

To: Kevin Reidy, Colorado Water Conservation Board
From: Cynthia Koehler and Victoria Arling, WaterNow Alliance
Subject: CWCB Water Plan Grant: Conservation and Land Use Planning, Final Report
Title: Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities
Period of Work: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023
Date: July 1, 2023

Water Project Overview	
Name of Grantee:	WaterNow Alliance, a program of Trust for Conservation Innovation DBA Multiplier
Name of Water Project:	Advancing High Impact Water Efficiency Solutions in Colorado Communities
Funding Source:	Colorado Water Plan – Conservation and Land Use Planning
Water Project Overview:	
<p>WaterNow Alliance (WaterNow) received a CWCB Colorado Water Plan – Water Conservation and Land Use grant in July 2022 to build upon two successful WaterNow initiatives that help Colorado communities develop, accelerate, and fund high impact water use efficiency projects—in particular, those that involve integrating water efficiency and land use planning.</p> <p>WaterNow successfully fulfilled all grant deliverables and stated outcomes over the course of the grant period. This Final Report summarizes the project’s implementation, describes how the project tasks were completed, and shares key findings and lessons learned. This Final Report also describes obstacles encountered, and how they were overcome. It also confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled.</p> <p>The project included two main objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1: Advance the implementation of innovative, integrated water efficiency and land use planning projects and policies through direct assistance to small-to-mid-sized Colorado communities.</p> <p>WaterNow provides technical program assistance and capacity to Colorado municipal water service providers through our Project Accelerator Program, to support innovative, outcomes-oriented projects that advance sustainable water management and the integration of water efficiency and land use planning. We met the project goals of holding two Accelerator rounds during the grant period and selecting 4 Colorado communities to participate in the Accelerator. Through those projects, WaterNow has successfully provided a range of technical support and assistance to these communities to plan, develop, and implement integrated water use efficiency programs. We have also shared project successes, lessons learned, and associated project</p>	

resources widely with the Colorado water community to advance the implementation of high impact water efficiency projects throughout the state.

Objective 2: Increase 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 Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART program.

To meet this second objective, WaterNow has provided outreach and application support for Colorado cities and utilities in accessing the US Bureau of Reclamations (USBR)’s WaterSMART program funding opportunities. WaterNow engaged with 43 communities and provided direct technical assistance to 33 communities in this regard over the grant period, exceeding the goal to support 15 – 20 communities in connection with these applications to advance innovative and sustainable water supply objectives. This component of the project included (a) conducting outreach and promotional activities with Colorado communities as various WaterSMART funding opportunities became available; (b) providing application direct assistance to cities, towns, and other municipal water providers; and (c) facilitating webinars with past successful WaterSMART applicants to amplify the program.

The value of and benefits associated with WaterNow’s Project Accelerator and WaterSMART support initiatives have been validated repeatedly by participating cities and utilities. We look forward to continuing this work and to support CO cities and utilities that would otherwise struggle to develop and implement projects, and/or take advantage of WaterSMART funding to advance sustainable water priorities.

WaterNow’s project has advanced the measurable objectives and critical actions in the Colorado Water Plan in several ways. First, both of the objectives reviewed above involved implementation of active water conservation initiatives intended specifically to reduce municipal water demand while preserving vibrant urban landscaping. The four Colorado Accelerator projects launched over the grant period all represent important water saving programs that are replicable and scalable statewide:

- In the City and County of Broomfield, we are supporting the development of a Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. Once enacted, the ordinance will play a significant role in meeting Broomfield’s goal of reducing total system water demand by 10% by 2040.
- We are working with Eagle River Watershed Council (ERWC) and Eagle County Conservation District (ECCD) on the design of the County’s “Beyond Lawn” Water Efficient Landscape Conversion Program. The program expects to reduce average per capita water usage by 20% in 3 years; it will reach 1,500 residents, convert 90,000 square feet of turf grass to water-efficient native landscaping, and deploy \$30,000 in rebate to update irrigation systems.

- In Longmont, WaterNow is developing goals for and conducting an impact analysis of a Non-Functional Turf Conversion Program to help the City achieve the conservation goals in its Water Efficiency Master Plan. This project will calculate the estimated water savings that could be realized by converting non-functional turf to water-wise landscapes, and examine additional environmental, social, and economic co-benefits that could result from turf conversion projects. It will generate a data-driven goal for turf conversions on city-owned properties, enabling Longmont to budget and plan for these projects in the future.
- Lastly, we are providing technical support to the City of Thornton to identify appropriate water use benchmarks for businesses to inform commercial water use analyses. In addition to helping Thornton better track and forecast water demand, this information could inform efforts to develop a more equitable tap fee structure.

