COLORADO
Colorado Water Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Multiplier
Name of Water Project	Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities
Grant Request Amount	**$331,885.00**
Primary Category	$331,885.00
Watershed Health & Recreation	
Total Applicant Match	**$0.00**
Applicant Cash Match	$0.00
Applicant In-Kind Match	$0.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	**$108,195.00**
Spring Point Partners	$108,195.00
Total Project Cost	**$440,080.00**

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Multiplier
Mailing Address: 548 Market Street, PMB 81178 San Francisco CA 94104-5401
FEIN: 912,166,435

Organization Contact: Liz Howard
Position/Title:
Phone: 680-207-3414
Email: liz@multiplier.org

Organization Contact - Alternate: Otha William
Position/Title: Senior Manager, Government Grants & Compliance
Phone: (404) 793-5611
Email: otha@multiplier.org

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Multiplier is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) umbrella organization that accelerates impact for initiatives focused on protecting and fostering a healthy, sustainable, resilient, and equitable world.

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	40.006866
Longitude	-105.259647
Lat Long Flag	Default/Proponent headquarters: If the location cannot be defined with flags above, use location of project proponent headquarters
Water Source	N/A
Basins	Colorado; Arkansas; Gunnison; Metro; Yampa/White/Green; Rio Grande; South Platte; Southwest; Nort...
Counties	
Districts	

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	
Type of Water Project	Planning
Scheduled Start Date - Design	7/1/2024
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	

Description

WaterNow seeks funding from the Colorado Water Plan (CWP) Grant to expand its current initiatives in collaboration with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). The goal is to accelerate and fund high-impact water use efficiency projects, specifically those integrating water efficiency with land use planning. The Project Accelerator will provide technical assistance to municipal water providers, supporting innovative projects for sustainable water management. The Colorado Regional Accelerator aims to develop both projects and a cohort of leaders addressing water issues. WaterNow will continue sharing successes and resources with the Colorado water community. Additionally, WaterNow proposes continuing the WaterSMART Help Desk, focusing on outreach and support for federal funding in under-served Colorado communities. Over the past five years, the Help Desk facilitated 13 successful applications, securing $6,879,470 in federal support and leveraging approximately $22 million for water efficiency programs. This year we plan to enable 20-25 Colorado

cities to apply for WaterSMART funding over the grant period, promoting innovative and sustainable water supply objectives. Furthermore, WaterNow aims to extend support to communities applying for Colorado's Drinking Water and Water Pollution Control State Revolving Funds (SRFs). This includes outreach efforts, resource development, and guidance to help communities successfully participate in the SRF application process. The initiative will address barriers, informed by a WaterNow 2023 survey of Colorado city and utility leaders, empowering communities to invest in drinking water and clean water projects.

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

This project will help meet Colorado’s Water Plan Goal of reducing the projected municipal water supply gap estimate of 740,000 acre feet of water by 2050.

Water Project Justification

WaterNow’s project, “Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities” is specifically designed to support and advance many of the 2023 Water Plan’s goals and partner actions in the Vibrant Communities and Resilient Planning action areas (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 173 – 228). It will also help reduce the projected municipal water supply gap estimate of 740,000 acre-feet of water by 2050 (2023 CWP, Chapter 3, pp. 45; Chapter 5, pp. 148). The proposal will support and continue to add to the available public outreach and education, land and water use planning integration, and water efficiency and collaboration projects tools and examples (2023 CWP, Chapter 5, pp. 153) that can help achieve these goals.

With CWCB’s support over the last three years, WaterNow has been successfully advancing the three key initiatives that it seeks to continue to implement and expand through this proposal. These include:

1. Colorado Regional Project Accelerator: Advancing the implementation of innovative, integrated water efficiency and conservation and land use planning projects and policies through direct project assistance to small-to-mid sized Colorado communities, through the Colorado Regional Project Accelerator.
2. WaterSMART Grant Application Support & Help Desk: Increasing the level of federal funding for Colorado communities to scale-up adoption of robust local water efficiency programs through outreach and application support for the WaterSMART program.
3. Advancing Water Efficiency Through State Revolving Fund Assistance: Engaging with Colorado communities to help them scale up investments in drinking water and clean water projects through outreach, resource development, and application support for the Colorado State Revolving Fund (SRF) program.

