

Last Updated: May 2021

<b>Colorado Water Conservation Board</b>
<b>Water Plan Grant – Statement of Work – Exhibit A</b>

Statement Of Work	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Name of Grantee:</b>	<b>Water Education Colorado</b>
<b>Name of Water Project:</b>	<b>Advancing a Coordinated and Collaborative Approach to Water Education and Outreach via the Water Educator Network through 2025</b>
<b>Funding Source:</b>	<b>CWP Grants - Education and Innovation Grant Fund</b>
<b>Water Project Overview:</b>	
<p>This grant will support, coordinate and strengthen the <b>Water Educator Network</b> over a 3-year project period through regular communications, trainings and collaborations, and improved vehicles for sharing resources.</p> <p>Established in 2014, the Water Educator Network (WEN) supports and connects Colorado’s education and outreach professionals dedicated to advancing understanding about water under the leadership of Water Education Colorado. In recent years, WEco has emphasized Colorado Water Plan Education and Outreach objectives in WEN trainings and activities via the strategic framework of the Statewide Water Education Action Plan for Colorado (SWEAP).</p> <p>To help advance the updated Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan in collaboration with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), WEco will continue to serve as a coordinating “backbone” organization to foster and guide a collective impact model for water education in Colorado through its leadership role in WEN.</p> <p>To do this, WEco will facilitate increased participation and coordination, peer-to-peer learning, and sharing of resources and best practices for effective water education and outreach via publication of a quarterly WEN newsletter, four annual training workshops and two annual webinars, and ongoing maintenance and development of the Water Educator Network directory.</p> <p>WEco is uniquely positioned to ensure WEN activities align with the priorities of the CWCB and Basin Roundtables through its strong relationships with the Colorado Water Conservation Board, Interbasin Compact Committee, PEPO liaisons, and Basin Roundtables. We will consult the education goals and strategies incorporated into Basin Implementation Plans, Education Action Plans, the Colorado Water Plan update, and the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) to guide WEN activities and priorities.</p>	
<b>Project Objectives:</b>	



Last Updated: May 2021

- **Ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach to implementing the Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan and Statewide Water Education Action Plan.**
- **Coordinate and strengthen water education activities statewide by improving educators’ skills, providing access to tools and resources, and fostering connection and coordination among educators.**
- **Improve approaches to water education topics and methods through the Water Educator Network by synthesizing learning from existing surveys.**
- **Working collectively with WEN affiliates, increase reach to Coloradans from diverse backgrounds and geographies, providing critical information and educational opportunities to help them lend an informed perspective to water discourse and decision making for balanced solutions.**

## Tasks

### Task 1 – Water Educator Network Year 1 Activities

**Description of Task:**

- 4 workshops and/or trainings for water educators in different locations around the state
- 2 webinar trainings
- Develop and support initial affinity group(s) structure
- Perform the functions of Host Institution for Colorado Project WET
- Maintain WEN affiliates roster, WEN Directory, WEN Google Group, and SWEAP website as platforms for shared resources and improved coordination
- Distribute a quarterly WEN newsletter

**Method/Procedure:**

- Assess the driving factors behind renewal of WEN affiliations, through listening sessions with current and lapsed WEN affiliates
- Identify a series of professional development trainings that would benefit educators throughout the state, by conducting listening sessions with WEN affiliates and reviewing the results of recent surveys, including (but not limited to):
  - CWCB 2021 Water Awareness Survey
  - Colorado Water Awareness, Knowledge and Behaviors Survey (UC-Denver Capstone Project)
  - Public Opinions on Water Quality Issues (CDPHE et al)
  - Aurora Water Awareness Survey
  - Colorado PK-12 Water Education Status and Opportunities Survey
  - Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) Implementation Google Form
  - Current assessment of SWEAP implementation status and gaps
  - Early feedback from the Water ‘22 public awareness campaign
  - Annual Water Festival Coordinators survey
- Plan training session concepts
- Recruit teachers/facilitators as needed



Last Updated: May 2021

- Secure training facility and needed materials
- Advertise and manage registration process
- Implement/facilitate trainings
- Evaluate each training and use results to inform subsequent trainings
- Develop a leadership structure, meeting calendar, and communication channel for initial affinity group(s), which could include one or more of the following depending on interest and timeliness: water festival coordinators, coordinators of water-related teacher professional development workshops/institutes, Project WET Facilitators, and/or university water centers.
- Maintain WEN Directory
- Develop and distribute a quarterly WEN newsletter

**Deliverable:**

A six-month and a year-end report documenting program activities, participation and reach, program evaluation highlights, expected outcomes, and next steps.

**Tasks**

**Task 2 – Water Education Network Year 2 Activities**

**Description of Task:**

- 4 workshops and/or trainings for water educators in different locations around the state
- 2 webinar trainings
- Develop and support additional affinity group(s)
- Perform the functions of Host Institution for Colorado Project WET
- Maintain WEN affiliates roster, WEN Directory, WEN Google Group, and SWEAP website
- Distribute a quarterly WEN newsletter



Last Updated: May 2021

Method/Procedure:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify a series of professional development trainings that would benefit educators throughout the state, informed by listening sessions with WEN affiliates and findings from recent surveys.</li> <li>● Plan training session concepts</li> <li>● Recruit teachers/facilitators as needed</li> <li>● Advertise and manage registration process</li> <li>● Secure training facility and needed materials</li> <li>● Implement/facilitate trainings</li> <li>● Evaluate each training and use results to inform subsequent trainings</li> <li>● Ensure existing affiliate groups maintain a leadership structure, meeting calendar, and communication channel</li> <li>● Develop a leadership structure, meeting calendar, and communication channel for initial affinity group(s), which could include one or more of the following depending on interest and timeliness: water festival coordinators, coordinators of water-related teacher professional development workshops/institutes, Project WET Facilitators, and/or university water centers.</li> <li>● Maintain WEN affiliates roster, WEN Directory, WEN Google Group, and SWEAP website</li> <li>● Develop and distribute a quarterly WEN newsletter</li> </ul>
Deliverable:
<p>A six-month and a year-end report documenting program activities, participation and reach, program evaluation highlights, expected outcomes, and next steps.</p>