All of these local initiatives involve strategies that incorporate water-saving actions into land-use planning, as detailed below.

Additionally, the WaterSMART assistance program engaged with 43 communities, provided direct assistance to 33 communities, and deeper application review to six communities. With support from WaterNow, four Colorado communities were successful in leveraging a total of \$2,642,109 in funding, securing \$1,085,879 in WaterSMART funding. These projects will increase water use efficiency, reduce overall water demand locally and regionally, reduce low-income customers' annual water costs, improve per capita multi-family water use, reduce strain on water delivery systems during peak irrigation season by minimizing seepage and evaporative losses, and improve real-time water consumption data collection. We anticipate that the water savings reasonably likely to be generated by the WaterSMART projects that WaterNow supported over the grant period to be 50 AF per year over the next five years, for a total of 250 AF.

Task 1 – WaterNow's Project Accelerator Initiative

Description of Task:

Through its [Project Accelerator](#), WaterNow has been able to provide technical program assistance and capacity to Colorado municipal water utilities to support innovative, outcomes-oriented initiatives that advance sustainable and affordable water management and the integration of water efficiency and land use planning. The Accelerator provides 250 hours of *pro bono* assistance to utilities seeking additional capacity and expertise to implement local sustainable water priorities. The Accelerator specifically prioritizes water initiatives designed to advance water equity and support underserved communities. Accelerator projects are driven by the individual

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communities’ goals and can range from legal and policy review, to project design, to data analysis, to communications and outreach, among other forms of assistance.

Deliverables:

The primary deliverable pursuant to Task 1 was the selection of four Colorado Accelerator projects, execution of Memoranda of Agreement and project scopes, and completion – or significant progress towards completion of each project – during the grant period. Each of the selected Accelerator Projects involves a set of unique deliverables. Project deliverables including memos, research, presentations, and other supporting documents are linked in this Final Report.

Progress Against Performance Measures:

Performance Measure 1: Hold two Project Accelerator rounds during the grant period and select a total of four Colorado communities.

WaterNow achieved its goal of holding two Project Accelerator rounds and selecting four Colorado communities through these application cycles.

The first application cycle took place in summer 2022 and focused on prioritizing water equity challenges. This application round drew applications across multiple states and WaterNow selected one Colorado application, submitted by Northern Water in Berthoud, to develop a model ordinance library for their allottees. However, due to an unforeseen reduction in staff at Northern Water, as well as a shift in Northern Water’s organizational priorities, the agency requested that we postpone this project for the time being. WaterNow then held a Colorado Regional Accelerator round held in early 2023 which received a strong response; it generated 13 applications which were almost uniformly strong. Selected projects were announced in March 2023, through a blog post, e-newsletter announcement, and social media materials. (A blog sharing the selected projects is available on WaterNow’s [website](#)).

For both application cycles, WaterNow executed widespread outreach for the Accelerator through email campaigns, social media, webinars, partner engagement, and one-on-one calls with utility and municipal partners to discuss specific project ideas. We utilized our extensive database of approximately 1,000 Colorado water utility contacts to support this outreach.

WaterNow’s next Colorado Regional Accelerator application cycle will launch in fall 2023 / winter 2024 with selected projects launching spring 2024.

Performance Measure 2: Provide technical project support and assistance to at least 4 Colorado communities to implement their sustainable water priority.

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WaterNow successfully launched and provided technical assistance for sustainable water projects in 4 Colorado communities as detailed below:

- **City and County of Broomfield, CO: Development of a Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance**

WaterNow and Western Resources Advocates (WRA) are partnering with Broomfield to develop a water efficient landscape ordinance and conduct associated community and stakeholder outreach. The project’s goal is to ensure Broomfield’s water supply is more resilient to better withstand future droughts and impacts from climate change. The consolidated City and County of Broomfield, CO, located midway between Denver and Boulder, has a population of approximately 74,000. The community is experiencing rapid population growth and anticipates a more than 50 percent increase in its footprint through buildout, particularly in the undeveloped areas in the northeastern portion of the county. Sixty to seventy percent of Broomfield’s annual water supply is currently dedicated to landscape irrigation. While Broomfield is investing considerably in replacing cool season turfgrass with waterwise and drought resistant landscaping alternatives, it has minimal code provisions related to water efficient landscape requirements. WaterNow and WRA are working with Broomfield to develop a water efficient landscape ordinance based on examples and best practices from other communities. The project involves research and gathering feedback from key stakeholders and community members on the draft ordinance, and support for Broomfield staff and leadership throughout the City Council approval process. The project launched in April and is expected to be finalized in September, and the project brief is available [here](#). The project launched in April and is expected to be finalized by September.