These programs provide direct, hands-on assistance to communities to advance, accelerate, and fund high

impact water efficiency projects. We will prioritize projects that integrate water and land use planning as a means of advancing water-savings actions at the local level. As substantial new funding has become available under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), we aim to support communities in harnessing these resources to meet local water efficiency priorities. WaterNow has the expertise, networks, and experience in Colorado to ensure the success of these closely related initiatives.

Background

Colorado communities are facing unprecedented, confounding challenges when it comes to managing their water resources. As of November 2023, one-third of the state was in “Severe Drought” to “Abnormally Dry” conditions, and the state has had three of the top five driest years on record since 2000 (2023 CWP, Chapter 3, pp. 38). At the same time, Colorado’s population is projected to continue to grow rapidly, from 5.8 million people in 2022 to 7.5 million by 2050 (2023 CWP, Chapter 3, pp. 44), making it essential to accelerate local efforts to plan for and invest in large scale water use efficiency activities.

As the data shows, active water conservation strategies have substantial potential to significantly reduce per capita water consumption. Colorado’s investments in water conservation and efficiency have decreased per capita municipal water use demand by 5% since 2008 (2023 CWP, pp. 43). Based on experience elsewhere in the West, there remains considerable potential to continue to meet the Colorado Water Plan’s goals for reducing municipal water demand through both passive and active water efficiency measures. Such strategies can include (but are not limited to) indoor water efficient fixture/appliance rebates and direct installation, indoor and outdoor water audits, turf replacement rebates and other irrigation efficiency incentives, such as smart irrigation controllers and high efficiency nozzles, alternative onsite water supplies like rainwater harvesting and graywater reuse, leak detection technologies, and water education initiatives, among many other tactics – many of which are identified in the Water Plan as agency and partner actions (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 173 – 228).

Land use planning, in particular, as the Water Plan has recognized, can make a significant difference in the water “footprint” of Colorado’s growing population. One of the primary causes of the projected gap between Colorado’s future water supply and demand is anticipated population growth. How this growth occurs is of utmost importance in managing future water supply and demand. As noted throughout the Colorado Water Plan, integrating water with land use planning is essential to ensuring that any future growth occurs as water-efficiently as possible (2023 CWP, Chapter 5, pp. 163; Chapter 6, pp. 182, 187). This reduces per capita water demand and builds community resilience in the face of climate change. In addition, integrating water efficiency into new development is significantly more cost effective than retrofitting developments in the future. Recognized tactics for incorporating water and land use planning include but are not limited to: (1) developing water efficient land development codes (i.e., turf limits; landscaping standards, etc.); (2) integrating water efficiency into comprehensive plans; (3) integrating land use planning into water efficiency plans; and (4) developing conservation-oriented tap fees or other incentives for efficient new development.

In order to make progress on implementing high impact water-smart growth strategies, communities must have access to sufficient funding. The Water Plan acknowledges that: “Local water providers often use customer water rates and tap fees as the primary source of funding where the end user is directly connected with costs and investments; however, smaller communities bring in less money from these rates and fees, which puts them at a disadvantage in generating revenue” (2023 CWP, Chapter 5, pp. 149 - 150). Many, if not most, municipal-owned utilities have experienced revenue shortfalls and budget cuts, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and still apparent today. The Water Plan identifies a funding gap of $1.5 billion – approximately $50 million per year through the planning horizon of 2050 – that CWCB would need to meet the identified project demands (2023 CWP, Chapter 3, pp. 64). Additionally, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), and the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority have cited a $14 billion need in their combined 2022 Drinking Water Revolving Fund (2023 CWP, Chapter 3, pp. 64).

