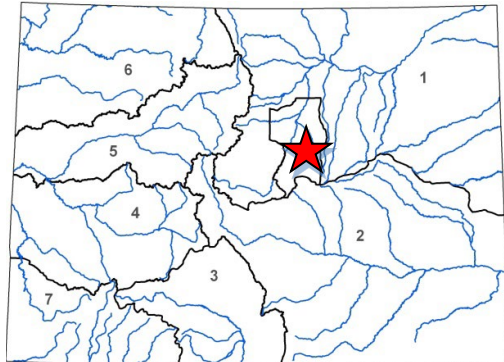


Water Plan Grant Application

September 2023 Board Meeting



L O C A T I O N	
County:	Jefferson
Drainage Basin:	Metro

D E T A I L S	
Total Project Cost:	\$209,208.00
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$98,125.00
Recommended amount:	\$98,125.00
Other CWCB Funding:	\$0
Other Funding Amount:	\$111,083.00
Applicant Match:	\$0
Project Types:	Design & Construction/Implementation
Project Category:	Watershed Health & Recreation
Measurable Results:	6 acres of Restored or Preserved Habitat; 15 Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity; will create an enriching and educational experience for the thousands of annual visitors.

Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge (TPNWR) is a critical 72-acre urban green space in Arvada, CO, supporting diverse wildlife. TPNWR's strategic location and high visitor numbers make it a significant conservation and recreational site. Challenges with water control infrastructure and encroaching cattails have impacted the site's management and visitor experience. The need for this project was identified in the City of Arvada Parks, Trails, and Open Space 2016 Master Plan. This comprehensive approach ensures that the project at Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge (TPNWR) is deeply rooted in the local context, supplementing the broader framework of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. Collaboration for this project involves several key stakeholders: Founders and Friends of Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge; City of Arvada; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Community organizations; Local schools and educational institutions; visitors and wildlife enthusiasts.

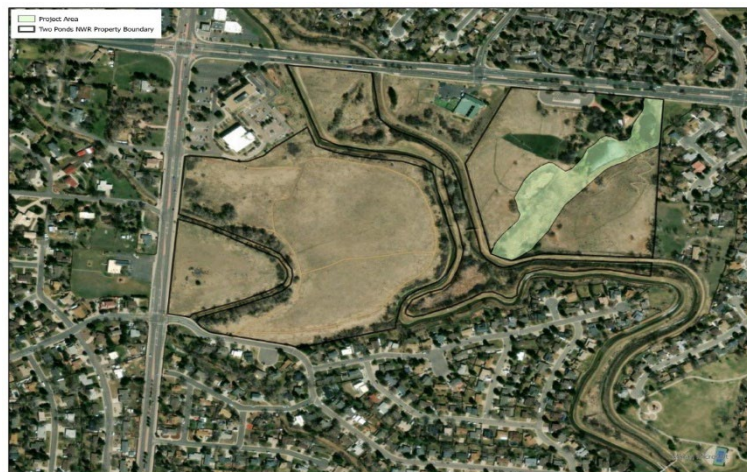


Figure 1. Project area and NWR boundaries. Note the communities immediately adjacent to this valuable refuge.

Ducks Unlimited is requesting funding for the planning, design, and construction of the TPNWR project, with the overarching goal of enhancing habitat, implementing infrastructure to optimize water rights utilization, and fostering expanded and more impactful opportunities for outreach and education concerning water and wetlands.

Specific project tasks focus on survey and design, permitting and construction. The survey and design task will include topographical surveys, surface models, conceptual designs and construction plansets. Refuge staff and federal partners will work with the applicant to complete all necessary local, state and

federal permitting for the project. Finally, construction subtasks are anticipated to include removing invasive species, clearing plant material, installing water control structures and installing educational signage.

Match funding will be secured through Colorado Parks and Wildlife Wetlands for Wildlife Program and a North American Wetlands Act Grant.

Funding Recommendation: This project is recommended for full funding of the \$98,125.00 requested.



Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Ducks Unlimited
Name of Water Project	Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge Restoration
Grant Request Amount	\$98,125.00
Primary Category	\$98,125.00
<i>Watershed Health & Recreation</i>	
Total Applicant Match	\$0.00
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	\$0.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	
Total Other Sources of Funding	\$111,083.00
<i>Colorado Parks & Wildlife Wetlands for Wildlife Program</i>	\$54,203.00
<i>North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) Grant</i>	\$56,880.00
Total Project Cost	\$209,208.00

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Ducks Unlimited
Mailing Address: 2114 Midpoint Dr. Suite 1 Fort Collins CO 80525
FEIN: 13,563,799

Organization Contact: Courtney Massey
Position/Title: Biologist Email: cmassey@ducks.org
Phone: 971-791-1379

Organization Contact - Alternate: John Denton
Position/Title: Colorado Manager of Conservation Programs Email: jdenton@ducks.org
Phone: (308) 258-4682

Grant Management Contact: Courtney Massey
Position/Title: Biologist Email: cmassey@ducks.org
Phone: 971-791-1379

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: John Denton
Position/Title: Colorado Manager of Conservation Programs Email: jdenton@ducks.org
Phone: (308) 258-4682

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Wetland conservation and restoration agency

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	39.502323
Longitude	-105.061404
Lat Long Flag	
Water Source	The primary water source for TPNWR is Farmers High Line Canal
Basins	Metro
Counties	Jefferson
Districts	7-Clear Creek