- **Eagle River Watershed Council and Eagle County Conservation District: Water Efficient Landscape Conversion Program**

WaterNow and WRA are also supporting the design and implementation of the “Beyond Lawn” Water Efficient Landscape Conversion Program being developed by the Eagle River Watershed Council and Eagle County Conservation District. This project aims to establish a non-functional turf replacement and irrigation upgrade rebate program, develop examples of lawn alternatives through research and demonstration gardens, and create educational opportunities to change behavior through outdoor water management practices and sustainable landscape conversion skills. As Eagle County faces an increasingly variable water supply, the Beyond Lawn Program is one step towards reducing water demand and maintaining a sustainable supply into the future. Eagle County is a river-centric community, with a population of approximately 56,000, located on the Western Slope of Colorado. Its tourism and recreation-focused economy relies on healthy and flowing streams, and its population is predicted to double by 2050, potentially doubling water demand. Together,

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Eagle River Watershed Council, a local nonprofit, and Eagle County Conservation District are piloting the “Beyond Lawn” Water Efficient Landscape Conversion Program. WaterNow and WRA are researching landscape conversion programs, conducting stakeholder meetings with local organizations and individuals interested in the program, creating program application materials, and supporting program outreach, metrics, and continued funding. The project brief is available [here](#). The project launched in April and is expected to be finalized by October.

- **The City of Longmont, CO: Impact Analysis and Goal Development of a Non-Functional Turf Conversion Program**

WaterNow is partnering with the City of Longmont to build on and complement its ongoing residential turf removal rebate program by establishing a data-driven target for reducing non-functional turf on city-owned property. Increasing water efficient and climate appropriate landscapes will enable the City to decrease outdoor water demand and move towards the conservation goals outlined in its Water Efficiency Master Plan. Longmont is located in Colorado’s Front Range and is home to a population of just over 100,000. Like many other Front Range communities, Longmont is interested in methods that reduce its water demand in the face of increasing water scarcity as the City continues to grow. In this project, WaterNow will draw on research and best practices from other communities to develop a methodology for identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing city-owned locations for turf conversion. This project will calculate the estimated water savings that could be realized by converting non-functional turf to water-wise landscapes, and examine additional environmental, social, and economic co-benefits that could result from turf conversion projects. This analysis will generate a data-driven goal for turf conversions on city-owned properties, enabling Longmont to budget and plan for these projects in the future. This analysis will also inform the City’s Water Efficiency Master Plan 2024 update. The project brief is available [here](#). The project was launched in June and finalized by March.

- **The City of Thornton, CO: Commercial Water Usage Benchmark Development**

Thornton has a population of about 148,000 people and provides water to a slightly larger service area of about 165,000. Currently, the City’s database for billing purposes does not distinguish business types within the commercial customer class, making it difficult to determine water use trends for different business types, and to project future water demand. WaterNow and Thornton are partnering to identify appropriate water use benchmarks for key business types, such as restaurants, hotels, warehouses, schools, car washes, medical facilities, automotive services, offices, industrial and retail. This project will research existing commercial water use benchmarks implemented in other communities to understand the methodologies used to determine business specific benchmarks and the various outcomes of benchmark implementation. Next, the project team will conduct a commercial water use

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analysis to establish draft commercial water use benchmarks for key business types in Thornton. The project team will meet with commercial water users and/or professionals with subject matter expertise to share the draft benchmarks and gather feedback, as well as explore the support commercial water users may need to meet the proposed benchmarks. WaterNow will then finalize the commercial water use benchmarks and work with Thornton to provide guidance on benchmark implementation. The project brief is available [here](#). The project launched in June and is expected to be finalized by February.

In addition to the 4 recently launched CO Accelerator projects described above, over the grant period WaterNow completed, or is nearing completion on, the following CO Accelerator projects. These include:

- **Ruedi Water and Power Authority (RWAPA), CO: Unified Permanent Watering Standards for the Roaring Fork Watershed**

WaterNow and WRA partnered with RWAPA to support their goal, identified in their Regional Water Efficiency Plan, to develop unified outdoor watering standards. The project was designed to help ensure an adequate water supply for future generations and enhance the environmental, recreational, and agricultural values unique to the watershed. All the water providers in the Roaring Fork Watershed have established annual water conservation goals, but outdoor watering standards vary (i.e., time of day and day of week) across the jurisdictions. This creates communication and compliance challenges, particularly for the many residents, landscape professionals, property managers, and others who live and work in the different jurisdictions of Aspen, Basalt, Carbondale, Glenwood Springs, Snowmass Village, and other unincorporated areas of Eagle and Pitkin counties. RWAPA, with support from the water providers, aimed to develop and implement outdoor watering standards that would be uniform across the watershed to create a consistent message, help alleviate confusion, increase compliance, and improve water efficiency practices.