Tasks
<b>Task 3 – Water Education Network Year 3 Activities</b>
Description of Task:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 4 workshops and/or trainings for water educators in different locations around the state</li> <li>● 2 webinar trainings</li> <li>● Maintain, adapt, and support additional affinity group(s) based on learning</li> <li>● Perform the functions of Host Institution for Colorado Project WET</li> <li>● Maintain WEN affiliates roster, WEN Directory, WEN Google Group, and SWEAP website</li> <li>● Distribute a quarterly WEN newsletter</li> </ul>



Last Updated: May 2021

Method/Procedure:

- Identify a series of professional development trainings that would benefit educators throughout the state, informed by listening sessions with Water Educator Network affiliates and findings from recent surveys.
- Plan training session concepts
- Recruit teachers/facilitators as needed
- Advertise and manage registration process
- Secure training facility and needed materials
- Implement/facilitate trainings
- Evaluate each training and use results to inform subsequent trainings
- Ensure existing affiliate groups maintain a leadership structure, meeting calendar, and communication channel
- Maintain WEN affiliates roster, WEN Directory, WEN Google Group, and SWEAP website
- Develop and distribute a quarterly WEN newsletter

Deliverable:

A six-month and a year-end report documenting program activities, participation and reach, program evaluation highlights, expected outcomes, and next steps.



Last Updated: May 2021

### Budget and Schedule

This Statement of Work shall be accompanied by a combined Budget and Schedule that reflects the Tasks identified in the Statement of Work and shall be submitted to CWCB in excel format.

### Reporting Requirements

**Progress Reports:** The applicant 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.

**Final Report:** At completion of the project, the applicant shall provide the CWCB a Final Report on the applicant's letterhead that:

- Summarizes the project and how the project was completed.
- Describes any obstacles encountered, and how these obstacles were overcome.
- Confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled.
- Includes photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.

The CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the 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 purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

### Payment

Payment will be made based on actual expenditures and must include invoices for all work completed. 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.

Costs incurred prior to the effective date of this contract are not reimbursable. The last 10% of the entire grant will be paid out when the final deliverable has been received. All products, data and information developed as a result of this contract must be provided to as part of the project documentation.

### Performance Measures

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 C. Per Grant Guidelines, the CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the 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 purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

(b) Accountability: Per 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 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.



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Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

Last Updated: May 2021

(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 Updated: May 2021

## ENGAGEMENT & INNOVATION GRANT FUND SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION

### Introduction & Purpose

Colorado’s Water Plan calls for an outreach, education, public engagement, and innovation grant fund in Chapter 9.5.

The overall goal of the Engagement & Innovation Grant Fund is to enhance Colorado’s water communication, outreach, education, and public engagement efforts; advance Colorado’s water supply planning process; and support a statewide water innovation ecosystem.

The grant fund aims to engage the public to promote well-informed community discourse regarding balanced water solutions statewide. The grant fund aims to support water innovation in Colorado. The grant fund prioritizes measuring and evaluating the success of programs, projects, and initiatives. The grant fund prioritizes efforts designed using research, data, and best practices. The grant fund prioritizes a commitment to collaboration and community engagement. The grant fund will support local and statewide efforts.

The grant fund is divided into two tracks: engagement and innovation. The Engagement Track supports education, outreach, communication, and public participation efforts related to water. The Innovation Track supports efforts that advance the water innovation ecosystem in Colorado.

### Application Questions

\*The grant fund request is referred to as “project” in this application.

Overview (answer for both tracks)
<p>In a few sentences, what is the overall goal of this project? How does it achieve the stated purpose of this grant fund (above)?</p>
<p>The goal of this project is to enable Water Education Colorado to continue supporting and strengthening the statewide Water Educator Network in order to achieve collective impact on Colorado Water Plan education and outreach goals.</p> <p>Established in 2014, the Water Educator Network (WEN) exists to both coordinate activities and increase the capacity of local water educators by providing affiliates with tools, trainings and collaborations that are relevant to their work, easily accessible, and simple to implement. WEN affiliates in turn advance understanding and community engagement in local communities across Colorado, using best practices in community education and outreach fostered through Network workshops, trainings and other resources. Those trainings and resources consistently incorporate a focus on program development that prioritizes measuring and evaluating program success, a stated goal of the grant program.</p> <p>For the past 2 years, the Network has also aimed to achieve collective impact through implementation of the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP), launched in Jan. 2020 as a framework for achieving Colorado Water Plan education and outreach objectives statewide. SWEAP includes shared, measurable outcomes to achieve the SWEAP impact of</p>



Last Updated: May 2021

“Coloradans engaged in well-informed community discourse and decision making regarding balanced water solutions,” another of the stated intents of this grant fund.

Who is/are the target audience(s)? How will you reach them? How will you involve the community?

The Water Educator Network’s target audience consists of local educators and outreach professionals working to inform a wide variety of youth and adult audiences and stakeholder groups. WEN affiliates also encourage informed participation in their communities around water. Network affiliates in turn deliver programs that reach thousands of Colorado students, community members, and policy makers across the state. Water Education Colorado will continue to develop Network affiliates’ capacity to reach their audiences through growing the Network affiliate program, continued partner development in each river basin, and marketing programs through local water, school and community groups.

Describe how the project is collaborative or engages a diverse group of stakeholders. Who are the partners in the project? Do you have other funding partners or sources?

The Water Educator Network has 70 current affiliates and WEco is following up to update information from 16 additional affiliates. In addition, WEco maintains a list of more than 570 additional prospective affiliates and 78 individuals interested in SWEAP notifications. Network affiliates are education and outreach professionals engaged in a wide variety of educational activities throughout the state. The Network serves as an umbrella group/association for these professionals to coordinate, improve, and advance individual educational efforts. To deliver resources and trainings effectively across the state, WEco partners with numerous groups depending on geographic area and works with WEN affiliates themselves to identify relevant topics for trainings and resources. Examples of the diverse range of WEN affiliates are local watershed groups, university water centers, nature centers, other nonprofits, water providers, formal K-12 classroom educators, school district curriculum leads and more. When traveling around the state with programs, we work to make sure we are inclusive of our partnerships and market offerings to as many people as possible to attract a diverse audience.

