



**Colorado Water Conservation Board**

**Water Plan Grant – Statement of Work – Exhibit A**

**Statement Of Work**

<b>Prepared Date:</b>	<b>4/26/23</b>
<b>Name of Grantee:</b>	<b>RiversEdge West</b>
<b>Name of Water Project:</b>	<b>Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative – River Planning Project</b>
<b>Funding Source:</b>	<b>Water Plan – Planning Grant</b>

**Water Project Overview:**

The Grand Valley’s River Corridor extends from De Beque, Colorado to the Utah state line; it also encompasses the Gunnison River from Bridgeport to the confluence with the Colorado River. The River Corridor is the lifeblood of the community and is a vital economic, cultural, and ecological resource that supports the Grand Valley’s wellbeing and prosperity. Essential industries to the region such as agriculture, tourism, recreation, and re-development within the River Corridor are dependent on the long-term health and vitality of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers.

Decision-making about River Corridor land-use, native and endangered species habitat, and flow management are largely siloed, not always considering the cumulative and long-term impacts they might have on this valuable resource. Given the diverse values supported by the river, the forecasts for growth in the region, and chronic and potentially worsening environmental stressors such as drought and fire, the Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative (RCI) was formed in 2020 to address the acute need for enhanced coordination, planning, and collaboration on River Corridor related activities.

From 2020-2021 the RCI has conducted stakeholder outreach and workshops to identify and prioritize community priorities for the River Corridor. In 2022 the Fluvial Hazard Zone has been mapped. This work has set the foundation for the currently proposed 2023-2025 RCI River Planning Project. This project will evaluate riparian and floodplain health metrics, identify conservation and restoration projects, quantify water user flow preferences linked to flow metrics and trends, and support the development of a framework among local governments for inter-jurisdictional River Corridor management. It also supports stakeholder facilitation and outreach activities. This scope is tailored to fill gaps within ongoing partner efforts and meet the needs of the Grand Valley.

**Project Objectives:**



**Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative Goals:**

- Engage River Corridor stakeholder groups to identify common values and challenges. Develop and implement strategies to address shared River Corridors goals, objectives, and challenges.
- Provide a platform and resource for River Corridor stakeholders, fostering coordinated collaboration and implementation on River Corridor planning and activities needs.
- Foster community education and connection with the river.

**River Planning Project Objectives:**

- Develop a public facing presence for the RCI and conduct community outreach activities related community awareness and connection to the River Corridor.
- Evaluate river health metrics within riparian and floodplain zones in coordination with the Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program's in-channel habitat project to inform and identify opportunities for restoration, conservation, and river dynamism.
- Characterize and quantify river stakeholder flow experiences and preferences.
- Support the development of an inter-jurisdictional River Corridor planning framework

**Tasks**

**Task 1 – Project Management, Facilitation, and Outreach**

**Description of Task:**

A facilitator for the Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative (RCI) will be hired to schedule regular stakeholder meetings, oversee the timeline for individual tasks and coordinate among task managers, ensure the project stays on track, and conduct targeted outreach and communications for the RCI. This task will include developing a public presence on RCI planning activities (website, videos, public engagement). It will also support the RCI in engaging and informing other ongoing and nascent partner efforts related to RCI objectives. These include:

- Two Rivers Regional Partnership Initiative (2022-2024): A recreation and conservation planning effort funded by GOCO and CPW and lead by Colorado Canyons Association
- Grand Valley Outdoor Coalition Recreation Planning (2022-2023): An outdoor / recreation business planning effort
- Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program hydrology and habitat study (2023-2028): An in-depth flow (current and future) and in-channel habitat analysis to be conducted for the US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Two Rivers Wildfire Coalition (ongoing): ongoing studies and restoration work related to riparian restoration and fuels management within the Grand Valley River Corridor
- Grand Valley Watershed Plan (2022-2024): a long-term effort to address water quality concerns in tributaries to the Colorado River within the Grand Valley.



<b>Method/Procedure:</b>
<p>Serve as project manager, grant management and aid in task facilitation and oversight overseeing timelines, responsibilities, and coordination among collaborators for Tasks 2, 3, and 4.</p> <p>Convene and facilitate quarterly RCI Advisory Committee and Steering Committee meetings.</p> <p>Plan and conduct two public outreach activities each in 2023 and 2024 in partnership with local river-oriented community groups to connect the Grand Valley community with the River Corridor.</p> <p>Partner with Colorado Mesa University to develop a short (10 min) video on the values of the river corridor for public engagement and outreach.</p> <p>Develop a landing web page for the RCI to host event information, documents and reports, meeting minutes and recordings, etc.</p> <p>The RCI will also conduct targeted outreach and communications to the public at large via, community meetings, social media, website and digital tools.</p>
<b>Deliverable:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continued engagement with stakeholder groups and the public through meetings and outreach events.</li><li>Successful and completed RCI project with task 2-4 finished by March 2025.</li><li>Toolbox of outreach materials used for public education, curation of data and dissemination of RCI process to other watersheds in Colorado.</li></ul>