In November 2022, the RWAPA Board voted unanimously in support of the adoption of the [unified outdoor watering standards](#) that came out of this project. The RWAPA board members also agreed to support each of their jurisdictions throughout the individual council adoption and approval processes. These outdoor watering standards will be paired with a professionally designed education and outreach campaign to ensure these coordinated outdoor watering standards are successful. Supporting the implementation of the unified baseline watering standards in the watershed is one important step that water providers, with support from RWAPA, can take to reduce confusion, improve communication and outreach to customers, and align on a shared ethos towards water stewardship throughout the region. A case study summarizing the project is available [here](#).

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- **City of Steamboat Springs, CO: Water Resiliency and Infrastructure Funding Strategy**

WaterNow assisted Steamboat Springs in strategizing about how it could best maximize new federal funding opportunities for priority water infrastructure and resiliency projects. Steamboat Springs is a rapidly growing community of approximately 13,000 people in Northern Colorado’s Yampa Valley. The City had invested significant resources in developing and updating water resource plans and studies to address climate change, drought, wildfires, over-use of resources, and an affordable housing crisis and had specific water management goals. However, it required support in identifying its best opportunities to obtain outside funding to help it achieve those goals. WaterNow created a framework to help the City, as well as other communities, prioritize water infrastructure resiliency projects and maximize the benefits of federal grant and financing programs, while accounting for considerations such as cost sharing requirements, staff bandwidth, and local regulations. As a first step, WaterNow worked with the City to understand and identify key water management priorities and projects and developed a [research template](#) that tracked key project elements as well as 39 water-related funding and financing opportunities created or expanded by recent federal legislation. WaterNow then developed a [Roadmap for Pursuing Funding Opportunities](#), which includes step-by-step advice for navigating the “best-fit” federal funding and financing opportunities for the City’s highest priority projects. Lastly, WaterNow developed an [Explainer](#) on how communities in Colorado can align the new federal funding with their local priority projects. A case study summarizing the project is available [here](#). WaterNow hosted a webinar on May 24, 2023, with Steamboat Springs to share out the findings of this project. More details about the webinar are available in the WaterSMART section (Task 2.3) of this report, below.

- **Town of Wellington, CO: Wellington Water Efficiency Campaign**

WaterNow has been supporting Wellington in creating a water use efficiency campaign to provide educational resources, including best practices, for local residents. Wellington has experienced rapid population growth, roughly doubling in size since 2008, and this rapid growth has put unprecedented stress on Wellington’s water resources and delivery systems. This educational campaign is identified as a key activity in Wellington’s Municipal Water Efficiency Plan, along with 28 other water efficiency activities slated for implementation over a ten-year horizon. Wellington aims to understand the unique needs of its population, including residents on a fixed income, homeowners associations, and Spanish-speaking households. The Town has an overarching goal to engage 100 new residents with their water efficiency programming within one year. Creating a targeted water efficiency campaign with attainable goals for Wellington’s residents will reduce utility treated water, as well as related stormwater, wastewater, and non-potable irrigation systems, which will enhance the resilience and reliability of the Town’s long-term supply as well as benefit the larger region.

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WaterNow conducted desk research and informational interviews to develop a baseline foundation identifying the Town’s water conservation goals, programming, and outreach efforts, summarized in [this memo](#). Additionally, WaterNow compiled a reference [database](#) of strong statewide and national outreach programs and campaigns focused on water use efficiency and conservation to use as a guide and reference point in designing Wellington’s tailored toolkit. WaterNow also worked with the Town to develop and disseminate a [survey](#) (in both English and Spanish) to Wellington residents to gauge their interest in participating in the Town’s water efficiency programming. Utilizing this survey feedback and feedback gathered during a [focus group meeting](#) with homeowners’ association members, WaterNow is currently developing the water efficiency communications toolkit (the final deliverable), and this project is expected to be complete in fall 2023.

