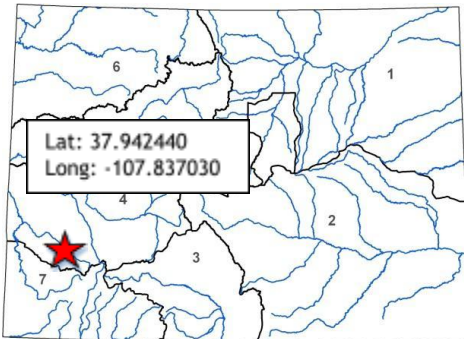




## Water Plan Grant Program Application



LOCATION	
County:	San Miguel
Drainage Basin:	San Miguel

DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	\$414,024.23
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$203,113.35
Recommended amount:	\$203,113.35
Other CWCB Funding:	\$0
Other Funding Amount:	\$210,910.88
Applicant Match:	\$0
Project Type:	Implementation
Project Category:	Watershed Health & Recreation
Measurable Result:	3,200 linear feet of stream restored; 15 acres of restored habitat

Colorado Water Plan Grant funding will support Trout Unlimited (TU) in completing post-reclamation revegetation to complement the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent removal of 60,000 cubic yards of fluvial mine tailings from the "wedge" reach of the San Miguel River along the Telluride Valley Floor (15 acres or at least 3,200 linear feet).

The ecological health of the Telluride Valley Floor, including the San Miguel River, is a community priority and an ongoing effort. A conservation easement covers a large Town of Telluride property on the valley floor and the San Miguel River was recently returned to its natural streambed after channelization during Telluride's mining days. However, these conservation and restoration efforts are hindered by this barren river reach which has created a lot of community concern and consternation. Implementing a revegetation effort in this reach has become a priority for the Town of Telluride.

The project includes Phase I, texturizing and revegetating the highly channelized upstream section of the reach, and Phase 2, design and engineering for the downstream section of the reach, public outreach, procurement of plants and seeds, and implementation of the revegetation effort.

TU's proposed revegetation effort aims to provide additional habitat on-site to support long-term sustainability and additional riparian growth, restore the recreational value of the site, reduce potential downstream erosional impacts from EPA-related removal actions, restore ecological function of the riparian corridor throughout the project reach, and improve security for Telluride's sewer line.

Funding partners include the U.S. Forest Service, Tiffany and Company, Newmont Mining, the Town of Telluride, and Gunnison Gorge Anglers. The majority of CWCB dollars would go toward Phase 2 revegetation design, procurement of native seeds and willows, and the installation of groundwater monitoring wells.

This project advances the Colorado Water Plan's partner action to "rehabilitate streams to improve habitat, reduce erosion" while meeting multiple water user needs. Throughout the project, TU will continue to broaden outreach and respond to public input as plans are solidified and design iterations progress.



### Funding Recommendation:

Staff recommends full funding of \$203,113.35 to Trout Unlimited for the Telluride Valley Floor Post-Removal Action.

**COLORADO**Colorado Water  
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

## Colorado Water Conservation Board

**Water Plan****Water Project Summary**

Name of Applicant	Trout Unlimited_Montrose
Name of Water Project	Telluride Valley Floor Post-Removal Action
Grant Request Amount	<b>\$203,113.35</b>
Primary Category	\$203,113.35
<i>Watershed Health &amp; Recreation</i>	
Total Applicant Match	<b>\$0.00</b>
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	
Total Other Sources of Funding	<b>\$210,910.88</b>
<i>United States Forest Service</i>	\$38,000.00
<i>United States Forest Service</i>	\$70,000.00
<i>Newmont Mining Company - Legacy Mining Group</i>	\$65,410.88
<i>Town of Telluride</i>	\$15,000.00
<i>Gunnison Gorge Anglers Chapter - TU</i>	\$15,000.00
<i>Tiffany &amp; Company</i>	\$7,500.00
Total Project Cost	<b>\$414,024.23</b>

**Applicant & Grantee Information**

Name of Grantee: Trout Unlimited_Montrose	
Mailing Address: 264 County Road 4 Montrose CO 81403	
FEIN: 381,612,715	
Organization Contact: Tanner Banks	
Position/Title:	Email: tanner.banks@tu.org
Phone: (970) 390-9492	
Organization Contact - Alternate: Jesse Bryan	
Position/Title: Central Colorado AML Project Manager	Email: jesse.bryan@tu.org
Phone: 385-290-0165	
Grant Management Contact: Tanner Banks	
Position/Title:	Email: tanner.banks@tu.org
Phone: (970) 390-9492	
Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Jesse Bryan	
Position/Title: Central Colorado AML Project Manager	Email: jesse.bryan@tu.org
Phone: 385-290-0165	

**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
- ☒ 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	37.942440
Longitude	-107.837030
Lat Long Flag	Stream location: Coordinates based on general location on stream
Water Source	San Miguel River
Basins	Southwest
Counties	San Miguel
Districts	60-San Miguel River Basin

### Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	Environmental
Type of Water Project	Construction / Implementation
Scheduled Start Date - Design	
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	10/1/2023
Description	The EPA completed the Telluride Valley Floor's Time-Critical Removal Action in August of 2022. From estimate we've seen, the EPA estimated is removed 60,000 cubic yards of fluvial tailings from the Valley Floor segment,

referred to as the wedge. Due to costs incurred in the removal of tailings, the EPA was not able to implement the anticipated scope of revegetation measures.