Increasing access to federal support from both USBR's WaterSMART programs and the Colorado State Revolving Fund (SRF) program – which fund many of the same types of projects and programs as CWCB's Water Plan Grants – is a key strategy for filling these funding gaps, particularly in light of the BIL and IRA funding opportunities.

WaterNow's Colorado Regional Project Accelerator, WaterSMART Grant Application Support & Help Desk, and Advancing Water Efficiency Through State Revolving Fund Assistance
initiatives all support and materially advance municipal water demand reductions and water-smart growth through high impact water efficiency program implementation and funding. Our substantial experience working with Colorado communities has made clear that while there is considerable talent and drive on the ground, many utilities and municipalities do not have the requisite staff bandwidth, expertise, information, and/or political support to fully develop, implement, and fund water efficiency initiatives. This project will facilitate bringing the requisite funds to under-resourced communities to help to overcome these challenges. We will also increase awareness and education around the numerous tools and strategies available to Colorado communities for increasing their water efficiency and incorporating water into land use planning.

This project supports the goals and partner actions identified in the Colorado Water Plan

WaterNow's proposed project, "Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities," supports many of the pillars identified in the Vibrant Communities Action Area and Resilient Planning Action Areas of 2023 Colorado Water Plan, and will help reduce the projected municipal water supply gap estimate of 740,000 acre feet of water by 2050. Because WaterNow operates on a statewide basis, we have grouped together various of the Roundtable Basin goals included in the Colorado Water Plan 2023 together with the state's goals for the CWP itself into seven goal categories as indicated below. The proposal will support and continue to add to the available public outreach and education, land and water use planning integration, and water efficiency and collaboration projects tools and examples (2023 CWP Chapter 5, pp. 153) that can help achieve these goals.

1. Reliable Municipal Supply Goals - Address gaps in water supply; ensure delivery of safe drinking water. "Statewide municipal and industrial gaps are projected to be from 230,000 acre-feet (in Weak Economy) to 740,000 acre-feet (in Hot Growth) in dry years…Municipal conservation efforts significantly reduce the risk of future gaps" (2023 CWP, Chapter 3, pp. 45). The need to address the supply gap and ensure reliable municipal supply was also echoed in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Arkansas Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 77); Colorado Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 90); Gunnison Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 97); Rio Grande Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 114); Southwest Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 129); South Platte (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 122); and Yampa-White Green Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 141).

WaterNow's project will support communities, including specifically small- to mid-sized and under resourced communities, ensure delivery of reliable water supplies, and reduce the risk of future gaps in supply and demand, through the adoption of permanent water savings with our Colorado Regional Project Accelerator initiative, WaterSMART Grant Application Support and Help Desk, and Advancing Water Efficiency Through State Revolving Fund Assistance. These initiatives will each provide direct hands-on assistance to support water conservation and efficiency projects. We have to date supported dozens of Colorado communities in learning about and navigating aspects of the WaterSMART program, while providing deeper assistance for 13 successful applications. Those 13 applications received $6,879,470 in federal support, and leveraged a total of approximately $22 million for water efficiency programs in the state of Colorado. In aggregate, these initiatives are expected to conserve thousands of acre-feet over the lifetime of the projects; however, we expect the total actual water savings flowing from these programs will be significantly higher since this figure does not include savings from many of the WaterSMART grants for which we provide support that do not require applicants to

quantify water savings estimates (i.e., Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects [SWEP]). Additionally, our Project Accelerator has also resulted in significant savings, as well as paved the way for future water savings, by creating enabling policy frameworks, developing and strengthening efficiency programs, and building community engagement and outreach.