To better support the Water Educator Network, WEco staff continue to collaborate with other environmental education efforts in the state. Led by the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CAEE), Colorado’s host institutions for Project WET (WEco), Project Learning Tree (Colorado State Forest Service and CAEE), Project WILD (Colorado Parks and Wildlife) and Ag in the Classroom (Colorado Foundation for Agriculture) continue to convene semi-regularly to share updates and coordinate programming and resource development. As host institution for Project WET in Colorado, these connections have led to major advancements for WEco and our support for the Water Educator Network. These relationships also led to closer connection with staff at the Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Parks and Wildlife, who advised directly on the development of the *Critical Water Concepts and*

Last Updated: May 2021

*Colorado Academic Standards: Toolkit for Colorado Educators and Organizations*, a major outcome of SWEAP and a key resource for Water Educator Network affiliates working with PK-12 audiences. As a result of these relationships, WEco has presented on water education tools at the Advancing Environmental Education Conference, the Colorado Science Conference, and additional webinars for educators sponsored by CAEE.

As host institution for Project WET in Colorado, WEco maintains a connection to the national Project WET Foundation and sister host institutions, such as the Arizona Project WET and the California Project WET program at the Water Education Foundation. By attending Project WET webinars and the annual Project WET Conference, WEco staff are able to share best practices from other states to Water Educator Network affiliates. WEco staff recently presented a virtual lesson on water law to Project WET coordinators from around the country and Canada, many of whom were less familiar with the Doctrine of Prior Appropriation.

This year, WEco was able to leverage federal, state and non-profit partnerships to secure additional support for K-12 water education in Colorado through a partnership with the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education, who oversees the Americorps eeCorps program with Serve Colorado. This allowed for a full-time eeCorps member to serve with WEco as K-12 Water Educator Liaison through July 2022. This Americorps member will conduct a survey of PK-12 schools and districts, lead Project WET trainings, coordinate a professional development unit for Denver Public Schools teachers with Denver Water and City and County of Denver Stormwater Education, and will help lead a showcase of K-12 student work as a component of the Water '22 public awareness campaign. As a result of the individual outreach to achieve these tasks, this AmeriCorps member will also strengthen the Water Educator Network and help recruit a diversity of new affiliates involved in PK-12 education.

Other funding to support this project comes from WEco's membership program, the annual scope of work for WEco's state legislative funding allocation through the CWCB Construction Fund, small county government grants, sponsorships, and nominal participant registration fees for WEN trainings. Additionally, WEco recently applied for a grant to support the eeCORPS position but did not receive it. We will continue to apply for new opportunities to obtain dedicated support for this position as well as our role as the official Colorado host institution for Project WET.

Describe how you plan to measure and evaluate the success and impact of the project?

Water Education Colorado has numerous evaluation processes in place and honed over time to measure the success and impact of programs. We collect basic data on overall reach and demographic and geographic data, as well as more complex data on the ability of programs to inform and equip participants for participation in discourse and decision making in their communities. We also solicit participant feedback on overall program value and possibilities for improvement. We will continue to collect and report this type of data for all Water Educator Network activities. In addition, WEco is committed to tracking participation in implementation

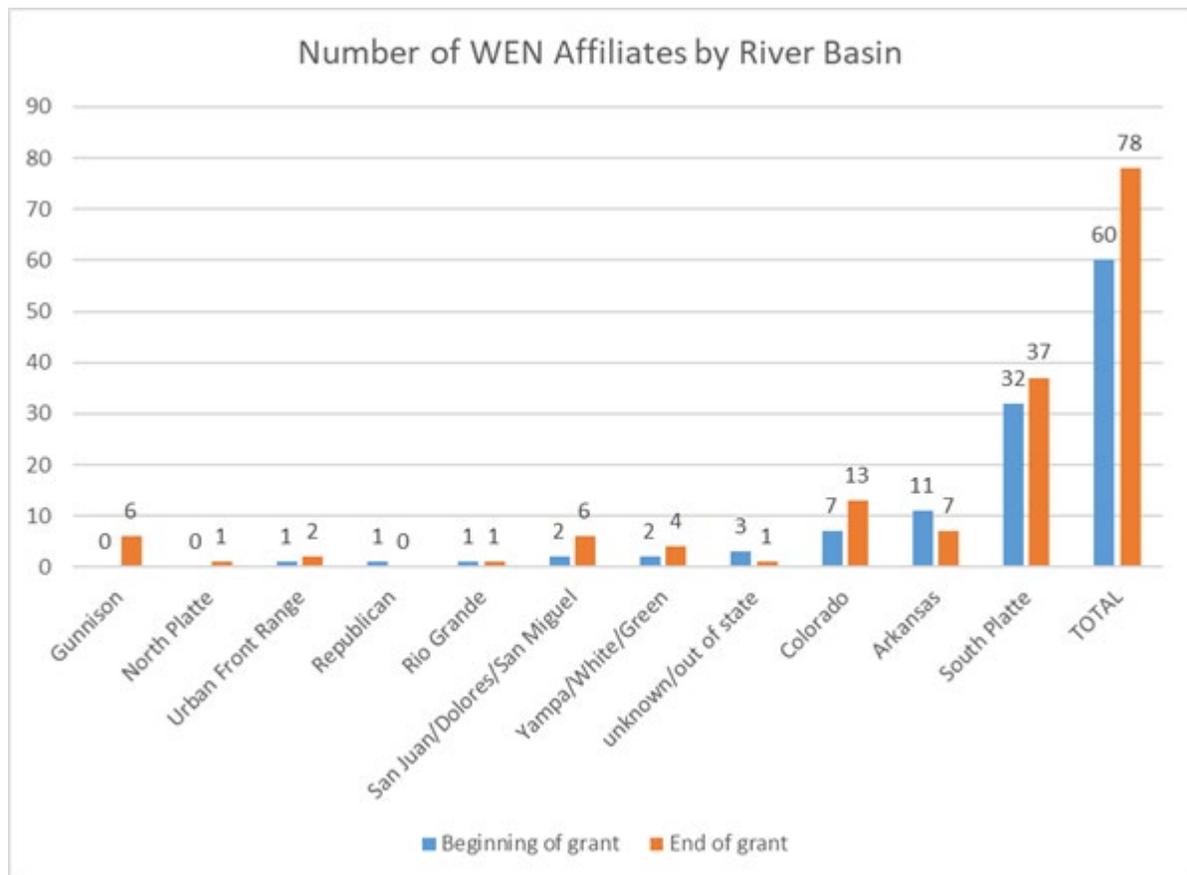


Last Updated: May 2021

of strategies identified in the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) as well as progress toward SWEAP outcomes as part of leading the Water Educator Network to achieve collective impact.

