COLORADO
Colorado Water Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation
Name of Water Project	Alamosa Riverfront Project - Planning Design, and Engineering
Grant Request Amount	**$182,900.00**
Primary Category	$182,900.00
Watershed Health & Recreation	
Total Applicant Match	**$0.00**
Applicant Cash Match	
Applicant In-Kind Match	
Total Other Sources of Funding	**$104,887.00**
City of Alamosa	$40,100.00
The Trinchera Blanca Foundation	$40,000.00
CSU Salazar Center (Peregrine Accelerator Program)	$10,000.00
ARFP Technical Advisory Team	$14,787.00
Total Project Cost	**$287,787.00**

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation
Mailing Address: 623 4th Street Alamosa CO 81101
FEIN: 753,169,057

Organization Contact: Daniel Boyes
Position/Title: Executive Director
Phone: 719-589-2230
Email: daniel@riograndeheadwaters.org

Organization Contact - Alternate: Emma Reesor
Position/Title: Administrative Director
Phone: (719) 589-2230
Email: emma@riograndeheadwaters.org

Description of Grantee/Applicant

No description provided

Type of Eligible Entity

- ☐ Public (Government)
- ☐ Public (District)
- ☐ Public (Municipality)
- ☐ Ditch Company
- ☐ Private Incorporated
- ☐ Private Individual, Partnership, or Sole Proprietor

- [x] 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.
- [x] 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	37.473380
Longitude	-105.861771
Lat Long Flag	Stream location: Coordinates based on general location on stream
Water Source	Rio Grande
Basins	Rio Grande
Counties	Alamosa
Districts	20-Rio Grande

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	Environmental
Type of Water Project	Design / Engineering
Scheduled Start Date - Design	7/1/2023
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	7/1/2025

Description

This project, Alamosa Riverfront Project Planning, Design, and Engineering, is a community-led effort to reconnect the community of Alamosa, Colorado to the Rio Grande while also improving agricultural water delivery infrastructure and river health. The Rio Grande within the City of Alamosa lacks infrastructure for water-based recreation and suffers from aquatic habitat degradation. This project will result in construction-ready design plans for new public river access and recreation infrastructure, diversion infrastructure improvements at the Westside Ditch, and enhanced aquatic habitat and water quality. Grant funds will support the following project activities:

1. Robust public engagement and outreach process to gather the community’s input on project design elements. Project partners will engage at least 350 community members through public meetings and other outreach.
2. Development of construction-ready designs detailing all project elements.

3. Completion of all required environmental and cultural resources compliance and obtain associated permits.

Project activities will result in a plan to revitalize the riverfront in Alamosa and create connectivity between the community and its most important natural resource, the Rio Grande. When implemented, project elements will enhance the river ecosystem and increase accessibility by creating a welcoming, safe space for community members, boaters, and anglers.

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)
Length of Pipe, Canal Built or Improved (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
350 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
Other
Construction-ready engineering plans and designs for the project

Water Project Justification

The need for this project, Alamosa Riverfront Project - Planning, Design, and Engineering, was identified in the Rio Grande Stream Management Plan (SMP) and is a result of planning and collaboration between the Rio Grande Farm Park, San Luis Valley Great Outdoors, City of Alamosa, County of Alamosa, Westside Ditch water users, San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District, Colorado Division of Water Resources and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Participation from diverse stakeholders and the broader community will ensure that both consumptive and non-consumptive needs are being achieved in the final construction-ready designs and permitting for multi-benefit river restoration, recreation, and irrigation infrastructure improvements. As such, this project will support many Colorado Water Plan (CWP) Action Areas and goals set in the Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan and Education Action Plan.

