: Develop local tools and political/community support for tools to sustain irrigated farmland; IPP Implementation MO#1: Maximize implementation of the updated IPP list. Finally, the project is consistent with Colorado's Water Plan grant criteria the Statewide Long-term Goal of Meet Colorado's Agricultural Needs by ensuring that irrigated agriculture remains a viable statewide economic driver and supports food security, jobs and rural communities and protects private property rights.

Upon review and consideration of Thornton's proposal at the November 10, 2020 Roundtable meeting, the SPBRT unanimously voted to approve the full \$25,000 of SPBRT Basin WSRF grant, and to support Thornton's Statewide \$50,000 WSRF grant application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Garrett Varra, Chair  
South Platte Basin Roundtable



Thornton Infrastructure Maintenance Center  
12450 Washington Street  
Thornton, CO 80241  
[www.ThorntonCO.gov](http://www.ThorntonCO.gov)

Infrastructure Department  
Water Resources Division  
PH 720-977-6600

Attn: Ben Wade  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
Department of Natural Resources  
1313 Sherman St, Room 718  
Denver, CO 80203

February 18, 2021

RE: Water Supply Reserve Fund Grants – Letter of Commitment

Dear Mr. Wade:

The City of Thornton is pleased to submit this letter of commitment for Thornton's Northern Properties Stewardship Plan: Land Use and Water Optimization Study. Thornton commits \$75,000 to this project, in addition to in-kind staff time.

As part of the Water Supply Reserve Fund Grants process, a local funding match is required. Thornton is seeking WSRF Grant Funding from the South Platte Basin Roundtable, the Metro Basin Roundtable, and Statewide funds. In addition, Thornton is seeking a Colorado Water Plan Grant. Thornton's funding commitment satisfies the requirements for the local match.

I appreciate your consideration of this application and we look forward to working on this important planning effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emily Hunt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emily Hunt  
Deputy Infrastructure Director

November 24, 2020

To the Colorado Water Conservation Board:

I am writing to express my support for the City of Thornton's efforts to obtain funding to conduct a Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study related to the agricultural land owned by Thornton in Larimer and Weld Counties.

We farm north of Fort Collins and have been involved in trying to minimize the loss of ag land and water for a number of years. We have placed a conservation easement on a portion of our farm and helped others with that process. I served on the Larimer County Planning Commission for 9 years and on the Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) since its inception in 1998. I am currently the Vice Chair of the AAB. My wife Nancy is currently a Planning Commissioner and is on the Open Lands Advisory Board. Through a variety of initiatives taken by these boards and commissions in collaboration with producers themselves, a considerable block of irrigated farmland has been protected over time in the area between Fort Collins and Wellington and in the Waverly Buckeye areas as well as a combination of rangelands and irrigated lands in the Larimer foothills ranching areas. The parcels currently owned by Thornton as a result of their water acquisition strategy, if conserved, could contribute greatly to efforts to protect and avoid the further fragmentation of the remaining, largely contiguous blocks of ag land, particularly north of Fort Collins in the area where Thornton's properties are located.

The specific details of how each parcel could contribute to the goals of Larimer County (and mitigate impacts from the Thornton pipeline and water conveyance) would likely be laid out during their proposed Regional Land Use Assessment. Such a study will not only examine potential future land uses on Thornton properties and how they could be integrated with the local land use planning and ag land conservation but the Water Optimization component will explore how Thornton, farmers, conservation groups, and other interested parties could restore irrigation on prime farmlands using non-Thornton owned water.

The study is described as an examination of methods to retain a resilient base of prime irrigated lands, advance a more strategic approach to restoration and reclamation, and thoughtfully transition irrigated lands to non-irrigated agricultural, environmental or other purposes. As Thornton begins to physically convey its water out of the Poudre River Basin to the city for municipal uses in Thornton, this project aims to offer innovative and creative solutions to an on-going challenge being faced around the state of Colorado, while satisfying different and unique interests in the region. It could help our efforts in Larimer County.

The City of Thornton has already engaged our Agricultural Advisory Board about a variety of matters and while the AAB itself cannot officially comment while the County is in litigation with Thornton, a number of us, our family included, support this study as individuals. In sum, we hope you will give every consideration to helping Thornton obtain the needed resources for this study.