What research, evidence, and data support your project?

**2021 Expansion of the Water Educator Network - Final Report (Grant CTGG1 2018-1605):** With support of a previous Water Plan Grant, the Water Educator Network grew between March 2018 and the end of the grant period, June 2021, in both number of affiliates and in geographic distribution. Total concurrently active affiliates increased from 60 in March 2018 to 78 in June 2021. We added 18 net affiliates from the Western Slope (Gunnison, San Juan/Dolores/San Miguel, and Yampa/White/Green). We also added additional affiliates from the major population centers in the Denver Metro area (as part of the South Platte watershed). As of June 2021, we had all river basins represented through WEN affiliates except for the Republican River Basin. Evaluation data cited in the report shows general satisfaction with professional development offerings and WEco’s role in leading the Water Educator Network.





Last Updated: May 2021

**2021-2022 Colorado PK-12 Water Education Status and Opportunities Survey:** This survey for teachers, curriculum leads and administrators opened in November 2021 and will remain open through February 22, 2022. WEco will use these survey results to identify gaps and opportunities and work with local organizations and educators via the Water Educator Network where opportunities exist to fill these gaps and where there is interest in doing so. Based on 5 early responses, which included the middle school science curriculum lead from Denver Public Schools and others on the Front Range, only two said they partner with water-focused organizations or water educators to help support teachers in discussing water topics, while 4 out of 5 were interested in partnering with water education organizations to develop programs specific to their district's water issues (the fifth was interested in professional development opportunities, but not creating a new program). This reinforces the continued need for a connector like the Water Educator Network between schools and organizations and individuals with water education expertise. The Water Educator Network Directory created under a previous Colorado Water Plan grant was a first step in making these partnerships easier for teachers and administrators.

**2021 UC Denver Capstone Project - *Colorado Water: Awareness, Knowledge, and Behaviors* (by Brenna Birt):** Additional data comes from a 2021 capstone project by University of Denver student, Brenna Birt. Birt interviewed 11 Water Educator Network affiliates, who represented a variety of organizations and focuses for improving Colorado water literacy. The purpose was to gather data about water education and outreach initiatives, with an intended focus on public awareness campaigns, by determining how each organization progresses water literacy within their area of effect and any successes or lessons learned they can share from past and current efforts. Birt found that the most effective practices are hands-on activities and experiences and collaboration. According to Birt, "Collaborations were mentioned in 8 interviews as working together or partnering with sister agencies, local groups, or forming public private partnerships." WEco seeks to spark this type of collaboration through the Water Educator Network.

**2020-2025 Statewide Water Education Action Plan:** A common agenda for water education's goal in achieving sustainable water for Colorado by 2050.

The research and analysis for developing SWEAP was informed by:

- 61 individual and small group phone interviews
- A coalition of 30 experts from around the state with diverse experience and perspectives in water education; the Coalition came together to build the strategic framework
- One World One Water, Water Education Asset Mapping Project, 2018
- 2008 Water Education Task Force Report
- ThinkWater Systems Analysis and ThinkWater staff
- A review of related documents, data and surveys shared by the SWEAP Coalition

After completion of SWEAP, Water Education Colorado participated in over 50 meetings and presentations specific to SWEAP implementation, and sought feedback on future phases of SWEAP implementation during almost every one of these meetings.



Last Updated: May 2021

WEco also received feedback from over 40 organizations who completed the SWEAP Google Form. Participants were asked, “What resources would be most helpful to your organization or program for implementing SWEAP?”

- 91% wanted opportunities to collaborate with other water educators, *which highlights the importance of WECo’s role in continuing to support the Water Educator Network*
- 77% wanted Training/Professional Development on SWEAP strategies or tracking metrics, *which supports efforts to develop protocols for SWEAP metrics and to offer regular professional development opportunities through the Water Educator Network*
- 73% wanted educational materials to distribute to audiences, *which supports the efforts to build educator capacity through the development of shared resources in this grant*

When asked, “Which SWEAP Outcomes best align with your current organizational goals and/or programs?” participants reported as follows:

- 89% aligned to the awareness outcome
- 66% aligned to the Critical Water Concepts outcome
- 82% aligned to the outcome regarding knowledge necessary to take an active role in water stewardship
- 73% aligned to the sustainable water behaviors outcome

**2020-2025 Water Education Colorado Strategic Plan:** Includes an imperative identified by the WEco board to serve as a lead for SWEAP implementation in continuing to coordinate and work through the Water Educator Network.

**2018 Water Education Asset Map:** The Water Education Asset Mapping Project was a good first step in preparing to develop a common vision for the Water Educator Network. The Asset Mapping project, completed by the One World One Water Center at Metro State University in 2018 through a CWCB grant, reported on successful water education programs and tools being implemented statewide, as well as self-identified gaps in programming and capacity noted by the water education organizations who informed the study. WEco supported this project by connecting OWOW staff to our WEN members as a critical source of data collection. The results of this work, as well as the early engagement of stakeholders participating in the project, helped inform the development of SWEAP.

**2012 Colorado Water 2012 Initiative Final Report:** WEco received a Water Supply Reserve Fund grant to support its role in spearheading Water 2012. This report summarizes the activities and the results of that initiative, which included participation by more than 600 entities across Colorado and a total reach of more than 500,000 audience members. Water 2012 helped spur development of the Water Educator Network.

