



Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Colorado Ag Water Alliance
Name of Water Project	Agricultural Drought Resilience & Innovative Water Conservation
Grant Request Amount	\$190,575.00
Primary Category	\$190,575.00
<i>Agricultural Projects</i>	
Total Applicant Match	\$75,000.00
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	
	\$40,000.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	
	\$35,000.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	\$75,000.00
<i>The Nature Conservancy</i>	
	\$40,000.00
<i>Colorado Ag Water Alliance</i>	
	\$19,200.00
<i>Colorado Cattlemen's Association</i>	
	\$3,000.00
<i>Colorado Association of Conservation</i>	
	\$1,800.00
<i>Districts</i>	
	\$11,000.00
<i>Various Organizations</i>	
Total Project Cost	\$340,575.00

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Colorado Ag Water Alliance
 Mailing Address: 10440 W Fair Unit C Littleton CO 80127
 FEIN: 2,969,510

Organization Contact: Greg Peterson
 Position/Title: Email: coagwater@gmail.com
 Phone: 720-244-4629

Grant Management Contact: Greg Peterson
 Position/Title: Email: coagwater@gmail.com
 Phone: 720-244-4629

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Association of agricultural organization focused on education and outreach. Our mission is to support and preserve irrigated agriculture

Type of Eligible Entity

- Public (Government)
- Public (District)
- Public (Municipality)
- Ditch Company

- Private Incorporated
- Private Individual, Partnership, or Sole Proprietor
- Non-governmental Organization
- Covered Entity
- Other

Category of Water Project

- Agricultural Projects
Developing communications materials that specifically work with and educate the agricultural community on headwater restoration, identifying the state of the science of this type of work to assist agricultural users among others.
- Conservation & Land Use Planning
Activities and projects that implement long-term strategies for conservation, land use, and drought planning.
- Engagement & Innovation Activities
Activities and projects that support water education, outreach, and innovation efforts. Please fill out the Supplemental Application on the website.
- Watershed Restoration & Recreation
Projects that promote watershed health, environmental health, and recreation.
- Water Storage & Supply
Projects that facilitate the development of additional storage, artificial aquifer recharge, and dredging existing reservoirs to restore the reservoirs' full decreed capacity and Multi-beneficial projects and those projects identified in basin implementation plans to address the water supply and demand gap.

Location of Water Project

Latitude 39.550100
 Longitude 105.782100
 Lat Long Flag
 Water Source
 Basins Arkansas; Colorado; Gunnison; Metro; Yampa/White/Green; Rio Grande; South Platte; Southwest; Nort...
 Counties
 Districts

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type Agricultural
 Type of Water Project Construction
 Scheduled Start Date - Design 7/1/2022
 Scheduled Start Date - Construction 1/1/2024

Description

To tackle the urgency of the challenge, we need to significantly advance the scale and pace of agricultural drought resilience and strategic water conservation work. Adaptation strategies must be tailored to local conditions, needs, and opportunities. Agricultural producers and irrigation water providers are best suited to lead these efforts, given the local knowledge and level of trust required for success. This project will provide technical and financial resources directly to agricultural communities to develop and implement strategies to respond to a long-term decline in water supply reliability.

We will use Colorado Water Plan funding to:

- Convene and facilitate a multi-stakeholder advisory group to guide the project.
- Conduct outreach and technical assistance to agricultural communities to help develop ideas for adaptation strategies.
- Assist agricultural communities with acquiring the necessary resources to implement their strategies.

Measurable Results

New Storage Created (acre-feet)
New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive
Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)
New Storage Created (acre-feet)
Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)
Efficiency Savings (dollars/year)
Efficiency Savings (acre-feet/year)
Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)
Quantity of Water Shared through Alternative Transfer Mechanisms or water sharing agreement (acre-feet)
Number of Coloradans Impacted by Incorporating Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning
Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity

Other

We intend to support the development and implementation of at least 5 new innovative and scalable agricultural resilience projects.

Water Project Justification

Safeguarding productive agriculture is a cornerstone of Colorado's Water Plan and subsequent update documents, which articulate numerous challenges faced by the sector and the importance of innovation to overcome them.

The Colorado Water Plan Section 6.5.2 (6-138) states that,

In order to meet the objective to maintain agricultural economic productivity, innovation and technological improvements will be integral to future agricultural water management.

The Colorado Water Plan Update Sheet on Robust Agriculture notes that,

Colorado's agriculture sector and food supply chain face a variety of ongoing water resource challenges affecting its viability, which is defined as the ability to sustain profitable farm enterprises. These challenges include climate change, drought, extreme weather events, buy-and-dry pressure, and aging infrastructure.

In a section on economic viability and resiliency, the Update Sheet points out that,

Opportunities such as connecting growing demand for local food with the transition to lower-water crops can develop new market pathways for agricultural operations and community infrastructure, while maximizing remaining water supplies.

The Update Sheet's section on "Innovative Solutions & On-farm Improvements" further notes that,

Developing supplemental irrigation or augmentation supplies, implementing soil health practices, reducing

delivery losses and supporting innovative groundwater management solutions are critical to Colorado agriculture. Colorado must continue to invest in on-farm efficiency improvements where appropriate and practices that build adaptive capacity to drought and other water stressors.

This project responds directly to these statements about the need for innovation and the building of adaptive capacity in agriculture by channeling resources directly to agricultural communities to develop local strategies for long-term resilience to the stress of reduced water supply reliability.

Related Studies

This project is complementary to and builds on other work CAWA has done to reach out to agricultural producers to provide resources related to long-term planning, infrastructure upgrades and funding opportunities. These include:

- The current Master Irrigator program CAWA developed with ag partners in the Rio Grande and Republican River Basins with support from the CWCB.
- The Colorado Drought Advisors program, in which CAWA is also a partner, provides trainings and one-on-one consulting with farmers and ranchers to connect resources, identify/assess risk, and implement practices that lessen the impact of drought.

This project will build on that work to promote more scalable and innovative projects to respond to the prospect of long-term reductions in the reliability of water supplies.

This project also responds to conditions and strategies outlined in the following reports.

- “Managing Colorado River Risk,” by Brad Udall and John Fleck, Science, May 2021 (<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abj5498>)

This article summarizes scientific studies in recent years that have pointed to the impact of warming temperatures on decreasing streamflows, as a result of the decreasing efficiency of snowmelt due to the drying of soils and increased evapo-transpiration. This project responds to the reality of decreasing water supplies depicted in the article.

- Ten Strategies for Climate Resilience on the Colorado River Basin, by Martin & McCoy and Culp & Kelly, LLP for a collection of conservation organizations, July 2021. (<https://www.tenstrategies.net/>)

This report examines ten strategies to bolster climate resilience and mitigate the impact of climate change in the Colorado River Basin. This project will enable more producers to pursue projects that utilize three of these strategies: regenerative agriculture, upgrading agricultural infrastructure and operations, and cropping alternatives and new market pathways.

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

None