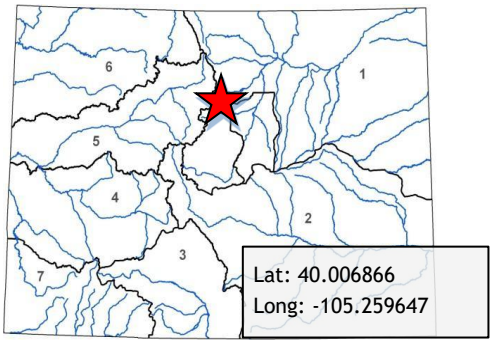
COLORADO
Colorado Water Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources

Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities Multiplier

March 2023 Board Meeting

Water Plan Grant Application



DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	$369,440
Water Plan Grant Request:	$184,720
Recommended amount:	$184,720
Other CWCB Funding:	$0
Other Funding Amount:	$0
Applicant Match:	$184,720
Project Type(s):	Other
Project Category:	Conservation & Land Use
Measurable Result: This project will help meet Colorado's Water Plan Goal of reducing the projected municipal water supply gap estimate of 740,000 acre feet of water by 2050.	

LOCATION
Counties: Statewide
Drainage Basins: Statewide

Project Overview: In partnership with their fiscal sponsor, Multiplier, WaterNow Alliance is proposing continuing their relationship with CWCB through this application aimed at connecting Colorado communities with federal WATERSMART and State Revolving Funds grants. Their intent is to leverage CWCB funding to aid these communities in developing, accelerating and funding high impact water use efficiency projects, in particular those that involve integrating water efficiency and land use planning.

This application has three distinct objectives; the first is to provide technical program assistance and capacity to at least four Colorado municipal water service providers through their Project Accelerator program. This support will be aimed at developing and completing projects that advance sustainable water management and the integration of water efficiency and land use planning. The second grant objective is to provide outreach and application support for the federal WaterSMART program, enabling 15 -20 Colorado cities to apply for federal funding over the course of the grant period to advance innovative and sustainable water supply objectives. Finally, the grantee plans to provide outreach support and research to identify the most promising approaches to support Colorado communities in applying for Revolving Fund (SRF) loans.

The goals of this project are supported by numerous state and basin plans. This proposed project aims to address the goals within the Vibrant Communities Action Area and Resilient Planning Action Areas of 2023 Water Plan by equitably supporting communities across the State as they work to reduce their municipal supply gaps, connect with available funding resources and proactively work to address conservation and land use needs. Finally, the actions outlined in this grant request support the engagement, education and outreach goals outlined in numerous basins' BIPs and could help bring numerous basins closer to addressing current and imminent supply gaps.

Funding Recommendation: Staff is recommending full funding at $184,720.

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Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Multiplier
Name of Water Project	Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities
Grant Request Amount	**$184,720.00**
Primary Category	$184,720.00
Conservation & Land Use Planning	
Total Applicant Match	**$184,720.00**
Applicant Cash Match	$184,720.00
Applicant In-Kind Match	$0.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	**$0.00**
Spring Point Partners	$0.00
Pisces Foundation	$0.00
Total Project Cost	**$369,440.00**

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Multiplier
Mailing Address: 548 Market Street, PMB 81178 San Francisco CA 94104-5401
FEIN: 912,166,435

Organization Contact: Liz Howard
Position/Title:
Phone: 680-207-3414
Email: liz@multiplier.org

Grant Management Contact: Liz Howard
Position/Title:
Phone: 680-207-3414
Email: liz@multiplier.org

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Multiplier is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) umbrella organization that accelerates impact for initiatives focused on protecting and fostering a healthy, sustainable, resilient, and equitable world.