**2008 Water Education Task Force Report:** WEco produced this report for CWCB in 2008 in partnership with the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education and the Colorado Watershed Network. The report’s goal was to inform CWCB on the status of water education programs in Colorado and provide recommendations for addressing gaps. This was the

Last Updated: May 2021

guiding document in creating what is now the Water Educator Network run by WEco, and SWEAP will serve as a more actionable, comprehensive and broadly useful update of the original task force report's recommendations.

**WEco Evaluations/Impact Reporting:** Water Education Colorado has extensive historical and current data from pre- and post-program evaluations as well as from annual member and supporter surveys that we use to shape and evolve our programs, as well as demonstrate impact. These data are a key resource in the design and development of professional development opportunities for the Water Educator Network.

Describe potential short- and long-term challenges with this project.

As we continue to grow/expand the Water Educator Network (WEN), we are working to reach more educators across Colorado while also continuing to nurture and develop current Network affiliates. Below are a few challenges that we have encountered along the way, which will continue to be addressed with support from these funds.

(1) **Capacity constraints** - Staff at WEco supporting WEN have a diverse range of competing tasks. Using this capacity to continually seek funding and support for a core service like the Water Educator Network strains our ability to effectively deliver all educational programs. Having three years of dedicated funding to support WEN will continue allowing us to develop a solid foundation for WEN, which will increase our ability to leverage these funds to create a sustainable, long-term program.

(2) **Varied and changing interest from WEN affiliates and reengaging lapsed affiliates** - While the number of WEN affiliates grew during the time of the previous grant from March 2018-June 2021, of the 60 WEN members participating at the start of the grant, only 22 were current WEN affiliates as of June 2021. During the grant period, 135 total people were part of WEN as members or affiliates, signing up for the first time or renewing their WEN commitment. Of those people, 59 were no longer current WEN affiliates as of June 2021. For our efforts with WEN to be successful, we plan to do further analysis under this new grant to figure out what is leading to this lapse in memberships/affiliation. It's possible that the lapse is due purely to turnover in positions at different organizations, or changes in capacity that no longer provide the support for participation in outside events. Or it could be that a more passive approach to renewing the affiliation, which occurs mostly via email, is leading to this lapse.

We also would like to know whether the offerings provided in WEN workshops and communication remain relevant. We intend to host listening sessions with current and lapsed affiliates to better understand this dynamic. Developing programs on an annual basis based on the needs and wants of local communities is a challenge. We focus a lot of time on the front-end of programs to make sure topics are vetted and important to cover. We have to be an active ear in a lot of different conversations to keep up,

Last Updated: May 2021

and sometimes we have to be proactive in facilitating these conversations. The listening sessions will be used as a way of addressing, in the short-term, the highest priority needs among educators, to help determine and develop the best approaches for K-12 programming and to set the focus for future WEN trainings. Educators across the state have a multitude of training focus areas that they need help developing educational tools for, so we want to ensure that we select the best training topics possible to reach the widest audience.

(3) **Communication needs to be reset again in the context of the pandemic-** During the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, a lack of events and activity led to a change in communication needs. Communication with WEN affiliates became more single subject and single topic focused. For example, updates on SWEAP implementation or feedback requested on events or the Water Educator Network Directory. With the likelihood of events and hiring ramping back up again over the course of this grant, there will be more opportunities and likely more desire for continued communication on a range of topics, so we look forward to re-initiating our regular newsletter. We are committed to a quarterly WEN newsletter as a component of this grant.

(4) **Delivering on a common vision** - In response to a request from the Water Educator Network for a common vision for water education and as a way to support implementation of the Colorado Water Plan’s Education and Outreach Objectives, the SWEAP Coalition established some high bars as expressed in the SWEAP Outcomes. Coordinating and ultimately accomplishing these outcomes in the timeframe identified (2020-2025) given current capacity constraints for WEco and many other nonprofit education institutions will be a challenge. To be successful in working with WEN to carry forward SWEAP implementation for the full five-year timeframe of the plan, WEco will require additional funding. This grant will be a tremendous support in that regard.

Please fill out the applicable questions for either the Engagement Track or Innovation Track, unless your project contains elements in both tracks. If a question does not relate to your project, just leave it blank. Please answer each question that relates to your project. Please reference the relevant documents and use chapters and page numbers (Colorado’s Water Plan, Basin Implementation Plan, PEPO Education Action Plan, etc.).

**Engagement Track**

Describe how the project achieves the education, outreach, and public engagement measurable objective set forth in Colorado’s Water Plan to “significantly improve the level of public awareness and engagement regarding water issues statewide by 2020, as determined by water awareness surveys.”

Last Updated: May 2021

Water Education Colorado's project to continue expanding public engagement and outreach capacity in Colorado through the Water Educator Network will not only help to implement the goals in Colorado's Water Plan, but our efforts will reach the most crucial people who have the platform to leverage our efforts and Colorado's Water Plan goals ten times over.

Through this funding we would work to magnify best practices on measuring impact, targeting audiences, and developing statewide best practice models surrounding public engagement on water issues. We are excited to have the baselines for this measurable objective provided by the 2021 CWCB Water Awareness Survey and the 2021 Colorado Water Awareness Knowledge, and Behaviors Survey conducted by Brenna Birt, a UC-Denver student, in collaboration with WEco. In addition to these surveys, we anticipate that the 2021-2022 Colorado PK-12 Water Education Status and Opportunities Survey and other efforts identified by the SWEAP Evaluation Protocols Task Force to establish baselines for SWEAP Outcomes will allow an opportunity to provide a fuller picture of statewide public awareness and engagement. A component of this grant will be to improve approaches to water education topics and methods through the Water Educator Network by synthesizing learning from these and other existing surveys.

To understand more specific ways in which support of the Water Educator Network can help reach the Water Plan's goals, it is helpful to review the outcomes and impacts of previous Water Plan Grant support for WEco's leadership role in the Water Educator Network cited in the June 2021 *Expansion of the Water Educator Network - Final Report (Grant CTGG1 2018-1605)*:

#### **Acted on feedback to establish common vision and shared strategy**

We held a focus group of Water Educator Network members in 2017 to help determine a way forward for WEN and identify priority needs/wants from the group. Members of the focus group, among other things, called for a shared vision, shared goals, and being able to tell a common story. This led to the development of the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) working with WEN and the SWEAP Coalition. The feedback from the focus group and leadership of WEN members in SWEAP provided a robust strategic framework that continues to be used as a guide by WEco as we develop new professional development workshops for WEN affiliates.