Tasks
<b>Task 2 – Riparian and Floodplain Health Assessment</b>
<b>Description of Task:</b>
<p>With ongoing efforts to study, plan, and implement projects related to water quality and in- stream flow and habitat, along with the renewed interest in development within the River Corridor, a gap exists in evaluating riparian and floodplain habitat quality and connectivity. As such, the RCI proposes to conduct a riparian and floodplain health assessment. The goal of this assessment will be to evaluate and score the condition of riparian and floodplain habitat within the Grand Valley River Corridor, which serve as critical habitat for the yellow-billed cuckoo and federally endangered fish. Based on this assessment, the RCI will identify multi-benefit opportunities for floodplain and riparian conservation and restoration.</p>



**Method/Procedure:**

The following analyses will be conducted based on the Colorado River Health Assessment Framework within the Riverscape scale with a health assessment metrics focusing on the following variables:

- Riparian Quality
- Floodplain Connectivity
- Geomorphology
- Hydrology (Task 3)

The RCI will conduct a Level 1 (remote sensing) and Level 2 (rapid field) assessment with the following approaches:

- Refine geomorphic reaches established by the 2022 Grand Valley FHZ study.
- Level 1 coarse scale health assessment of riparian quality, floodplain connectivity, and of land use, valley / channel type, floodplain type and connectivity across entire study area (remote sensing).
- Level 2 fine scale classification and scoring of land use and riparian quality of priority reaches (Remote Sensing + Rapid Field Verification on approximately 1/3 of study area)
- Site scale riparian and floodplain action plan development for multi-benefit project identification and prioritization. Projects may include:
  - Conservation
  - Habitat restoration / vegetation management
  - Riprap removal
  - Floodplain reconnection / restoration

River hydrology has previously been evaluated and an instream flow program established for habitat considerations within the River Corridor by the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program. However, to support Task 3, Flow Conditions and Preferences Analysis, a stream gage analysis will be conducted to link quantitative metrics of the timing, duration, frequency, and magnitude of flows (and trends thereof) with stakeholder-identified attributes of values and associated flow preferences. This updated flow study along with previously-identified low and high flow targets will be used to evaluate the health of the segments within the study area.

**Spatial Domain:** Colorado River: 46.4 miles from within De Beque Canyon upstream of the confluence with Plateau Creek to the entrance of Ruby-Horsethief Canyon downstream of Fruita. Gunnison River: 15.2 miles spanning just upstream of Whitewater, CO at the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area boundary to the confluence with the Colorado River (61.6 miles total).

**Deliverable:**

- Riparian and floodplain health assessment report and action plan (project list and prioritization).
- Completion of Colorado Water Conservation Board Stream Management Plan Outcomes Tracking Tool with inclusion of prioritized projects. This form will be completed on an annual basis and will include updates regarding implementation and funding sources.



Tasks
<b>Task 3 - Flow Conditions and Preferences Analysis</b>
<b>Description of Task:</b>
<p>The RCI is partnering with River Network to conduct an interactive stakeholder analysis that results in a description of relationships between flows and attributes of value. This process asks stakeholder to list their attributes of value (i.e., what they rely on the river for) and their description of how flows positively or negatively impact the attribute at times throughout the year. For example, when the river is at bank full it affects my agricultural operation in these ways or when the river is low it affects how many people recreate in the region, diminishing patrons to my business. This analysis will be used during the early stages of assessing existing flow conditions to provide a way to develop more understanding among stakeholders and compliment an upcoming scientific flow needs assessment. This preferences analysis is paired with a flow analysis that quantifies flow rates at various times of year under low, medium, and high runoff years.</p>
<b>Method/Procedure:</b>
<p>A series of three facilitated stakeholder workshops will be conducted in the Grand Valley to identify attributes of values and detriments linked to the timing, duration, frequency, and magnitude of flows in the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers within the Grand Valley. Stakeholders from the following types of user groups will be included: irrigation districts, recreation, municipal, environmental / conservation.</p> <p>A hydrologic analysis will be conducted based on stream gage data in conjunction with this stakeholder process to link quantitative metrics of the timing, duration, frequency, and magnitude of flows (and trends thereof) with stakeholder-identified preferences. This will be conducted at three gage locations within the Grand Valley River Corridor: Colorado River downstream of major diversions in Palisade and downstream of the confluence with the Gunnison River as well as on the Gunnison River near Whitewater.</p>
<b>Deliverable:</b>
<p>A technical memo of flow preferences across various water user groups with a companion flow study will be completed. This deliverable will contain a visual matrix of water user preferences linked to attributes of value for high and low flows throughout the year based on wet, average, and dry runoff scenarios. This will support ongoing and future work related to instream flow-habitat suitability by the Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program as well as discussions with agricultural producers regarding water use within the Grand Valley and Colorado River Basin drought planning and management.</p>