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	40.006866
Longitude	-105.259647
Lat Long Flag	Default/Proponent headquarters: If the location cannot be defined with flags above, use location of project proponent headquarters
Water Source	N/A
Basins	Colorado; Gunnison; North Platte; Arkansas; Yampa/White/Green; Rio Grande; South Platte; Southwes...
Counties	
Districts	

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	
Type of Water Project	Planning
Scheduled Start Date - Design	7/1/2023
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	

Description

WaterNow seeks to renew CWCB support for our two initiatives to (1) accelerate adoption of high impact water use efficiency projects at the local level; and (2) increase federal funding support for water efficiency efforts in Colorado. Additionally, we seek to expand this project by laying the groundwork for an initiative to increase SRF financial support for municipal water use efficiency across the state through outreach and data gathering in regard to Colorado’s SRF opportunities. All three of these inter-related efforts are aimed at supporting primarily smaller-to-mid sized, under-resourced communities and will continue WaterNow’s current focus on the integration of water and land use planning.

WaterNow’s Project Accelerator provides 250-300 hours of pro bono assistance to communities to develop and/or implement projects, programs and policies advancing water use efficiency and other sustainable

strategies. We seek CWCB support for 4 new Colorado-based Accelerator projects as part of a regional cohort. Projects are selected based on local priorities that have the greatest potential for impact and replicability statewide and beyond, and the Accelerator also includes efforts to share learnings and resources from these projects with other communities.

We also seek renewal support for our program providing outreach and technical assistance support to Colorado communities in applying for federal WaterSMART grants. Over the past four years, we have supported dozens of Colorado communities in learning about and navigating aspects of the WaterSMART program, while providing deeper assistance for 15 successful applications. Those 15 applications received $6,314,338 in federal support, and leveraged a total of approximately $21 million for water efficiency programs. In the aggregate, these initiatives are expected to conserve 7,080 acre-feet; however, we expect the total actual water savings flowing from these programs will be significantly higher since this figure does not include savings from many of the WaterSMART grants we provide support on that do not require applicants to quantify water savings estimates (i.e., Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects [SWEP]).

We also plan to expand this body of work by providing outreach support and conducting research to identify the most promising approaches to support Colorado communities in applying for SRF loans. We plan to develop and conduct a survey for city and utility leaders to inform the potential structure and design for an application support program focused on connecting Colorado communities to take advantage of SRF loans and resources for distributed water infrastructure projects. The results of this effort will be used to draw broader conclusions about the best ways to provide direct support to communities as they consider if and how to apply for Colorado's Clean Water and Drinking Water SRF programs.

Particularly in light of new federal funding opportunities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the opportunity and need for WaterNow's WaterSMART and SRF assistance programs are substantial.

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

This project will help meet Colorado's Water Plan Goal of reducing the projected municipal water supply gap estimate of 740,000 acre feet of water by 2050.

Water Project Justification

WaterNow's project, "Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities" is specifically designed to support and advance many of the 2023 Water Plan's goals and partner actions in the Vibrant Communities and Resilient Planning action areas (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-1 – 6-61). It will also help reduce the projected municipal water supply gap estimate of 740,000 acre feet of water by 2050 (CWP 2023

Update, Chapter 3, pp. 3-21; Chapter 5, pp. 5-4). The proposal will support and continue to add to the available public outreach and education, land and water use planning integration, and water efficiency and collaboration projects tools and examples (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 5, pp. 5-9) that can help achieve these goals.

With CWCB's support over the last two years, WaterNow has been successfully advancing these objectives, and with this application seeks to ensure continuity of these efforts and the expansion of them to the extent feasible. These programs provide direct, hands-on assistance to communities to advance, accelerate, and fund high impact water efficiency projects. We will prioritize projects that integrate water and land use planning as a means of advancing water-savings actions at the local level. WaterNow also plans to substantially expand the impact of this body of work by exploring the most promising approaches to support Colorado communities in applying for State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans. This is critical now that substantial new funding has become available under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). WaterNow has the expertise, networks, and experience in Colorado to ensure the success of these closely related initiatives.