#### **Coordinated and accelerated water education activities statewide**

Through this previous Water Plan grant, we coordinated and accelerated water education activities statewide by improving educators' skills, providing access to tools and resources, and fostering connection among educators. Leadership within the Water Educator Network has grown to support this acceleration. With each Water Educator Network workshop, from the Symposium to Project WET workshops to Water Festival Coordinators Gatherings, WEN affiliates share their work and lead discussions with fellow water educators. WEN affiliates provide input into how these professional development events will be conducted, topics to



Last Updated: May 2021

focus on, and ideas for other professional development activities. Water Festival Coordinators workshops relied not only on affiliates to lead sections of the agenda for the annual Water Festival Coordinators Gathering, but to also participate in work groups that produce content ahead of the workshop.

Through the categories of expertise identified in the Water Educator Network Directory, we were able to specifically recruit WEN affiliates to participate in two task forces related to SWEAP implementation. Through a separate Water Plan grant, these task forces created resources that fill identified gaps for other educators.

As another example of how WEN affiliates are taking this leadership outward, a WEN affiliate recently presented to the 2021 Watershed Summit at Denver Botanic Gardens (also funded through CWCB Water Plan Grant funds) and explained how the work of Aurora Water connects to the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP).

### **Supported the Water Educator Network to reach more Coloradans**

When combined with the tools and framework provided by SWEAP, this more robust Water Educator Network is well positioned to reach more Coloradans with critical information and resources so they can understand water as a limited resource and be equipped to lend an informed perspective to water conversations and initiatives.

### **More interaction with stakeholders, partners and educators across the state**

With each of our WEN events, we conducted intentional outreach to new partners to ensure that we were reaching individuals with a diversity of perspective and strong expertise in the topic area. For WEco, an expected outcome would be that we would see more interaction with stakeholders, partners, and educators across the state in all areas including seeking input for developing workshops, attendance from more diverse audiences at all of our activities, and evaluating the effectiveness of our programs. Numerous examples of this expanded audience and network are detailed in the final report for the

Describe how the project achieves the other measurable objectives and critical goals and actions laid out in Colorado's Water Plan around the supply and demand gap; conservation; land use; agriculture; storage; watershed health, environment, and recreation; funding; and additional.

All of the water plan's critical goals and actions are part of the conversation that is important to WEco and to Water Educator Network affiliates as they work across the state to inform their communities and engage them to continue implementing the water plan's objectives.

The project envisions capacity development through shared resources and training opportunities to support the work of water educators around the state in equipping their audiences with the awareness, knowledge and skills needed to participate in discourse and decision making that advances the trajectory of all of these Colorado Water Plan measurable objectives. As we continue to prioritize capacity-building resources, we will consider alignment with the CWP measurable objectives as a key qualifier.



Last Updated: May 2021

Describe how the project achieves the education, outreach, and public engagement goals set forth in the applicable Basin Implementation Plan(s).

This project directly advances several of the BIP education, outreach and engagement goals listed on page 9-59 of the Colorado Water Plan:

1) Work closely with organizations that specialize in the facilitation of public education and outreach programs in order to leverage existing resources within each basin and increase overall impact. *WEco, by nature of its organizational mission and goals, will provide the bedrock expertise in public education and outreach, and the partnerships anticipated in planning and accomplishing this project will further increase impact at the basin and statewide scale.*

2) Enhance coordination and financial support that enable watershed groups and other grassroots organizations to effectively engage the public and increase participation. *Continued coordination with CWCB and other funders will improve the cohesiveness and focus of grant requests, as they reflect improved coordination and programming among entities engaged in the Water Educator Network.*

3) Establish metrics to evaluate the success and effectiveness of statewide and basin-level communication and education programs, and modify strategies as needed. *SWEAP is explicitly designed around an adaptive process of planning, implementation, assessment and renewal. The SWEAP Evaluation Protocols Task Force drafted a set of protocols for measuring SWEAP Outcomes. WEco will continue working with the Water Educator Network affiliates to incorporate these best practices for measuring impact of water education efforts over the course of this grant.*

For the past two and a half years, Water Education Colorado has been working with basins around the state to first develop and then begin to implement the shared vision and framework that is SWEAP. There is continued support for a strong coordination role in accomplishing the plan's outcomes, and WEco is a trusted organization well-positioned to fill that role. When looking at the draft updated BIPs released in October 2021, there is support for collaborative implementation of Water Plan Education and Outreach objectives statewide as well as using SWEAP as either a common vision or a guide to reference:

- Arkansas BIP Section 8. Outreach Strategies (Draft, Oct 2021): "In addition to working on basin projects and outreach, the Arkansas Basin PEPO Workshop also supports the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP)..."
- Colorado BIP PEPO Goals (Draft, Oct 2021): "Elevate awareness of the Colorado BIP and Colorado Water Plan knowledge and engagement opportunities: ...Reference



Last Updated: May 2021

Water Education Colorado’s Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP), and use where applicable.”

- Gunnison BIP Section 8. Outreach Strategies (Draft, Oct 2021): “Use the Gunnison BRT and PEPO educational platforms to engage and inform Coloradans by: ...Participating in state and regional activities that are consistent with guidance in the Statewide Water Education Action Plan.”
- North Platte BIP Strategies to Foster Project Acceptance (Draft, Oct 2021): “The North Platte BRT can promote public education and outreach to change perceptions by: Working closely with organizations that specialize in public education and outreach facilitation, such as Water Education Colorado (WECO).”
- South Platte BIP Strategies (Draft, Oct 2021): “Support the South Platte Basin’s participation with the Colorado Water Education Action Planning (SWEAP) process to engage South Platte Basin residents in better understanding the South Platte BIP and in encouraging an active role in their communities to promote informed decisions about critical water issues.”
- South Platte BIP Outreach Strategies: “The South Platte and Metro BRTs carry out Public Education, Participation, and Outreach activities and a joint Education Action Plan that aligns with the 10 key outcomes in the Statewide Water Education Action Plan.”
- Southwest BIP Section 8. Outreach Strategies (Draft, October 2021): “PEPO Liaison: The PEPO liaison will participate in CWCB education-related meetings webinars and attend statewide meetings and discussions regarding outreach and education efforts, particularly as they pertain to the Education Action Plan, BIP updates, and coordination with K-12 and higher education curriculum.”
- Yampa-White-Green BIP, Volume II Section 7. Public Education Participation, and Outreach: “Reference SWEAP (Statewide Water Education Action Plan) and use where applicable.”