This project aligns with the four CWP Action Areas of Vibrant Communities, Robust Agriculture, Thriving Watersheds, and Resilient Planning, by planning for and developing engineered design plans for:
• Improved recreation opportunities and enhanced public spaces adjacent to the river through Alamosa, thereby supporting “Holistic planning for urban landscapes that improve quality of life” (CWP Section 1 pp. 180).
• Improved diversion infrastructure associated with the aging Westside Ditch, aligning with the Robust Agriculture action to “rehabilitate aging storage facilities and diversion structures” (CWP, Section 2, pp. 194). When implemented, increasing efficiency and water diversion accuracy through automation of the Westside Ditch headgate will also benefit water rights administration.
• Enhanced aquatic habitat through construction of a low-flow channel, in alignment with the action item to “rehabilitate streams to improve habitat, reduce erosion, and meet needs” (CWP Section 3 pp. 205). As noted on page 204 of the CWP, “sustaining healthy watersheds, which include the forests, rivers, and habitat within them, is critical to Colorado’s tourism, our resilience, and our water supply.”
• The CWP Action Area of Resilient Planning includes, “climate adaptation, planning for climate extremes,

embracing EDI (equity, diversity, inclusivity), education, outreach and engagement, supportive government, etc" (2023 CWP, Chapter 1, pg 8). The project will result in engineered plans to reduce flood risks and mitigate the impact of drought conditions through the construction of a low-flow channel in the Rio Grande through Alamosa.

The project is also in alignment with the Public Education and Outreach goals outlined in the CWP. The CWP's vision is that "Education and outreach engages the public, partners, and leaders in integrated water planning to conserve and protect water for current and future generations." (2023 CWP, Chapter 5, pg 240). This project will help address these key challenges of "Inclusive Public Engagement" identified in Chapter 5 by engaging the community of Alamosa and the greater San Luis Valley to document and incorporate community-identified river access features into final project designs. The CRGRF will track and monitor outcomes of the grant activities. Specific metrics will include number of individuals engaged, number of events and tours organized, and social media engagement analytics.

In addition to meeting many of the CWP Action Areas, the project meets the following Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan Goals and is supported by the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable:
• Healthy watersheds that provide critical ecosystem services, are resilient to disturbances, and benefit from ongoing efforts to protect water sources, improve water quality, enhance aquatic, riparian, wetland, and upland habitat, and maintain connected ecosystems.
• Water administration that is adaptive, flexible, and creative while complying with state statutes and the doctrine of prior appropriation, and fully utilizing Colorado's compact entitlements under the Rio Grande and Costilla Creek compacts.
• Engaged and informed citizens who understand the scope and urgency of local, state, and regional water issues and participate in robust and diverse educational opportunities.
• Vibrant and resilient agriculture, recreation, municipal, and industrial economies that support thriving communities.

As the Rio Grande Basin faces water shortages and prolonged periods of drought, the need for healthy and resilient riverscapes that support community needs, including agricultural production and recreation, is becoming increasingly crucial. The project will result in a plan to increase the Rio Grande's resiliency to drought and flood events, reconnect the community of Alamosa to the river by providing new recreational opportunities, and improve agricultural diversion infrastructure.

Related Studies

The vision for this project is the result of multiple local and community-driven planning efforts and works toward implementing multiple CWCB programs. Recent plans, studies, and engagement efforts have identified a community desire to reconnect the City of Alamosa (City) with the Rio Grande and to improve outdoor recreation opportunities in the City. Listed below are the plans, studies, and engagement efforts that have informed this project:
• Rio Grande Stream Management Plan (2020)
• Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan (2021)
• Riparian to Refuge, Alamosa Trails Master Plan (result of multiple community outreach efforts, 2022)
• Feasibility Study - River Corridor Improvements, Rio Grande in Alamosa, CO (2017)
• Revitalize the Rio Coalition (report published 2018)
• City of Alamosa Comprehensive Plan (result of multiple community outreach efforts, 2017)
• San Luis Valley Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Community Survey (2022)
• Outdoor Recreation Community Meeting (2023)

Additionally, this project supports all four of the Colorado Water Plan's Interconnected Action Areas of Vibrant

Communities, Robust Agriculture, Thriving Watersheds, and Resilient Planning. This project will create a comprehensive plan to improve river health and function, enhance community recreation opportunities, support agricultural production, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

The Applicant, The Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation, is not subject to TABOR limitations, as it is a Colorado nonprofit organization operating under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.