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	Environmental
Type of Water Project	Design & Construction
Scheduled Start Date - Design	9/1/2023
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	7/1/2024
Description	Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge (TPNWR) is a critical 72-acre urban green space in Arvada, CO, supporting diverse wildlife. Despite its small size, TPNWR's strategic location and high visitor numbers make it a significant conservation and recreational site. However, challenges with water control infrastructure and encroaching cattails

have impacted its management and visitor experience. This project aims to enhance water control, restore native wetland plants, and improve recreation opportunities. Restoration efforts include removing invasive species, clearing plant material, and installing water control structures. TPNWR is part of the USFWS Urban Wildlife Conservation Program, promoting access to green space, education, and outdoor recreation for urban residents. By eliminating access barriers and fostering connections, TPNWR seeks to engage communities, promote conservation, and provide recreational opportunities. A partnership between USFWS, DU, and the Friends and Founders of Two Ponds is crucial to this project's success, but the Refuge also maintains strong partnerships with schools and educational organizations across the Denver metro area, hosting school groups and environmental education programs. Through this multi-dimensional approach, TPNWR serves as a valuable resource, offering important recreation access and engaging the community while nurturing a deep appreciation for nature and conservation.

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)
- 6 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
- 15 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity

Other

The outcomes of this project will have profound and long-lasting effects on the community of Arvada and the broader Denver metro area. The enhanced facilities and resources at Two Ponds National Wildlife Refuge will create an enriching and educational experience for the thousands of annual visitors (far more than the minimum 15 we are committed to engage in this project), fostering a deep appreciation for the natural world. Additionally, the Refuge's collaboration with Denver metro school districts and other community partners will empower students with valuable environmental education, instilling a sense of responsibility and promoting ecological awareness. Ultimately, these outcomes will strengthen the connection between people and nature, leaving an enduring impact on the community.

We anticipate new storage will be created through the project, though we expect the new wetland basin to measure less than 1 AF.

Water Project Justification

This project supports the 2023 Colorado Water Plan and 2022 South Platte-Metro Basin Implementation Plan in that it will protect and enhance watershed function, environmental attributes, and recreation attributes.

Colorado Water Plan (CWP): The project aligns with the CWP's Thriving Watersheds Vision (CWP pgs. 204-207) and aims to achieve it through a comprehensive water resources planning approach. Its primary objectives are twofold: restoring wetlands and wildlife habitat to enhance ecosystem function, and preserving and strengthening the recreational value of the property. To ensure success, the project fosters an engaged partnership by integrating DU's restoration expertise with TPNWR's strong community ties. This collaboration is crucial for

effectively addressing both ecological health and the needs of the local community. To work toward meeting future water needs and achieving thoughtful storage (CWP pg. 205), this project will use nature-based solutions (wetlands) to attenuate flows, improve ecosystem health, and meet the needs of local users. According to the CWP, partner actions rely on effective engagement and education at different levels, as detailed on page 207. The plan classifies stakeholders into three categories: government, NGOs, and residents. This project actively works across all three levels and has been developed to align with the values of local stakeholders.

South Platte-Metro BIP Goal 6.A: Protect and improve water quality throughout the watershed. In accordance with goal 6.A, the project will address nutrient buildup in aquatic systems at TPNWR, enhancing the Refuge's ecological integrity.

South Platte-Metro BIP Goal 7: Protect and enhance environmental attributes. In line with goal 7, the project will implement strategies that protect and enhance environmental attributes for this socially and ecologically important habitat. Specifically, in accordance with strategy 7.A, the project will actively take measures to enhance wetlands and aquatic habitat. Additionally, in support of strategy 7.B, the project will implement actions aimed at promoting the well-being of wetland-dependent species and protecting state species of special concern, several of which have been observed at TPNWR in recent years (e.g. northern leopard frog). Moreover, in accordance with strategy 7.C, the project will carry out initiatives to safeguard and enhance the conditions of wetlands and lakes, ensuring their functionality as vital waterfowl habitats.

South Platte-Metro BIP Goal 8: Protect and enhance recreational attributes. While this is a relatively small-scale project, we believe the effort is in line with goal 8, protecting and enhancing recreational attributes, as the project will implement strategies to protect and enhance the recreational landscape and sensitive habitats at TPNWR.

South Platte-Metro BIP Goal 11: Broaden South Platte communications, outreach, and education programs. In line with goal 11, our project will create new and stronger opportunities to expand on existing communications and outreach programs to improve knowledge and promote informed decisions about critical water issues and wetlands' role in addressing Colorado's water needs.

Related Studies

This proposal is responsive to the 2018 update to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP), an international plan to conserve waterfowl and migratory birds of North America, and the studies that supported the plan's development. First established in 1986, the 2012 NAWMP revision recognized a need to reach new audiences and grow numbers of waterfowl hunters, conservationists, and citizens who enjoy and support wetlands and waterfowl conservation. The 2018 update builds upon this goal by directly calling for better integration of social science into planning and program delivery, highlighting a need to invest in identifying key geographic areas where best opportunities exist to meet the needs of waterfowl and people, and calls on the community to compel people to take action to conserve waterfowl habitat. The project proposed here aligns with this goal by delivering a two-pronged project that 1) restores important wetland areas for the benefit of migratory birds and other wetland-dependent wildlife and 2) provides opportunities to engage new audiences through outreach and engagement efforts that utilize the restored landscapes.

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

DU is not aware of any TABOR issues that impact this application.