## Tasks

### **Task 4 – Framework for Integrating River Corridor Planning and Management among Local Governments**

#### **Description of Task:**

Land use planning and development within the Grand Valley River Corridor, which spans three municipalities (Palisade, Grand Junction, and Fruita) and the unincorporated areas within Mesa County, currently occurs outside of a shared vision or master plan. Under this task, the RCI will work with these partners to establish a framework for inter-jurisdictional River Corridor master planning through a facilitated process. This framework will include a shared vision and goals for development within the River Corridor, planning processes and guidelines that can support these goals, and, should our partners support it, lay the foundation for a River Corridor master planning processes in a subsequent phase.

#### **Method/Procedure:**

The RCI will hire a planner to facilitate three workshops among the four entities with planning and development review jurisdiction within the River Corridor. In these workshops the municipalities and Mesa County will re-affirm and refine a shared vision and goals for planning and development within the River Corridor, discuss planning processes and guidelines that can support these goals, and develop a planning toolkit and guidance document with consensus best practices and policies for land use and development within the River Corridor.

This workshop series will include the following:

- Facilitated confirmation of the RCI vision and identification of related goals for the River Corridor
- Discussion of options in planning processes that achieve the desired goals.
- Development and sharing of supporting information: 1) peer city examples and outcomes 2) planning approach options and 3) implementation tools for consideration. (Discussion of ordinances, design guidelines, plan review, overlay districts, etc. will be part of this workshop)

The RCI will then summarize the outcomes of the facilitated workshops, planning approaches and group preferences. From this input, we will develop a guidance document or planning framework that sets the stage for a potential future comprehensive River Corridor Master Plan. A chartering process or jurisdictional agreement could be part of “adopting” this guidance document or planning framework.

Then, if our municipal partners are willing to consider taking additional steps to pursue River Corridor master planning, we will work with the group to develop draft agreements, resolutions or ordinances that carry the process forward towards a future master planning effort.

#### **Deliverable:**



Facilitated River Corridor planning and management discussion among municipal stakeholders.

Guidance document and planning framework that delineates how River Corridor management and planning could be implemented across jurisdictions within the Grand Valley.

Formal acknowledgement and incorporation of the River Corridor as a special area for planning, conservation and development in support of future master planning efforts.

### Budget and Schedule

This Statement of Work shall be accompanied by a combined Budget and Schedule that reflects the Tasks identified in the Statement of Work.

### Reporting Requirements

**Progress Reports:** The applicant shall provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of issuance of a purchase order, or the execution of a contract. The progress report shall describe the status of the tasks identified in the statement of work, including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues.

**Final Report:** At completion of the project, the applicant shall provide the CWCB a Final Report on the applicant's letterhead that:

- Summarizes the project and how the project was completed.
- Describes any obstacles encountered, and how these obstacles were overcome.
- Confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled.
- Includes photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.

The CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the budget when the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

### Payment

Payment will be made based on actual expenditures and must include invoices for all work completed. The request for payment must include a description of the work accomplished by task, an estimate of the percent completion for individual tasks and the entire Project in relation to the percentage of budget spent, identification of any major issues, and proposed or implemented corrective actions.

Costs incurred prior to the effective date of this contract are not reimbursable. The last 10% of the entire grant will be paid out when the final deliverable has been received. All products, data and information developed as a result of this contract must be provided as part of the project documentation.

### Performance Measures



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Performance measures for this contract shall include the following:

(a) Performance standards and evaluation: Grantee will produce detailed deliverables for each task as specified. Grantee shall maintain receipts for all project expenses and documentation of the minimum in-kind contributions (if applicable) per the budget in Exhibit B. Per Grant Guidelines, the CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the budget when the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

(b) Accountability: Per Grant Guidelines full documentation of project progress must be submitted with each invoice for reimbursement. Grantee must confirm that all grant conditions have been complied with on each invoice. In addition, per Grant Guidelines, Progress Reports must be submitted at least once every 6 months. A Final Report must be submitted and approved before final project payment.

(c) Monitoring Requirements: Grantee is responsible for ongoing monitoring of project progress per Exhibit A. Progress shall be detailed in each invoice and in each Progress Report, as detailed above. Additional inspections or field consultations will be arranged as may be necessary.

(d) Noncompliance Resolution: Payment will be withheld if grantee is not current on all grant conditions. Flagrant disregard for grant conditions will result in a stop work order and cancellation of the Grant Agreement.