Thank you for your consideration,

George and Nancy Wallace,



Soldias Farms 1824 West County Road 66, Fort Collins, CO 80524

November 19, 2020

To the Colorado Water Conservation Board:

We are writing to express our support for the City of Thornton's efforts to conduct a Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study related to the agricultural land owned by Thornton in Larimer and Weld Counties.

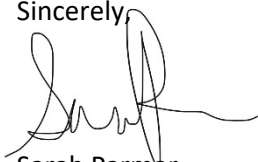
Colorado Open Lands (COL) is a statewide land trust that has protected more than 500,000 acres across Colorado. The Northern Front Range and Lower South Platte region is a priority conservation landscape for COL with its nexus of prime farmland, senior water rights, and unique shortgrass prairie habitat. COL recognizes that the scale of land owned by the City of Thornton is incredibly rare in Larimer and Weld Counties and that the decisions made by the City will have significant socioeconomic and ecological impacts to the region. COL applauds the City for its investments to date in understanding the context and community vision to minimize impacts of its eventual water conversion. We believe that these next steps will be critical for a deeper understanding of that context from which the City and partners can explore opportunities.

The Regional Land Use Assessment will identify potential future land uses on Thornton properties by exploring the local land use context. The Water Optimization Study will explore how Thornton, farmers, conservation groups, local community members/stakeholders and other interested parties could restore irrigation on prime farmlands using non-Thornton owned water. The intent is to examine methods to retain a resilient base of prime irrigated lands, advance a more strategic approach to restoration and reclamation, and thoughtfully transition irrigated lands to non-irrigated agricultural, environmental or other purposes. As Thornton begins to physically convey its water out of the Poudre River Basin to the city for municipal uses in Thornton, this project aims to offer innovative and creative solutions to an on-going challenge being faced around the state of Colorado, while satisfying different and unique interests in the region.

The City of Thornton has already engaged us about its proposed planning efforts and how supporting this grant application will allow them to complete a study that is comprehensive, inclusive and provides optimum outcomes for everyone involved in the planning area. COL looks forward to continued participation in the City's process. As a committed partner, we believe there are opportunities to increase resiliency of remaining agricultural producers and to create ecological benefits and we hope that the City's work can become an example for municipal providers across the state.

Thank you for your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,



Sarah Parmar

Director of Conservation, Colorado Open Lands



November 24, 2020

Colorado Water Conservation Board:

The City of Greeley is writing to express our support for the City of Thornton's efforts to conduct a Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study related to the agricultural land owned by Thornton in Larimer and Weld Counties.

The City of Greeley is a regional hub for agriculture in northeast Colorado. Agricultural production from irrigated lands fuels Greeley's economy, and the future sustainability of irrigated agriculture in Weld County is of paramount importance to our community. Greeley also continues to grow. The preservation of open space and agricultural heritage areas is of great interest to Greeley's residents. Greeley's Water & Sewer Department is also a large owner of farmland and irrigation water, including many of the same areas as Thornton's farms. For these reasons, it is with great interest that Greeley supports Thornton's willingness to study land and water use in northern Weld County.

The Regional Land Use Assessment will identify potential future land uses on Thornton properties by exploring the local land use context. The Water Optimization Study will explore how Thornton, farmers, conservation groups, and other interested parties could restore irrigation on prime farmlands using non-Thornton owned water. The intent is to examine methods to retain a resilient base of prime irrigated lands, advance a more strategic approach to restoration and reclamation, and thoughtfully transition irrigated lands to non-irrigated agricultural, environmental or other purposes. As Thornton begins to physically convey its water out of the Poudre River Basin to the city for municipal uses in Thornton, this project aims to offer innovative and creative solutions to an on-going challenge being faced around the state of Colorado, while satisfying different and unique interests in the region.

The City of Thornton has already engaged us about its proposed planning efforts and how supporting this grant application will allow them to complete a study that is comprehensive, inclusive and provides optimum outcomes for everyone involved in the planning area.

Thank you for your consideration of Thornton's project.

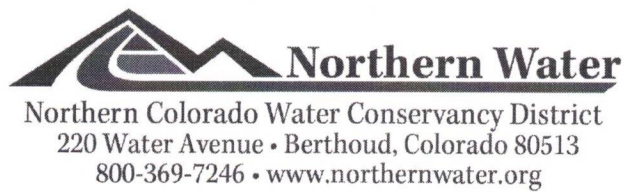
DocuSigned by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Chambers".