To support the continued use of SWEAP as a guide, WEco sees the Water Educator Network as a critical resource for sharing best practices as they are developed and tested.

Describe how the project achieves the basin roundtable’s PEPO Education Action Plans.

Water Educator Network affiliates include Basin Roundtable PEPO liaisons and Water Education Colorado will continue to coordinate with those liaisons as well as other local educators to maximize the effectiveness of their activities.

When looking at updated EAPs, there is support for working collaboratively and utilizing SWEAP as a guide, which can each be fostered through involvement with the Water Educator Network. While the Colorado Water Plan Education and Outreach Objectives along with specific strategies in SWEAP provide a guide, targeted Water Educator Network trainings and collaborations will be needed to effectively move from plan to implementation on relevant PEPO efforts, including:



Last Updated: May 2021

- Colorado EAP Goals (2021-2023): “Elevate awareness of the Colorado BIP and Colorado Water Plan knowledge and engagement opportunities: ...Reference Water Education Colorado’s Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP), and use where applicable.”
- Gunnison EAP (2021-2023): “These educational platforms and delivery mechanisms will engage and inform Coloradoans by:
  - h. Collaborating with K-12 educators, especially those involved with water-related activities (e.g., seminars, field trips, and public forums)
  - i. Partnering with related higher education facilities such as the Water Center at Colorado Mesa University, Western Colorado University’s Environmental and Sustainability Program (Water emphasis section) and Water Education Colorado (WEco) to share pertinent water resource information
  - j. Participating in state and regional activities that are consistent with guidance provided by the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP)”
- Rio Grande EAP (2021-2023): “Our Basin EAP includes strategies to implement the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) which is estimated to begin implementation in the next two years.” AND “...we also have an active PEPO liaison who will be supported to attend statewide meetings and discussions regarding outreach and education efforts, particularly as they pertain to SWEAP, Basin Implementation Plan updates, and coordination with K-12 and higher education curriculum.”
- South Platte EAP (2021-2023): Task 1 - Coordination and Facilitation: “Coordinate with Water Education Colorado (WECo) on the Statewide Education Action Plan (SWEAP).”
- Southwest EAP (2021-2023): “v. The PEPO representative, Elaine Chick, will participate in CWCB education related meeting/webinars, attend statewide meetings and discussions regarding outreach and education efforts, particularly as they pertain to SWEAP, BIP updates, and coordination with K-12 and higher education curriculum.” AND “How will programs be assessed/monitored? i. The PEPO representative, Elaine Chick, will participate in CWCB education related meeting/webinars, Water Educator Network workshops, attend statewide meetings and discussions regarding outreach and education efforts, particularly as they pertain to SWEAP, BIP updates, and coordination with K-12 and higher education curriculum.”

Support for the Water Educator Network will further support the success of each basin and PEPO in achieving education goals for different audiences. For example, many EAPs cite either ongoing or new efforts to engage teachers and youth as a target audience. WEco, as host institution for Project WET and leader in the development of the *Critical Water Concepts*

Last Updated: May 2021

*and Colorado Academic Standards: Toolkit for Colorado Educators and Organizations*, is uniquely positioned to support PEPO liaisons by connecting and providing resources through the Water Educator Network. Different mentions of K-12 involvement within EAPs include:

- “Collaborating with K-12 educators, especially those involved with water-related activities (e.g., seminars, field trips, and public forums)” - Gunnison EAP (2021-2023)
- “Coordination with K-12 and higher education curriculum.” - Rio Grande EAP (2021-2023)
- “Our communications strategy has identified these categories of stakeholders as our principal targeted audiences: Academic – Post-secondary educators and students...” - South Platte/Metro EAP (2021-2023)
- “...Coordination with K-12 and higher education curriculum.” - Southwest EAP (2021-2023)
- “Yampatika has received a WSRF grant from the YWG BRT to develop and provide to all the school districts within the Yampa and White Basins K-12 Water Education.” - Yampa-White-Green EAP (2020)

Innovation Track
Describe how the project enhances water innovation efforts and supports a water innovation ecosystem in Colorado.
N/A
Describe how the project engages/leverages Colorado’s innovation community to help solve our state’s water challenges.
N/A
Describe how the project helps advance or develop a solution to a water need identified through TAP-IN and other water innovation challenges. What is the problem/need/challenge?
N/A

Last Updated: May 2021

Describe how this project impacts current or emerging trends; technologies; clusters, sectors, or groups in water innovation.

N/A





Ben Wade Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman St., Room 718  
Denver, CO 80203

November 23, 2021

Dear CWCB Board and Staff members,

On behalf of the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education, I am honored to write this letter of support for Water Education Colorado's (WEco) grant request from the Colorado Water Plan Engagement & Innovation grant fund. This grant will support and strengthen the Water Educator Network through 2025 and will help support WEco's continued leadership role.

The Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education supports the many types of educators who teach concepts we all need to understand: how natural systems work, what we must do to interact responsibly with the environment, and how we can protect natural resources for future generations. We are the largest network of environmental educators in Colorado, our network serves over 800,000 learners. Collectively, we inspire educators, schools, and communities to impact conservation, education, social justice, health and wellness, and positive youth development. Water Education Colorado has been a long-time partner in the network and leader in water education in the larger Colorado environmental education community.

My experience advising WEco on the development and support of the Water Educator Network and my involvement in the development and implementation of the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) has demonstrated that WEco is uniquely qualified to help advance water education and outreach in Colorado as called for by the Colorado Water Plan.