Background
Colorado communities are facing unprecedented, confounding challenges when it comes to managing their water resources. As of November 2022, the entire state was in "Exceptional Drought" to "Abnormally Dry" conditions , and the state has had three of the top five driest years on record since 2000 (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 3, pp. 3-14). At the same time, Colorado's population is projected to continue to grow rapidly, from 5.8 million people in 2022 to 8.5 million by 2050 (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 3, pp. 3-20), making it essential to accelerate local efforts to plan for and invest in large scale water use efficiency activities.

As the data shows, active water conservation strategies have substantial potential to significantly reduce per capita water consumption. Colorado's investments in water conservation and efficiency have decreased per capita municipal water use demand by 5% since 2008 (CWP 2023 Update, pp. 3-19). Based on experience elsewhere in the West, there remains considerable potential to continue to meet the Colorado Water Plan's goals for reducing municipal water demand through both passive and active water efficiency measures. Such strategies can include (but are not limited to) indoor water efficient fixture/appliance rebates and direct installation, indoor and outdoor water audits, turf replacement rebates and other irrigation efficiency incentives, such as smart irrigation controllers and high efficiency nozzles, alternative onsite water supplies like rainwater harvesting and graywater reuse, leak detection technologies, and water education initiatives, among many other tactics – many of which are identified in the Water Plan as agency and partner actions (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-1 – 6-61).

Land use planning, in particular, as the Water Plan has recognized, can make a significant difference in the water "footprint" of Colorado's growing population. One of the primary causes of the projected gap between Colorado's future water supply and demand is anticipated population growth. How this growth occurs is of utmost importance in managing future water supply and demand. As noted throughout the Colorado Water Plan, integrating water with land use planning is essential to ensuring that any future growth occurs as water-efficiently as possible (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 5, pp. 5-19; Chapter 6, pp. 6-10, 6-15). This reduces per capita water demand and builds community resilience in the face of climate change. In addition, integrating water efficiency into new development is significantly more cost effective than retrofitting developments in the future. Recognized tactics for incorporating water and land use planning include but are not limited to: (1) developing water efficient land development codes (i.e., turf limits; landscaping standards, etc.); (2) integrating water efficiency into comprehensive plans; (3) integrating land use planning into water efficiency plans; and (4) developing conservation-oriented tap fees or other incentives for efficient new development.

In order to make progress on implementing high impact water-smart growth strategies, communities must have access to sufficient funding. The Water Plan acknowledges that: "Local water providers often use customer water

rates and tap fees as the primary source of funding where the end user is directly connected with costs and investments; however, smaller communities bring in less money from these rates and fees, which puts them at a disadvantage in generating revenue" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 5, pp. 5-5). Many, if not most, municipal-owned utilities have experienced revenue shortfalls and budget cuts, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and still apparent today. The Water Plan identifies a funding gap of $1.5 billion – approximately $50 million per year through the planning horizon of 2050 – that CWCB would need to meet the identified project demands (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 3, pp. 3-40). Additionally, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), and the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority have cited a $14 billion need in their combined 2022 Drinking Water Revolving Fund (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 3, pp. 3-40). Increasing access to federal support from both USBR's WaterSMART programs and the Colorado State Revolving Fund (SRF) program – which fund many of the same types of projects and programs as CWCB's Water Plan Grants – is a key strategy for filling these funding gaps, particularly in light of the BIL and IRA funding opportunities.

WaterNow's Project Accelerator and WaterSMART Program Outreach & Application Assistance initiatives, and our proposed SRF outreach and polling initiative, all support and materially advance municipal water demand reductions and water-smart growth through high impact water efficiency program implementation and funding. Our substantial experience working with Colorado communities has made clear that while there is considerable talent and drive on the ground, many do not have the requisite staff capacity, expertise, information, and/or political support to fully develop, implement, and fund water efficiency initiatives. This project will facilitate bringing the requisite funds to under-resourced communities to help to overcome these challenges. We will also increase awareness and education around the numerous tools and strategies available to Colorado communities for increasing their water efficiency and incorporating water into land use planning.