Through our expanded Advancing Water Efficiency Through State Revolving Fund Assistance we aim to further engage with Colorado communities to increase awareness, provide them with the necessary information to learn about and navigate the SRF application process, and help them apply for SRF funds to scale up projects capable of achieving large statewide water savings. WaterNow's successes help to establish a virtuous cycle of replicable and scalable examples that can support other Colorado communities in pursuing ambitious conservation initiatives. The technical assistance WaterNow provides for funding and implementation of high impact water efficiency programs and projects will support the State's goals to reduce the projected municipal and industrial gap.

2. Encouraging Ambitious Municipal Conservation Goals. "Communities need to continue advancing programs and planning that strive for ever-greater levels of indoor and outdoor water efficiency. Colorado water supplies are stressed and will be even more so in the future. Cities will need to build and redevelop with an eye toward densification and creative water-savings techniques that use green infrastructure. Water efficiency and conservation programs, reuse, and rate structures that encourage water savings are strategies that will help communities stretch their water supplies and be more resilient in the future" (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 180). Goals focused on water conservation and efficiency are also reflected in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Colorado Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 90) and Southwest Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 129).

WaterNow's proposed project will expand the ability of under-resourced Colorado communities to advance and invest in projects that increase indoor and outdoor water efficiency and build resilience. WaterNow's Project Accelerator focuses on projects that embrace One Water principles and enhance resiliency in the face of shrinking water supplies. For example, Project Accelerator has supported efforts such as the development of a new water efficient landscape ordinance for Broomfield, creation of a water efficiency campaign for Wellington, development of turf rebate program in Eagle County, established a data driven target for reducing turf on city owned properties in Longmont, and commercial water use benchmark development in Thornton, among many others (see a full list on WaterNow's website).
Additionally, through WaterNow's WaterSMART Grant Application Support and Help Desk initiative we have focused on assisting community projects that provide multiple benefits including, but not limited to, increased water use efficiency, reduced overall water demand locally and regionally, reduced low-income customers' annual water costs, improved per capita multi-family water use, reduced strain on water delivery systems during peak irrigation season by minimizing seepage and evaporative losses, and improved real-time water consumption data collection. For example, we have supported many communities in submitting successful WaterSMART applications, including City of Alamosa's Cattails Golf Course Irrigation Efficiency WEEG application, City of Fountain's Water Meter Upgrade WEEG application, Colorado Springs Utilities' High Efficiency Toilets for Affordable Housing SWEP application, and Dave Miller Mutual Ditch Company's Ditch Piping Project SWEP application, among many others.

Our SRF Support Program will dovetail and complement our WaterSMART initiative by providing technical assistance to communities ready to accelerate their investments in multi-benefit water use efficiency programs. This technical support will enable Colorado communities to invest in these environmentally sustainable infrastructure programs on par with centralized infrastructure investments and access low-cost financing aligned with the Colorado SRF's green project reserve priorities.

3. Education and Outreach Goals. "Education and outreach are needed to equip Coloradans to take action to

conserve water. Education and outreach opportunities need to spur new thinking, connect people to solutions, and invite the next wave of innovation. In addition, Coloradans need to be educated in an inclusive way about opportunities to participate in strategies to conserve water and programs to assist with implementing conservation measures" (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 218). "Raising awareness and helping all Coloradans recognize our water scarcity issues will be important to addressing our challenges. Education is the key to bridging perceived divides across the West and East Slopes, rural and urban populations, and diverse people. Public education around water must be increased, and outreach efforts should be increasingly inclusive. The State should work with local governments to support common messaging that increases awareness of water challenges and helps all Coloradans understand the critical importance of funding, collaboration, and multi-purpose projects" (2023 CWP Chapter 6, pp. 219). Goals focused on engagement, education and outreach are also reflected in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Gunnison Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 97); Rio Grande Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 113); Southwest Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 129); and South Platte (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp. 122).

