



Colorado Water Conservation Board

## Local Capacity Grants

### Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	American Rivers	
Name of Water Project	Addressing Capacity Gaps and Building a Robust Pipeline of Wetland and Riparian Conservation and Restoration Projects in the San Luis Valley	
Grant Request Amount		\$180,000.00
Project Type		Watershed Health & Recreation
Federal Grant Application Deadline		
Population 10,000 or less		<input type="checkbox"/>
MHI less than 80%		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MHV less than 100%		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
County 24-month unemployment average		<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicant Cash Match		\$19,000.00
Applicant In-Kind Match		\$0.00
Sources of Funding		
<i>Ducks Unlimited</i>		\$25,000.00
<i>Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership</i>		\$17,000.00

### Grant Details

Anticipated federal grant program applicant is likely to apply for We are still considering the different federal grant programs we plan to apply for, however we are looking at programs through Natural Resource Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service, among others.

How does the proposed project further Colorado Water Plan or current Basin Implementation Plan goals, objectives, or actions?

The Water Plan (2015) includes a critical goal (10-12) to “Protect Healthy Environments: Understand, protect, maintain, and improve conditions of streams, lakes, wetlands, and riparian areas to promote self-sustaining fisheries and functional riparian and wetland habitat to promote long-term resiliency. The “Thriving Watersheds” Section of the draft CWP update highlights opportunities to enhance watershed health by reconnecting floodplains and nature-based solutions and improving riparian and aquatic habitat (6-34). The Rio Grande BIP includes outcomes for the protection, conservation, and restoration of streams, wetlands, and riparian systems that contribute to watershed resiliency. The BIP also identifies wetland and riparian restoration projects on various landscapes. This project meets these goals by working with partners to develop a pipeline of watershed restoration/conservation projects to apply for federal funding, submit 3 applications, and address critical funding barriers.

Does the project advance interstate, regional or watershed-scale water and natural resource management efforts and solutions? Please describe.

Riparian and wetland restoration projects are explicitly identified in the Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) and stream management plans (SMPs) for the Rio Grande, Saguache Creek, and Conejos River as a critical part of water management and multi-benefit solutions in the San Luis Valley. As a part of developing a project pipeline, we will work with partners across the Valley to identify projects from the BIP list as well as SMPs to connect with federal funding opportunities.

Does the project advance an innovative approach to water and natural resource management? Please describe. Yes, this project takes an innovative approach by addressing critical barriers to accessing federal funds through the development of a regional project coordination network. Working with partners, the project will build a strategy and pipeline for the development of wetland/riparian restoration/conservation efforts in the SLV (w/ a priority for multi-benefit projects) for near and more out-year funding applications.

Describe any local community and stakeholder support? Note: Letter of support can be uploaded at the end of the application.

We have met with and received support from partners including Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partners, Ducks Unlimited, SLV Wetland Focus Area Committee, Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project, Colorado Open Lands, Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust, and Trout Unlimited. This effort is complementary and supportive of the capacity grant submitted by the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project. We will coordinate and support each other as we work together to move forward projects in the SLV.

Have relevant Federal, state and local government agencies provided input on the project? Please describe which agencies and any relevant details.

We have discussed the project with the Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Colorado Water Conservation Board and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Additionally we met with the San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District, Rio Grande Water Conservancy District, Conejos Water Conservancy District and will meet with the Basin Roundtable on January 10, 2023.

### Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: American Rivers

Mailing Address: 1101 14th St NW Suite 1400 Washington DC 20005

FEIN: 237,305,963

Organization Contact: Fay Hartman

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Organization Contact - Alternate: Hannnah Holm

Position/Title:

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Grant Management Contact: Fay Hartman

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Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Hannnah Holm

Position/Title:

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### Agency Information

Agency Type

Other

Current Assessment

Number of Shareholders or Customers  
Number of Shares  
Number of Taps  
Average Monthly Water Bill  
Annual Water Delivery (acre-feet)

#### Description of Grantee/Applicant

American Rivers protects and restores rivers and clean water for people and nature.

#### Location of Water Project

Latitude 37.469400  
Longitude -105.870000  
Lat Long Flag Municipal centroid: Coordinates based on centroid of municipal boundary  
Water Source  
Basins Rio Grande  
Counties  
Districts

#### Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type  
Type of Water Project Planning  
Scheduled Start Date - Design  
Scheduled Start Date - Construction  
Description

The San Luis Valley (SLV) is home to an extensive network of wetland, and riparian habitats that support abundant wildlife, including at least 13 threatened and endangered species and more than 160 species of birds, including the entire Rocky Mountain population of Greater Sandhill Cranes and other waterfowl popular with sporting and recreational bird-watching communities. These wetland and riparian systems also provide a suite of co-benefits for the region and state, including, but not limited to, promoting natural approaches to water storage and groundwater recharge, enhancing water quality, sequestering carbon, and potentially mitigating risks associated with wildfire and flooding to critical infrastructure throughout the region. The Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) recognizes these benefits. The BIP includes outcomes calling for the protection, conservation, and restoration of streams, wetlands, and riparian systems that contribute to watershed resiliency. The BIP also includes a suite of supporting strategies, including implementing wetland and riparian restoration and floodplain reconnection projects that provide habitat, filter pollutants, and restore and maintain surface and groundwater tables. Finally, the BIP includes many wetland and riparian restoration projects on various landscapes, including National Forest Service lands and national and state wildlife areas (e.g., Monte Vista NWR, Russell Lakes, etc.)

Collectively, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) contain potentially billions in federal funding to increase the pace and scale of wetland and riparian restoration and conservation efforts in the SLV. The SLV is uniquely positioned to capture these funds, given previous planning efforts and ongoing coordination on wetland projects. Specifically, these efforts include the development of three Stream Management Plans, which collectively highlight several riparian and wetland restoration and conservation projects, the completion of the SLV Wetland and Wildlife Conservation Assessment, and ongoing coordination of efforts through the SLV Wetland Focus Area Committee. While these efforts make the SLV an ideal location for scaling wetland and riparian conservation and restoration efforts, as a more rural region, limited agency and organizational capacity to develop projects, secure funding, and implement projects are significant barriers,

particularly for projects on public lands. Other noted barriers to accessing federal funds include navigating existing federal resources and working with federal and state agency partners to coordinate project development and implementation on larger scales.

With these opportunities and challenges in mind, this project will seek to address critical barriers to accessing federal funds through the development of a regional project coordination network, build a robust strategy and pipeline for the development and implementation of wetland and riparian restoration and conservation efforts in the SLV (w/ a priority for multi-benefit projects), and result in the submission of at least three applications for federal funding. In addition to American Rivers, partners in this effort include the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partners, Ducks Unlimited, the SLV Wetland Focus Area Committee, the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Fund, Colorado Open Lands, Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, Trout Unlimited, conservation districts, and other regional and local partners.

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
	Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
Other	
No additional measurable results provided	