This project supports the goals and partner actions identified in the Colorado Water Plan

WaterNow's proposed project, "Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities," supports many of the pillars identified in the Vibrant Communities Action Area and Resilient Planning Action Areas of Water Plan Update, and will help reduce the projected municipal water supply gap estimate of 740,000 acre feet of water by 2050. Because WaterNow operates on a statewide basis, we have grouped together various of the Roundtable Basin goals included in the Colorado Water Plan 2023 together with the state's goals for the CWP itself into seven goal categories as indicated below. The proposal will support and continue to add to the available public outreach and education, land and water use planning integration, and water efficiency and collaboration projects tools and examples (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 5, pp. 5-9) that can help achieve these goals.

1. Reliable Municipal Supply Goals - Address gaps in water supply; ensure delivery of safe drinking water. "Statewide municipal and industrial gaps are projected to be from 230,000 acre-feet (in Weak Economy) to 740,000 acre-feet (in Hot Growth) in dry years…Municipal conservation efforts significantly reduce the risk of future gaps" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 3, pp. 3-21). The need to address the supply gap and ensure reliable municipal supply was also echoed in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Arkansas Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-7); Colorado Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-20); Gunnison Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-27); Rio Grande Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-44); Southwest Basin CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-59); South Platte (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-52); and Yampa-White Green Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-71).

WaterNow's project will support communities, including specifically small- to mid-sized and under resourced communities, ensure delivery of reliable water supplies, and reduce the risk of future gaps in supply and demand, through the adoption of permanent water savings with our Project Accelerator initiative, WaterSMART Program

Outreach & Application Assistance, and SRF outreach and research efforts. These initiatives will each provide direct hands-on assistance to support water conservation and efficiency projects. We have to date supported dozens of Colorado communities in learning about and navigating aspects of the WaterSMART program, while providing deeper assistance for 15 successful applications. Those 15 applications received $6,314,338 in federal support, and leveraged a total of approximately $21 million for water efficiency programs in the state of Colorado. In the aggregate, these initiatives are expected to conserve over 7,000 acre-feet each year; however, we expect the total actual water savings flowing from these programs will be significantly higher since this figure does not include savings from many of the WaterSMART grants for which we provide support that do not require applicants to quantify water savings estimates (i.e., Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects [SWEP]). Additionally, our Project Accelerator has also resulted in significant savings, and paved the way for future water savings, depending on the project. Through our proposed new SRF outreach support and polling efforts, we aim to engage with Colorado communities to increase awareness and prepare the ground for a new major effort to access the substantial new SRF funds available to support additional projects capable of achieving large statewide water savings. WaterNow's successes help to establish a virtuous cycle of replicable and scalable examples that can support other Colorado communities in pursuing ambitious conservation initiatives. The technical assistance WaterNow provides for funding and implementation of high impact water efficiency programs and projects will support the State's goals to reduce the projected municipal and industrial gap.

2. Encouraging a High Level of Municipal Conservation Goals. "Communities need to continue advancing programs and planning that strive for ever-greater levels of indoor and outdoor water efficiency. Colorado water supplies are stressed and will be even more so in the future. Cities will need to build and redevelop with an eye toward densification and creative water-savings techniques that use green infrastructure. Water efficiency and conservation programs, reuse, and rate structures that encourage water savings are strategies that will help communities stretch their water supplies and be more resilient in the future" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-8). Goals focused on water conservation and efficiency are also reflected in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Colorado Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-20) and Southwest Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-59).

WaterNow's proposed project will expand the ability of under-resourced Colorado communities to advance and invest in projects that increase indoor and outdoor water efficiency and build resilience. WaterNow's Project Accelerator focuses on projects that embrace One Water principles and enhance resiliency in the face of shrinking water supplies. For example, Project Accelerator has supported efforts such as the creation of an indoor water efficiency program in Evans, development of outdoor watering standards for the Roaring Fork Valley, and enhancing Greeley's water efficiency portfolio through performance analysis, among many others.