WaterNow's proposal is grounded in the education and outreach objectives outlined above, and aims to help ensure that Coloradans understand their water supply, and how to use it efficiently. All three elements of our proposal – the Colorado Regional Project Accelerator, WaterSMART Grant Application Support and Help Desk, and Advancing Water Efficiency Through State Revolving Fund Assistance – include substantial outreach elements. We aim to provide direct technical assistance to a wide variety of communities across the State with a diversity of institutional arrangements (i.e., Front Range vs. rural, municipal vs. independent or special district water providers, and communities with multiple water providers) so that the lessons learned from our initiatives will be widely applicable statewide. Our final reports and supplemental materials will be made available on our Project Accelerator Library page and learnings from these projects will also continue to be shared widely throughout the Colorado water community through webinars, conferences, workshops, and online media (i.e., blogs, newsletters, articles). Additionally, WaterNow will expand our regional Community Cohort of Colorado Accelerator participants by encouraging collaboration, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and facilitating dialogue to help amplify project learnings and outcomes that can support other communities facing similar challenges and goals.

4. Water Equity Goals. Equity is referenced throughout the CWP as a key "tool" for action. In addition, various other aspects of the CWP highlight increasing equity as a goal of the CWP: "Water conservation and incentive programs are sometimes not used because residents do not know about them, cannot afford them, or are unable to effectively use them. These programs can have greater reach and impact if they are translated, and a focus is placed on residents who are not typically engaged in water issues. Water conservation should be seen as an adaptive measure toward greater drought resilience" (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 218). Additionally, the CWP states "Inclusive water planning builds resilience to respond to water challenges and advances equitable outcomes for all Colorado communities" (2023 CWP, Chapter 5, pp. 160). The Water Equity Task Force created guiding principles that include: "Promote diversity in career pathways in water-related fields through education and engagement"; "Promote collaboration, new voices, and greater community engagement in water discussions"; and "Expand grant opportunities to new audiences" (2023 CWP, Chapter 1, pp. 5). Goals focused on water equity are also reflected in the Colorado Basin Implementation Plan (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 89).

For WaterNow, water equity means universal access to secure, affordable, safe, and healthy drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater management services. Through its Colorado Regional Project Accelerator program, WaterNow will continue to support projects that enhance water equity, in particularly, supporting smaller-to-mid-sized and under resourced communities and customers. For example, we worked with the City of Evans to develop a direct installation program for income-qualified residents and free indoor water efficiency audits. Without this program, these homeowners may have not otherwise had the resources or financial means to access this opportunity and upgrades including high efficiency toilets, faucets, aerators, and other water and

energy saving fixtures. We are also working to incorporate equity considerations in the identification and prioritization of sites for non-functional turf conversion in partnership with the City of Longmont, and have explored the water savings and community co-benefits that could be generated through urban agriculture.

Other resources, from projects outside of Colorado, may also have resources or learnings applicable to disadvantaged Colorado communities and populations. These include: the development of language water use efficiency program enhancements to support bilingual and non-English speaking residents in Santa Rosa, CA and Walnut Valley Water District, CA; and support for the creation of a grassroots customer engagement program in Cleveland, OH, each of which is summarized on the Project Accelerator landing page. These resources sought to identify obstacles and solutions to overcoming barriers to awareness of or participation in water efficiency or affordability programs.

Additionally, WaterNow will continue to target small to mid-sized and disadvantaged communities in Colorado through tailored WaterSMART and SRF outreach content and application support.

5. Funding Goals – Support efforts to provide cost-effective solutions to local water supply gaps. “Often, NGOs or non-profits can help support expanding connections… Water providers, NGOs, and others can implement coordinated water projects, help disseminate grant application information and apply for grants, and seek opportunities to align with other local initiatives to leverage funding and advance the dialogue around water” (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp 219). The Water Equity Task Force created guiding principles that include: “Expand grant opportunities to new audiences” (2023 CWP, Chapter 1, pp. 5). Funding goals are also reflected in the Basin Implementation Plans of the Arkansas Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 82); Colorado Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 90); Gunnison Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 98); North Platte Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 106); South Platte Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 120); Southwest Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 129). Funding and development of water projects is a significant concern for many stakeholders. Collaboration, multi-purpose projects, and creative funding strategies can help overcome this challenge (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 140).

