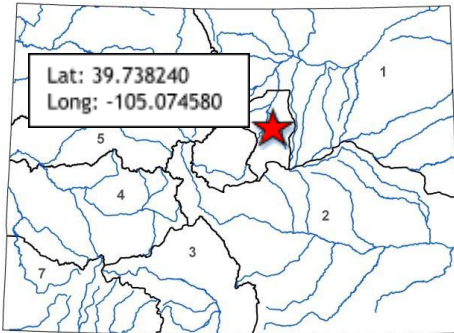


Water Plan Grant Program Application



LOCATION	
County/Countries:	Statewide
Drainage Basin:	Statewide

DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	\$638,050
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$475,000
Recommended amount:	\$475,000
Other CWCB Funding:	\$0
Other Funding Amount	\$98,400
Applicant Match:	\$64,650
Project Type:	Education
Project Category:	Agriculture
Measurable Result:	10,000 Coloradans impacted by engagement activity

Colorado Water Plan Grant funding will support the Colorado Cattlemen's Association (specifically CCA's Ag Water NetWORK) and Colorado Ag Water Alliance (CAWA) to 1) conduct outreach and training on ag water issues and 2) assist producers and ag oriented groups in understanding and securing funding for ag water projects over three years at the local, basin and statewide scale.

Success of the project will include these deliverables:

1. 50 or more outreach meetings and presentations to equip producers with water knowledge to encourage more flexible and profitable ag water use and minimize permanent ag dry up;
2. 30 outreach events (such as educational trainings, webinars, extension forums, mini-workshops, publications, exhibits or booths) to educate producers and ag-serving entities, along with technical assistance to individual irrigation districts; and
3. 30 or more grant or loan applications for irrigation infrastructure improvement work that will result from CCA and CAWA's funding-focused assistance, training, and grant writing.

As CCA's Phil Brink put it, "Zoom is not producers' preferred means of engagement," which is why they are requesting CWCB funding to support a significant number of hours and miles to reach producers in person to deliver on these outcomes.

CCA and CAWA believe they are well-positioned to scale up work on Colorado Water Plan's priority of "robust agriculture," specifically Action 2.2, to "integrate capacity-building efforts to support agriculture" and 2.8, "streamline ag infrastructure funding."



This project demonstrates a commitment to collaboration and broad-based involvement through CCA's 39 member-affiliate ag groups and CAWA's 15 agricultural organizations. Among those supporting this effort are Colorado Department of Agriculture's Conservation Services Division, Colorado Association of Conservation Districts, Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, Colorado Livestock Association, and Rocky Mountain Farmers Union.

Funding Recommendation:

Staff recommends full funding of \$475,000 to Colorado Cattlemen's Association for the Scaling Up Ag Water Education & Funding Outreach effort subject to staff approval of annual written progress reports documenting sufficient progress and work quality.



COLORADO

Colorado Water
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Colorado Cattlemen's Association
Name of Water Project	Scaling Up Ag Water Education and Funding Outreach
Grant Request Amount	\$475,000.00
Primary Category	\$475,000.00
<i>Agricultural Projects</i>	
Total Applicant Match	\$64,650.00
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	\$0.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	\$64,650.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	\$98,400.00
<i>Walton Family Foundation</i>	\$20,000.00
<i>CDPHE</i>	\$61,900.00
<i>Walton Family Foundation</i>	\$15,300.00
<i>Rainbow Park Water Company</i>	\$1,200.00
Total Project Cost	\$638,050.00

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Colorado Cattlemen's Association
Mailing Address: 7000 W 14th Ave. Lakewood CO 80214
FEIN: 840,174,480

Organization Contact: Sarah Didericksen
Position/Title: Industry Advancement Director Email: sarah@coloradocattle.org
Phone: 303-431-6422

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is the state's premier cattlemen's association working to ensure a dynamic and profitable beef industry that provides growth and opportunity for future generations. CCA's Ag Water NetWORK (AWN) focuses on "keeping ag water connected with ag land," equipping producers with in-depth knowledge about ag water-related challenges and providing technical assistance to achieve water-related improvements that help advance and sustain the agricultural industry in Colorado.