Additionally, through WaterNow's WaterSMART Technical Outreach and Application Assistance initiative we have focused on assisting community projects that provide multiple benefits including, but not limited to, increased water use efficiency, reduced overall water demand locally and regionally, reduced strains on water delivery systems during peak irrigation season, and provision of real time water use statistics which can be used to detect leaks quickly and inform increased water conservation and efficiency. For example, we have supported many communities in submitting successful WaterSMART applications, including Greeley's Advanced Metering Infrastructure WEEG application, Aspen's Irrigation Efficiency Assessment and Outdoor Rebate Program SWEP application, and Fort Collins' Xeriscape Incentive Program SWEP application, among many others.

Our proposed SRF outreach and polling efforts will inform the development of design of our future SRF application outreach and assistance support programming (similar to our WaterSMART initiative) and enable Colorado communities to secure funding that advances projects that increase water conservation and efficiency.

3. Engagement, Education and Outreach Goals. "Education and outreach are needed to equip Coloradans to

take action to conserve water. Education and outreach need to spur new thinking, connect people to solutions, and invite the next wave of innovation. In addition, Coloradans need to be educated in an inclusive way about opportunities to participate in strategies to conserve water and programs to assist with implementing conservation measures" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-46). "Raising awareness and helping all Coloradans recognize our water scarcity issues will be important to addressing our challenges. Education is the key to bridging perceived divides across the West and East Slopes, rural and urban populations, and diverse people. Public education around water must be increased, and outreach efforts should be increasingly inclusive. The State should work with local governments to support common messaging that increases awareness of water challenges and helps all Coloradans understand the critical importance of funding, collaboration, and multi-purpose projects" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-47). Goals focused on engagement, education and outreach are also reflected in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Gunnison Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-27); Rio Grande Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-44); Southwest Basin CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-59); and South Platte (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp. 4-52).

WaterNow's proposal is grounded in the education and outreach objectives outlined above, and aims to help ensure that Coloradans understand their water supply, and how to use it efficiently. All three elements of our proposal – Project Accelerator, WaterSMART technical assistance, and SRF readiness – include substantial outreach elements. We aim to provide direct technical assistance to a wide variety of communities across the State with a diversity of institutional arrangements (i.e., Front Range vs. rural, municipal vs. independent or special district water providers, and communities with multiple water providers) so that the lessons learned from our initiatives will be widely applicable statewide. Our final reports and supplemental materials will be made available on our Project Accelerator Library page and learnings from these projects will also continue to be shared widely throughout the Colorado water community through webinars, conferences, workshops, and online media (i.e., blogs, newsletters, articles). Additionally, WaterNow will expand our regional Community Cohort of Colorado Accelerator participants by encouraging collaboration, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and facilitating dialogue to help amplify project learnings and outcomes that can support other communities facing similar challenges and goals.

4. Water Equity Goals. Equity is referenced throughout the CWP as a key "tool" for action. In addition, various other aspects of the CWP highlight increasing equity as a goal of the CWP: "Water conservation and incentive programs are sometimes not used because residents do not know about them, cannot afford them, or are unable to effectively use them. These programs can have greater reach and impact if they are translated, and a focus is placed on residents who are not typically engaged in water issues. Water conservation should be seen as an adaptive measure toward greater drought resilience." "Inclusive water planning builds resilience to respond to water challenges and advances equitable outcomes for all Colorado communities" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 5, pp. 5-16). The Water Equity Task Force created guiding principles that include: "Promote diversity in career pathways in water-related fields through education and engagement"; "Promote collaboration, new voices, and greater community engagement in water discussions"; and "Expand grant opportunities to new audiences" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 1, pp. 1-5). Goals focused on water equity are also reflected in the Colorado Basin Implementation Plan (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-19).

For WaterNow, water equity means universal access to secure, affordable, safe, and healthy drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater management services. Through its Project Accelerator program, WaterNow will continue to support projects that enhance water equity, in particularly, supporting smaller-to-mid-sized and under resourced communities and customers. For example, we worked with the City of Evans to develop a direct installation program for income-qualified residents and free indoor water efficiency audits. Without this program, these homeowners may have not otherwise had the resources or financial means to access this opportunity and upgrades including high efficiency toilets, faucets, aerators, and other water and energy saving fixtures.