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Sean Chambers

Director of Water and Sewer Department



November 23, 2020

To the Colorado Water Conservation Board:

We are writing to express our support for the City of Thornton's efforts to conduct a Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study related to the agricultural land owned by Thornton in Larimer and Weld Counties.

Northern Water staff actively participates in Basin Implementation Plan and Water Plan development efforts and other projects and processes that seek to address future municipal water supply gaps while maintaining the continued viability of agriculture in Northern Colorado. We know meeting water supply needs are inextricably tied to efficient use of water supplies and wise land use planning. We believe Thornton's Study will be valuable to meet these goals in this region.

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The City of Thornton has already engaged us about its proposed planning efforts and how supporting this grant application will allow them to complete a study that is comprehensive, inclusive and provides optimum outcomes for everyone involved in the planning area.

Thank you for your consideration of Thornton's project.

Sincerely,



Jim Hall, P.E.

Senior Project Engineer



**Julie Kallenberger**  
Colorado Water Center | Colorado State University  
E121 Engineering Building | 1033 Campus Delivery  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1033  
970.491.5124  
Julie.Kallenberger@colostate.edu  
watercenter.colostate.edu/prti

February 2, 2021

To the Colorado Water Conservation Board:

On behalf of the Poudre Runs Through It (PRTI) Study/Action Work Group, I am writing to express PRTI's support for the City of Thornton's efforts to conduct a Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study related to the agricultural land owned by Thornton in Larimer and Weld counties.

PRTI's membership includes about two dozen citizen experts representing a diversity of interests from the agricultural, environmental, municipal, industrial, recreational, business, development sectors throughout the Poudre River Basin. The goal of the PRTI is to build relationships and to put in action the initiatives they have identified, "to make the Poudre River the best example of a working river that's also healthy." With this goal in mind, PRTI supports the proposed grant activities directly related to these two studies. This letter of support does not represent individual members' official position, rather the PRTI Study/Action Work Group as a collective whole.

The Regional Land Use Assessment will identify potential future land uses on Thornton properties by exploring the local land use context. The Water Optimization Study will explore how Thornton, farmers, conservation groups, and other interested parties could restore irrigation on prime farmlands using non-Thornton owned water. The intent is to examine methods to retain a resilient base of prime irrigated lands, advance a more strategic approach to restoration and reclamation, and thoughtfully transition irrigated lands to non-irrigated agricultural, environmental or other purposes. As Thornton begins to physically convey its water out of the Poudre River Basin to the city for municipal uses in Thornton, this project aims to offer innovative and creative solutions to an on-going challenge being faced around the state of Colorado, while satisfying different and unique interests in the region.

The City of Thornton has already engaged PRTI about its proposed planning efforts and how supporting this grant application will allow them to complete a study that is comprehensive, inclusive and provides optimum outcomes for everyone involved in the planning area.

Thank you for your consideration of Thornton's grant application.

Regards,  
*Julie Kallenberger*

Julie Kallenberger  
PRTI Facilitator  
Associate Director  
Colorado Water Center



**The Water Supply and Storage Company**  
**PO Box 2017**  
**Fort Collins, CO 80522-2017**  
**970 482-3433**

January 24, 2021

To the Colorado Water Conservation Board:

The Water Supply and Storage Company (the "Company") is a Colorado mutual ditch company delivering water for agricultural and municipal purposes. The City of Thornton owns approximately 47% of the outstanding shares of stock in the Company, and has begun to transition some of its ownership from agricultural use to municipal use. This transition involves the need to manage historically irrigated lands in a sustainable manner. Thornton's Regional Land Use Assessment and Water Optimization Study is a forward-looking approach which the Company hopes will have positive impacts on the area and the Company's remaining agricultural shareholders.

With this letter, the Company desires to express its support of the study to the Board. Thornton has engaged the Company as a stakeholder in the planning process and the Company looks forward to continuing to work with Thornton on the transition of its water rights and land away from irrigation in a manner mutually beneficial to Thornton, the Company and the region as a whole.

Keith Amen  
President