WaterNow’s WaterSMART Grant Application Support and Help Desk is critical in helping to fill funding gaps, particularly for smaller and midsized communities with limited capacity and expertise in navigating USBR’s application process. Our program outreach utilizes our growing database of nearly 1,000 Colorado water utility contacts and will continue to include extensive email campaigns, blogs, social media posts, partner outreach, phone calls, and peer learning events such as webinars. The USBR WaterSMART program is an important funding opportunity that has allowed water providers across the West to scale-up their sustainable water management projects. Particularly given budget cuts at the local and state level, WaterSMART funding will allow applicants to implement projects they otherwise couldn’t fund. WaterNow’s WaterSMART initiative can galvanize additional applications, potentially leveraging millions in funding to Colorado communities, particularly in light of increases in funding pursuant to recent federal legislation.

Complementary to our WaterSMART initiative, our SRF Assistance will also help fill gaps and meet funding goals of the CWP. We believe that there are currently unrealized opportunities for Colorado communities to take advantage of SRF funding to develop and implement impactful water conservation projects, and that with the availability of new funding made available through the BIL and IRA, there is a need to inform water decision makers about the opportunities available to then and support then through navigating the application process.

Additionally, WaterNow’s Project Accelerator supports small-to-mid-sized municipal utilities, particularly those that are under-resourced. Based on a survey in 2022 by Colorado WaterWise, many utilities do not have any staff working on conservation (dedicated or otherwise) and/or do not have a dedicated conservation budget to build and run conservation programs. These utilities will be unable to make progress towards the State’s water

conservation goal without substantial outside capacity and expertise to support the funding and implementation of impactful water efficiency programs.

6. Land Use Planning Goals – Developing local water-conscious land use strategies and long-term strategies for conservation, land use, water efficiency, and drought planning. “Colorado must start building the landscapes of the future today by identifying and planting the types of vegetation that are reflective of local natural landscapes, can thrive under warmer and drier conditions, and potentially only need irrigation one day per week or less. Irrigation efficiency should be maximized on existing and new water-wise landscapes. Open spaces should be preserved as urbanization occurs to maintain ecosystem benefits and biodiversity. Green spaces like parks, gardens, and stream corridors that provide community benefits for health, shade, habitat, and food need to be prioritized over seldom-used or nonfunctional turf areas that require irrigation and provide little to no additional benefit” (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 180). “Zoning regulations, land use codes, utility rate structures, conservation-oriented tap fees, state and federal funding assistance, effective landscape transformation programs, utility-financed programs, and other tools must work together to drive water conservation but also address the underlying issues that drive water use” (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 180). “New construction can acquire certifications with rating systems, such as EPA WaterSense®-labeled homes or Water Efficiency Rating Scores, that integrate highly efficient indoor use and resilient landscaping as a part of sustainable design that realizes both energy and water savings” (2023 CWP, Chapter 6, pp. 180). Goals focused on land use planning are also reflected across all Basin Implementation Plans including the Arkansas Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 81); Colorado Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 89); Gunnison Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 97); North Platte Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 106); Rio Grande Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 113); Rio Grande Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 122); Southwest Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 129); and the Yampa-White-Green Basin (2023 CWP, Chapter 4, pp 137).

WaterNow’s programs have supported and are well-placed to continue to support integrated land and water use planning. Through Project Accelerator, WaterNow has supported the development of Broomfield’s new landscape ordinance, one of the strongest water efficient landscape ordinances in Colorado; conducted data analysis to determine CII water use benchmarks for the City of Thornton to help current businesses become more efficient and make their water supply more resilient to increasing development; explored the potential for urban agriculture and community gardening to serve as a water resource management tool in the intermountain west; incorporated sound water conservation tactics in the Town of Severence’s Comprehensive Plan; developed high priority recommendations for updates to the City of Centennial’s municipal code to advance water efficiency, on-site reuse, and sustainable stormwater management practices; and supported the City of Golden in developing a graywater ordinance and demonstration program. Developing strategies that both enhance water conservation and guide development in water-smart ways will continue to be a core focus of this initiative.