I support WEco's efforts to help advance the updated Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan in collaboration with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). I further support the objectives of WEco's grant proposal, particularly 1) Ensuring a coordinated and collaborative approach to implementing the Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan and 2) Coordinating and strengthening water education activities statewide by improving educators' skills, providing access to tools and resources, and fostering connection among educators.

Over nearly 20 years, WEco has proven itself as the leader in water education for our state. I believe they are the right organization to continue providing these valuable services on behalf of all of Colorado.

Sincerely,

Katie Navin  
Executive Director, Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education

Environmental Education & Outreach  
15151 E. Alameda Pkwy, Ste. 3228  
Aurora, Colorado 80012  
303.739.7195



December 1, 2021

Ben Wade Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman St., Room 718  
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: WEco Colorado Water Plan Engagement & Innovation Grant Request

Dear CWCB Board and Staff members:

I am writing to express Aurora Water's support for Water Education Colorado's (WEco) grant request from the Colorado Water Plan Engagement & Innovation grant fund. This grant will support and strengthen the Water Educator Network through 2025. This Water Plan grant is important to WEco's role in leading the Water Educator Network and as the host institution for Project WET in Colorado.

Aurora Water's Environmental Education & Outreach Team have not only been providing robust water education programming in Aurora for over twenty-five years but have played an important role as leaders contributing to the expansion of statewide water education efforts. Our organization's experience advising WEco on development and support of the Water Educator Network, participating in annual Water Educator Network professional development opportunities, obtaining Project WET resources and our involvement with WEco in the development and implementation of the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) has shown us that WEco is uniquely qualified to help advance the need for water education and outreach cited in the Colorado Water Plan.

We support WEco's efforts to help advance the updated Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan in collaboration with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). We further support the objectives of WEco's grant proposal, particularly 1) Ensuring a coordinated and collaborative approach to implementing the Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan and 2) Coordinating and strengthening water education activities statewide by improving educators' skills, providing access to tools and resources, and fostering connection among educators.

Over nearly 20 years, WEco has proven itself as the leader in water education for our state. Our Environmental Education & Outreach Team has benefited from the support, coordination, networking and professional development opportunities we continue to receive from WEco. We believe they are the right organization to continue providing these valuable services on behalf of all of Colorado.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Natalie Brower-Kirton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Natalie Brower-Kirton  
Environmental Education and Outreach Program Manager  
Aurora Water, Office of Public Relations

Barr Lake/Milton Reservoir Watershed Association

December 1, 2021

Ben Wade Colorado Water Conservation Board

1313 Sherman St., Room 718

Denver, CO 80203

Subject: WEco Colorado Water Plan Engagement & Innovation Grant Request

Dear CWCB Board and Staff members,

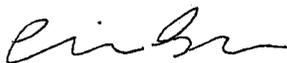
I am writing to express Barr Lake/Milton Reservoir Watershed Association's support for Water Education Colorado's (WEco) grant request from the Colorado Water Plan Engagement & Innovation grant fund. This grant will support and strengthen the Water Educator Network through 2025. This Water Plan grant is important to WEco's role in leading the Water Educator Network.

Our organization has been seeking an opportunity to support WEco in the implementation of the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) as WEco has shown itself to be uniquely qualified to help advance statewide needs for water education and outreach cited in the Colorado Water Plan.

We support WEco's efforts to help advance the updated Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan in collaboration with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). We further support the objectives of WEco's grant proposal, particularly 1) Ensuring a coordinated and collaborative approach to implementing the Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan and 2) Coordinating and strengthening water education activities statewide by improving educators' skills, providing access to tools and resources, and fostering connection among educators.

Over nearly 20 years, WEco has proven itself as the leader in water education for our state. We believe they are the right organization to continue providing these valuable services on behalf of all of Colorado.

Sincerely,



Erin Sandos, EIT

Barr Lake/Milton Reservoir Watershed Association Chairperson



**443-797-2878**

**[fountainckdist@gmail.com](mailto:fountainckdist@gmail.com)**

**[www.fountain-crk.org](http://www.fountain-crk.org)**

Mr. William Banks  
P.O. Box 26373,  
Colorado Springs, CO 80936-6373

December 9, 2021

Ben Wade Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman St., Room 718  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear CWCB Board and Staff members,

I am writing to express the Fountain Creek Watershed Flood Control and Greenway District's (District) support for Water Education Colorado's (WEco) grant request from the Colorado Water Plan Engagement & Innovation grant fund. This grant will support and strengthen the Water Educator Network through 2025, and will strengthen WEco's role in leading the Water Educator Network for our state.

The District is actively involved with the Water Education Network, its planning and programming. As a large watershed, we have found that working collaboratively is the best way to make the biggest impact for the most citizens. Resource sharing, educational and training opportunities, and speaking with the same voice/messaging all aid our mission of protecting and enhancing the Fountain Creek Watershed for local citizens and those downstream.

On behalf of the District's Board of Directors, we support WEco's grant proposal to continue coordinating the Education and Outreach objectives of the 2022 Colorado Water Plan which align with our initiatives, as well as to foster collaboration among water educators.

We look forward to helping elevate water education in Colorado along with WEco and know a grant award will aid significantly in this effort.

Sincerely,

William S. Banks  
Executive Director, Fountain Creek Flood Control and Greenway District.

**MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 26373, Colorado Springs, CO 80936-6373**



Dec. 1, 2021

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

RE: Match commitment for CWP grant, "Advancing a Coordinated and Collaborative Approach to Water Education and Outreach via the Water Educator Network through 2025"

Dear Ben:

This letter is to provide a statement of commitment that Water Education Colorado will contribute \$2,733 of in-kind match funds, in addition to \$107,000 in cash funds, to be secured via organizational sponsorships, nominal participant registration fees, a county grant, and WEco's annual funding allocation via the CWCB Construction Fund, to support the project for which we've applied for CWP grant funds entitled "Advancing a Coordinated and Collaborative Approach to Water Education and Outreach via the Water Educator Network through 2025" over a time period extending from May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2025.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jaye Poppleton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jaye Poppleton