Other resources, from projects outside of Colorado, may also have resources or learnings applicable to disadvantaged Colorado communities and populations. These include: the development of language water use efficiency program enhancements to support bilingual and non-English speaking residents in Santa Rosa, CA and Walnut Valley Water District, CA; and support for the creation of a grassroots customer engagement program in Cleveland, OH, each of which is summarized on the Project Accelerator landing page. These resources sought to identify obstacles and solutions to overcoming barriers to awareness of or participation in water efficiency or affordability programs.

5. Funding Goals – Support efforts to provide cost-effective solutions to local water supply gaps "Often, NGOs or non-profits can help support expanding connections… Water providers, NGOs, and others can implement coordinated water projects, help disseminate grant application information and apply for grants, and seek opportunities to align with other local initiatives to leverage funding and advance the dialogue around water" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-47). The Water Equity Task Force created guiding principles that include: "Expand grant opportunities to new audiences" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 1, pp. 1-5). Funding goals are also reflected in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Arkansas Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-12); Colorado Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-19); Gunnison Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-28); North Platte Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-36); South Platte Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-50); Southwest Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-59). Funding and development of water projects is a significant concern for many stakeholders. Collaboration, multi-purpose projects, and creative funding strategies can help overcome this challenge (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-70).

WaterNow's WaterSMART Program Outreach and Application Assistance is critical in helping to fill funding gaps, particularly for smaller and midsized communities with limited capacity and expertise in navigating USBR's application process. Our program outreach utilizes our growing database of nearly 1,000 Colorado water utility contacts and will continue to include extensive email campaigns, blogs, social media posts, partner outreach, phone calls, and peer learning events such as webinars. The USBR WaterSMART program is an important funding opportunity that has allowed water providers across the West to scale-up their sustainable water management projects. Particularly given budget cuts at the local and state level, WaterSMART funding will allow applicants to implement projects they otherwise couldn't fund. WaterNow's WaterSMART initiative can galvanize additional applications, potentially leveraging millions in funding to Colorado communities, particularly in light of increases in funding pursuant to recent federal legislation. Complementary to our WaterSMART initiative, our proposed SRF outreach and polling efforts will aid in increasing awareness of and assessing interest and needs around efforts to apply for Colorado's SRF program. The results of this research will ultimately be used to draw boarder conclusions about the best ways to provide direct support to communities as they consider applying for SRF opportunities and enable communities to leverage additional means of funding.

Additionally, WaterNow's Project Accelerator supports small-to-midsized municipal utilities, particularly those that are under-resourced. Based on a survey in 2020 by Colorado WaterWise, many utilities do not have any staff working on conservation (dedicated or otherwise) and/or do not have a dedicated conservation budget to build and run conservation programs. These utilities will be unable to make progress towards the State's water conservation goal without substantial outside capacity and expertise to support the funding and implementation of impactful water efficiency programs.

6. Land Use Planning Goals – Developing local water-conscious land use strategies and long-term strategies for conservation, land use, water efficiency, and drought planning. "Colorado must start building the landscapes of the future today by identifying and planting the types of vegetation that can thrive under warmer and drier conditions and potentially only need irrigation one day per week or less. Open spaces should be preserved as urbanization occurs to maintain ecosystem benefits and biodiversity. Green spaces like parks, gardens, and stream corridors that provide community benefits for health, shade, habitat, and food need to be prioritized over

seldom-used or nonfunctional turf areas that require irrigation and provide little to no additional benefit" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-8). "Zoning regulations, land use codes, utility rate structures, and other tools must be employed to work together to not just drive water conservation but address the underlying issues that drive water use" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-8). "New construction can acquire certifications with rating systems, such as EPA WaterSense®-labeled homes or Water Efficiency Rating Scores, that integrate highly efficient indoor use and resilient landscaping as a part of sustainable design that realizes both energy and water savings" (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 6, pp. 6-8). Goals focused on land use planning are also reflected across all Basin Implementation Plans including the Arkansas Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-11); Colorado Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-19); Gunnison Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-27); North Platte Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-36); Rio Grande Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-43); Rio Grande Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-52); Southwest Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-59); and the Yampa-White-Green Basin (CWP 2023 Update, Chapter 4, pp 4-67).