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 39.738240
 Longitude -105.074580
 Lat Long Flag
 Water Source
 Basins Arkansas; Colorado; Gunnison; Yampa/White/Green; Rio Grande; South Platte; Southwest; North Platte
 Counties Alamosa; Boulder; Clear Creek; Archuleta; Cheyenne; Chaffee; Arapahoe; Adams; Conejos; Bent; Baca
 Districts

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type
 Type of Water Project Education
 Scheduled Start Date - Design 1/1/2024
 Scheduled Start Date - Construction
 Description
 Colorado Cattlemen's Association is the applicant. The project represents work that will be collaboratively executed by both Colorado Cattlemen's Association (Ag Water NetWORK) and the Colorado Ag Water Alliance. The project will span three (3) years and will complete:

- Education and outreach on water issues that are important to agriculture. The topics of focus will encompass funding for irrigation infrastructure, drought planning, efficiency and conservation, funding, water law, compact compliance, watershed management planning, and water quality issues including nutrients and salinity. Outreach will include workshops, trainings, presentations, webinars, online forums, publications for agricultural operators and service providers around the state, individual communications, as well as an ag water symposium.

- **Funding-focused Assistance, Training and Grant-writing.** This activity will include helping agricultural producers, irrigation companies, conservation districts, conservancy districts and others conceptualize, aggregate and scope projects, secure cost estimates, and identify sources of federal, state and local funding. It will also involve assisting with and/or preparing grant applications on behalf of ag water entities and communicating with granting entities regarding funding eligibility and ensuring necessary pieces of information are provided in desired formats. We will also provide navigational help throughout grant application processes. In a few cases we may roll smaller projects into grant-funded projects that we apply for and administer. We do this in cases where small ag water entities are unable or uncomfortable managing a grant themselves.

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
 10,000 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
 Other

Measurable outcomes include: the number of outreach events and number of attendees at events. Amount of irrigated acreage represented by attendees at outreach events (in some cases). Number of projects initiated or implemented by event attendees with CCA/CAWA assistance. Attendee feedback from outreach events. Number of ag water improvement projects advanced from inception forward. Number of ag water funding applications and proposals submitted. Types of entities engaged with, including private, public, university and NGOs.

Water Project Justification

The Colorado Water Plan calls for efforts to help maintain Colorado’s agricultural productivity, support for rural economies, and food security, as well as supporting industry efforts to become more efficient and resilient. The Water Plan prioritizes ‘robust agriculture’ in Colorado as one of its action areas. The goals of our outreach and assistance are to equip agricultural producers with the information and resources they need to continue viable operations and sustain and improve irrigated agriculture. According to the Technical Update to the Water Plan (2019) a majority of residents surveyed stated that water for Colorado’s farms and ranches was the second most important water-related issue after the quality of water for homes (Volume 2, Section 12, “Observation Regarding Public Perceptions on Water”). Every Basin Roundtable throughout the state highlights the need for education and outreach to the agricultural community among their values.

Action Item 2.1 of the 2023 Water Plan calls for Expanding Ag Water Conservation, Innovation and Peer-to-Peer Programs that Enhance Innovation.” Action Item 2.2 is to “Integrate Capacity-Building Efforts to Support Agriculture.” Two of the tools used for both these action items are 1) Public Outreach and Education and 2) Collaboration Groups. CCA and CAWA work to build capacity by collaborating with entities that have overlapping interests in supporting robust irrigated and non-irrigated agriculture in Colorado. We utilize a variety of ag producer-focused public outreach methods, including collaboration with other ag-oriented groups like

conservation districts, irrigation consortiums, CCA affiliates and CAWA member associations, water conservancy districts, and NGOs to advance the goal of creating a robust and resilient agricultural future in Colorado. This includes engaging with the next generation of agricultural producers and professionals that work in agriculture (e.g., Tribal ag producers, ditch company employees, CSU Extension educators, watershed coordinators).