Similarly, our WaterSMART Grant Application Support and Help Desk will continue to promote funding opportunities for water efficiency solutions (e.g., AMI, turf replacement rebate projects and programs, irrigation efficiency incentives, graywater and rainwater reuse programs, water efficiency and drought contingency plans, conservation-oriented water budgets, etc.) and support communities’ water-smart growth priorities and projects that integrate water and land use planning.

Through the Advancing Water Efficiency Through State Revolving Fund Assistance program, we hope to increase communities’ awareness of the ways SRF funds can support these activities, including specifically the nexus between land use planning and water use efficiency, and to understand and develop strategies to help communities overcome obstacles to accessing these funds. Anecdotal conversations with utilities and communities suggests many are unaware of the ways that SRF funds can support these types of activities, in particular projects that support sustainable, distributed infrastructure. We will also coordinate our assistance with WaterNow’s complementary Innovative Finance for National Forests Grant Program project to develop and

disseminate a multicriteria decision analysis tool to facilitate accelerate investments in upstream watershed health infrastructure via the SRF.

Related Studies

There are a few related studies to this project:
1. Koehler, C. and Koch, C. 2019. Innovation in Action: 21st Century Water Infrastructure Solutions. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance. Link.
2. Castle, A. and Rugland, E. 2019. Best Practices for Implementing Water Conservation and Demand Management Through Land Use Planning Efforts. Addendum to 2012 Guidance. Prepared by Getches-Wilkinson Center, University of Colorado and Babbitt Center for Land and Water Policy for Colorado Water Conservation Board. Link.
3. Nolan Blanchard, J. C. 2018. Integrating Water Efficiency into Land Use Planning in the Interior West: A Guidebook for Local Planners. Prepared by Land Use Law Center for Western Resource Advocates. Link.
4. Tap into Resilience Resource Library: Water Use Efficiency Reports & Case Studies. Updated on an on-going basis. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance (2020, updated 2022). Link.
5. Koehler, C., Koch, C., Arling, V., Belanger, L., Berggren, J., and Rogers., L. 2022. Financing the Future: How to Pay for Turf Replacement in Colorado. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance and Western Resource Advocates. Link.
6. WaterNow Alliance. 2019. Alternative Transfer Methods - Flexible and Innovative Water Supply Alternatives: A Guide for Local Leaders in Colorado. Prepared by WaterNow Alliance. Link.
7. Colorado WaterWise. 2010. Guidebook of Best Practices for Municipal Water Conservation in Colorado. Prepared by Colorado WaterWise. Link.
8. WaterNow Alliance and Western Resource Advocates. 2022. Enhancing Greeley's Water Efficiency Portfolio through Performance Analysis. Prepared by WNA and WRA. Link.
9. WaterNow Alliance. 2023. Aligning New Federal Funding with Local Priority Projects. Prepared by WNA. Link.
10. WaterNow Alliance. 2023. Summary of Funding and Financing Opportunities for Colorado Communities. Prepared by WNA. Link.

This project continues to be complementary to the Sonoran Institute's Growing Water Smart (GWS) workshops, which are funded in part by a Water Plan grant. These three-day educational workshops result in detailed community action plans. WaterNow will continue to work with the Sonoran Institute to ensure that GWS communities are aware of the Project Accelerator initiative to assist with projects and policy priorities identified in these action plans. In fact, six communities (Broomfield, Longmont, Thornton, Evans, Greeley, and Wellington) that have been through the GWS program have also participated in Project Accelerator. Additionally, projects identified in the action plans may be well-suited for funding through the WaterSMART program. Our complimentary efforts will ultimately increase the total number of communities who receive assistance with their land use and water integration efforts.

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

N/A