WaterNow's programs have supported and are well-placed to continue to support integrated land and water use planning. Through Project Accelerator, WaterNow has explored the potential for urban agriculture and community gardening to serve as a water resource management tool in the intermountain west; incorporated sound water conservation tactics in the Town of Severence's Comprehensive Plan; developed high priority recommendations for updates to the City of Centennial's municipal code to advance water efficiency, on-site reuse, and sustainable stormwater management practices; and supported the City of Golden in developing a graywater ordinance and demonstration program. Developing strategies that both enhance water conservation and guide development in water-smart ways will continue to be a core focus of this initiative.

Similarly, our WaterSMART Program Outreach and Application Assistance will continue to promote funding opportunities for water efficiency solutions (i.e., AMI, turf replacement rebate projects and programs, irrigation efficiency incentives, graywater and rainwater reuse programs, water efficiency and drought contingency plans, conservation-oriented water budgets, etc.) and support communities' water-smart growth priorities and projects that integrate water and land use planning.

Through the outreach and polling around the SRF opportunities, we hope to increase communities' awareness of the ways SRF funds can support these activities, including specifically the nexus between land use planning and water use efficiency, and to understand and develop strategies to help communities overcome obstacles to accessing these funds. Anecdotal conversations with utilities and communities suggests many are unaware of the ways that SRF funds can support these types of activities. The first phases of this new program will aim to better understand impressions of how these resources can be used and to conduct an outreach and communications campaign that addresses common questions and increases awareness of the SRF's ability to support sustainable, distributed infrastructure.

Related Studies

There are a few related studies to this project:

1. Koehler, C. and Koch, C. 2019. Innovation in Action: 21st Century Water Infrastructure Solutions. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance. Link.
2. Castle, A. and Rugland, E. 2019. Best Practices for Implementing Water Conservation and Demand Management Through Land Use Planning Efforts. Addendum to 2012 Guidance. Prepared by Getches-Wilkinson Center, University of Colorado and Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy for Colorado Water Conservation Board. Link.
3. Nolan Blanchard, J. C. 2018. Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners. Prepared by Land Use Law Center for Western Resource Advocates. Link.
4. Tap into Resilience Resource Library: Water Use Efficiency Reports & Case Studies. Updated on an on-going

basis. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance (2020, updated 2022). Link.
5. Koehler, C., Koch, C., Arling, V., Belanger, L., Berggren, J., and Rogers., L. 2022. Financing the Future: How to Pay for Turf Replacement in Colorado. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance and Western Resource Advocates. Link.
6. WaterNow Alliance. 2019. Alternative Transfer Methods - Flexible and Innovative Water Supply Alternatives: A Guide for Local Leaders in Colorado. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance. Link.
7. Colorado WaterWise. 2010. Guidebook of Best Practices for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado. Prepared by Colorado WaterWise. Link.
8. WaterNow Alliance and Western Resource Advocates. 2022. Enhancing Greeley's Water Efficiency Portfolio through Performance Analysis. Prepared by WNA and WRA. Link.

This project continues to be complementary to the Sonoran Institute's Growing Water Smart (GWS) workshops, which are funded in part by a Water Plan grant. These three-day educational workshops result in detailed community action plans. WaterNow will continue to work with the Sonoran Institute to ensure that GWS communities are aware of the Project Accelerator initiative to assist with projects and policy priorities identified in these action plans. In fact, five communities that have been through the GWS program have also participated in Project Accelerator. Additionally, projects identified in the action plans may be well-suited for funding through the WaterSMART program. Our complimentary efforts will ultimately increase the total number of communities who receive assistance with their land use and water integration efforts.

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

N/A