Action Item 2.8 of the new Water Plan calls for “Streamlining Ag Infrastructure Funding.” This Action states “the CWCB, in partnership with other agencies and organizations, will support agricultural producers seeking infrastructure funding. This could include, but is not limited to, coordinating grant-writing workshops, connecting water users to resources and organizations to help with grant writing, or creating a framework for irrigation infrastructure assessments to help ditch companies, water conservation partnerships, and producers identify needed improvements, costs, and potential solutions.”

This action item aligns with a primary need identified in CCA’s 2021 statewide survey of ag producers; specifically – that a lack of financial resources is the primary barrier to improving irrigation infrastructure.

As Action Item 2.8 further indicates, “new infrastructure and storage projects are needed by agricultural producers to address current and potential future water shortages. Such improvements reduce labor time and costs, increase operational efficiency, and help keep more land in production.” CCA’s survey results and many subsequent conversations with irrigators confirm that agricultural producers lack knowledge about grant opportunities and their requirements. This leads to inaction and demoralization. CCA and CAWA have seen firsthand the positive results achieved through helping secure funds for irrigation improvement projects, including assessments. Obtaining project funding provides a focal point and energizes producers and districts, spurring interest and building momentum. CAWA and CCA have been working with agricultural producers to secure funding for irrigation infrastructure projects. In the previous two years (2022-2023), CAWA has secured \$2,256,587 in state and local funding for irrigated agricultural projects. CAWA and CCA are positioned to write grants on behalf of agricultural producers because we have spent years building relationships and understanding agricultural water use.

The South Platte Basin Implementation Plan calls for efforts to garner community and political support to develop tools to sustain irrigated agriculture (1.9.1). The Yampa/White/Green BIP calls for protecting and encouraging “agricultural uses of water in the YWG Basin within the context of private property rights” (1.2.4). Sustaining, protecting, and promoting agriculture is a major theme of the Colorado BIP (16). The Gunnison BIP also emphasizes the goal to “discourage the conversion of productive agricultural land to all other uses within the context of private property rights” (2). The Rio Grande BIP also cites the need for “outreach events designed for agricultural water users [emphasis added], public officials, and community members” (160). The Arkansas River Basin BIP cites a goal of “sustaining a productive agricultural economy in the Basin that sustains viable rural, agricultural-based communities.” It also states a goal of “supporting projects within and outside the Arkansas Basin that will help meet the basin’s agricultural water supply gap,” and to “sustain a productive agricultural economy in the Arkansas Basin that sustains viable rural, agricultural-based communities.” One of the identified priorities of the North Platte Basin Roundtable is to “continue to ensure an adequate water supply for irrigated agriculture.” Priorities identified by the South Platte Basin Roundtable include “address[ing] potential impacts of agricultural transfers and finding alternatives to permanent agricultural dry-up,” and “address[ing] agricultural supply shortages for both surface and groundwater users.

The Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) 2020-2025 identifies agricultural dry-up as one of the “big water challenges facing Colorado.” Our project advances multiple outcomes outlined in SWEAP. We are working to provide producers with the knowledge and skills to take an active role in water stewardship on their farms and in their communities. Our workshops and outreach raise producer awareness about the value of participating in “community discourse and decision processes about water at the state, regional and local levels.”

Related Studies

CCA has used surveys to study and report on ag producer viewpoints relating to watershed and stream management planning, irrigation infrastructure improvement needs, and leasing water for other uses (demand management). These studies support CWCB's watershed protection and restoration program, demand management / water sharing programs, and the Water Plan's Action Item 2.2 objective to "integrate capacity building efforts to support agriculture" and Water Plan's goal of "supporting industry efforts to become more efficient and resilient" via agricultural irrigation infrastructure improvement.

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

No issues.