As a result, TU proposed a post-reclamation revegetation aimed at providing additional habitat uplift on-site to reduce short- and long-term impacts to this reach of the San Miguel River. Targeted revegetation and in-stream habitat will provide a more direct path toward long-term site sustainability and natural succession of riparian vegetation. Improved habitat conditions will benefit upland areas by reducing erosion and sedimentation of the 3,200 linear feet of the San Miguel River and bolster aquatic ecological health by providing natural riparian habitat and nutrient input to the river. Additionally, vegetative success at the Site will reduce the risk of plant invasion, which can have landscape-scale impacts given Site recreational use and seed entrainment by the San Miguel River. Finally, downstream aquatic and terrestrial habitats and the communities that rely upon them will benefit from the improved headwater conditions of the San Miguel.

TU plans to phase the revegetation and relevant habitat work on the Valley Floor. This work is scheduled to take place in fall of 2023 and spring of 2024.

### 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)
3,200	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)
15	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	

### Water Project Justification

A: Balance all needs and reduce conflict – The project will promote healthy ecological conditions in a frequently used multi-stakeholder location in Telluride, Colorado. An EPA Time Critical CERCLA Removal Action occurred with minimal vegetative restoration included in the scope. Visitors to the location are subject to a highly visible and degraded mile of river corridor with two trails running parallel to the project.

A3: Support and implement education and outreach efforts to the diverse communities of Southwest Colorado to create a water-fluent public by providing relevant local and statewide water information - Through stakeholder meetings, field trips, public outreach and educational events, the project will increase the awareness and understanding of a functioning floodplain. Project implementation will require community involvement, which will provide education on planting techniques and the different species propagated throughout the area.

C: Meet municipal and industrial needs – Any downstream water consumption may be impacted by increased mobility of fine sediments at the project area. Without vegetation, the ability to reduce stream velocity at bankfull events is greatly diminished.

C2: Water quality has the potential to decrease through sediment loading during the spring freshet and high-intensity rainfall events. Issues can arise in both water treatment plants and irrigation use with increased turbidity. Many communities, including Placerville, Sawpit, Norwood, Nucla, and Naturita, could potentially be impacted from a decrease in water quality.

D: Meet recreational water needs - Reasons behind recreating in the outdoors are diverse but can include solitude, beauty, and relaxation. The construction zone that is the Valley Floor project area is in stark contrast to the beautiful surrounding environment. The area was once a serene mile of the river corridor and is now physically altered and denuded. Stand Up Paddle Boarding, fishing, sightseeing, biking, and floating the San Miguel is a popular activity in the valley, and the values behind these activities are impacted due to the unfinished project.

D1: Maintain, Protect, and Enhance Recreational Values – This request for funding will ultimately enhance goal-related outcomes for visitors to the area by increasing ecological function throughout the project reach.

D2: Support Stream and Water Management Plans - The Telluride Valley Floor Trails and Stream Restoration Plan lists six segments or reaches within their Stream Restoration Plan. Two are located within the EPA project area improvements are intended to extend beyond the stream and include enhancement of the adjacent riparian corridor, where required. A naturally functioning channel regularly interacts with its adjacent riparian floodplain zone. "Reach 2" is located on US Forest Service property. Restoration in Reach 2 includes instream improvements within the existing channel alignment. Significant bank stabilization and revegetation is planned along the length of Reach 2. Banks will be reshaped to a stable configuration and vegetation added. Vegetation is intended to aid in stabilizing the earthen banks, provide additional wildlife habitat and create shading and overhead cover for the aquatic environment." As listed, "Reach three has three acres of new riparian vegetation is planned along the sections of the railroad grade that will be breached. However, this does not address the 7-acre borrow that was created from the removal action plan. Large amounts of vegetation were lost during this and now mimics a lakebed.

E: Meet environmental water needs - The project will increase environmental health by restoring the San Miguel River corridor, reconnecting floodplains and providing protections through the symbiotic relationships lotic, riparian, and upland systems exhibit.

E1: Encourage and support restoration, recovery, and sustainability of endangered, threatened, and imperiled aquatic and riparian-dependent species and plant communities. Riverine function, coexistence, and restoration in the San Miguel Watershed may benefit the Northern Leopard Frog, Gunnison Sage Grouse, SW Willow Flycatcher, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Beaver and Elk, amongst numerous other species.

E2: Support efforts to protect, maintain, monitor, and improve the condition and natural function of streams, lakes, wetlands, and riparian areas to promote self-sustaining fisheries, support native species and functional habitat (aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems) in the long term and adapt to changing conditions - This project directly aims to improve condition and function of the San Miguel River and associated riparian areas.

F: Promote healthy watersheds - This project directly aims to increase health of the San Miguel Watershed by enhancing riparian corridors through coexistence and restoring degraded areas of the San Miguel River through floodplain reconnection by process-based restoration work.

F2: Support efforts to enhance and maintain watershed health by protecting and/or restoring watersheds to ensure sustainable water supply, water quality, critical infrastructure, and/or

environmental and recreational areas - The main goals of the project are to protect and restore the San Miguel Watershed through the process-based restoration of riparian areas and coexistence with existing wetlands and river corridors.

#### Related Studies

- Town of Telluride - Reach 1 and Reach 3, planning and restoration implementation
- Mountain Studies Insitute - Post-Removal Surface Water Sampling and Analysis Program
- San Miguel Watershed Coalition - Integrated Hydrological Modeling: A modern tool for water resource evaluations

#### Taxpayer Bill of Rights

No Tax Bill of Rights provided