In addition to the CO Accelerator Projects initiated and/or completed in Colorado over the grant period, WaterNow has also worked on several projects in other Western states that yielded lessons and findings that are directly applicable to, and could benefit, Colorado communities. Those materials will be shared through the Regional Cohort. (No CWCB funds were used to support any out of state projects.) Two of these are briefly summarized below:

- **City of Moab, UT: Developing a Waterwise Landscaping Ordinance**

WaterNow developed a water wise landscaping and irrigation efficiency ordinance for new development, as well as redevelopment projects, in Moab. Moab applied to the Project Accelerator seeking support in crafting waterwise landscaping and irrigation efficiency ordinances for new developments. WaterNow and WRA created a reference [database](#) of landscape best practices to serve as the basis for updating Moab’s ordinances, recommended [plant list](#), and landscape water budget [worksheet](#) and [example landscape designs](#), among other deliverables. The project involved workshopping our research findings with stakeholders, city staff, local landscape professionals, and others to develop a set of recommendations that could work for this arid community, which receives less than 10” of rain annually on average. February 2022, WaterNow and WRA presented draft landscaping ordinance options to the Moab City Council and the Moab Planning Commission (presentation available [here](#)) to gain input from these key decision makers on the ordinance. After workshopping with relevant stakeholders, the ordinance was approved by Planning Commission in May 2023. The first reading of the ordinance is scheduled with City Council on July 11, 2023, and the ordinance is expected to be finalized and adopted shortly after.

Water efficient landscaping ordinances can be a meaningful way to reduce outdoor watering demand across Colorado. The Moab ordinances, and even more critically, the cooperative and

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successful process we’ve developed to bring about their adoption, have potential to serve as models for municipalities across the State of Colorado.

- **City of Henderson, NV: Non-Residential Water Utility Scorecard**

WaterNow developed recommendations for the adoption of a Non-Residential Water Utility Scorecard, a rating system to identify and attract industries and businesses that will have a positive economic impact, but also a responsible and sustainable water footprint in the City. Key considerations included the sustainability of the business, its ability to add to the City’s economic diversity, the number of people employed, the average wage, and the capital investment into the community, weighed against its the anticipated consumptive use of water. The draft scorecard has been completed, but final adoption is on hold pending the development of regional criteria for new business development by the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

The process of developing the scorecard involved research into water use benchmarks and the development of a greater understanding of how different types of water use by different types of businesses affect the overall water budget of a Colorado River community. This work will inform the development of water use benchmarks in the above-described Thornton, CO project, and, once publicized, the Non-Residential Water Utility Scorecard can be used as a model for any Colorado community interested in attracting economically beneficial growth without undue strain on its water supply.

Performance Measure 2: Share successes, lessons learned, and associated project resources widely with the Colorado water community to advance implementation of high impact water efficiency projects throughout the State.

WaterNow has amplified and shared the successful outcomes, lessons and resources developed through the CO Accelerator projects through a concerted program of outreach through blogs, final project report postings, news articles, webinars, one-on-one engagements, conferences, meetings, and other presentation opportunities. Project Accelerator projects are also included in WaterNow’s searchable [Community Case Studies Map](#), a filterable, interactive map that shares examples of the ways communities are implementing localized water strategies. Visitors to the map can filter examples according to communities’ demographics (such as population), water management challenges, project strategies (e.g., graywater reuse systems, turf replacement, high efficiency appliances, etc.), budget and financing approaches, and overall benefits (e.g., cost savings, community benefits, and environmental improvements). A [StoryMap](#) walks visitors through these features in greater detail, and highlights several project examples, including Aurora, Colorado’s Low-Income Water Efficiency Program, and Golden, Colorado’s Laundry-to-

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Landscape graywater ordinance. Over the past year, the Community Case Studies Map web page has garnered 633 page views, from a total of 468 unique viewers. Insights from completed Accelerator projects are also woven into WaterNow’s Tap into Resilience (TiR) initiative, which is designed to share resources that help water leaders navigate tax, accounting, legal, and financial questions in order to initiate, implement, and scale sustainable localized water solutions for their communities. For instance, learnings from an Accelerator project with Evans, Colorado, are reflected in a how-to guide on [Direct Installations for Local Water Infrastructure](#). TiR case studies from Accelerator projects with [Greeley](#) and the [City of Evans](#), join other examples of Colorado communities implementing innovative and sustainable water management solutions, at [Aurora Water](#), [Boulder Water Utility](#), [Castle Rock](#), [Denver Water](#), and [Fort Collins Utilities](#).

The Project Accelerator application cycles and project selections were covered through the following blogs or media, as well as through a social media outreach campaign on Twitter and LinkedIn, and various email campaigns to nearly 1,000 water leaders, managers, and staff across 162 Colorado communities:

- [WaterNow Announces Second Round of Colorado Regional Accelerator Projects](#), posted on the WaterNow Blog in March 2023.
- [Now Open: Applications for the Colorado Regional Project Accelerator!](#), posted on the WaterNow Blog in January 2023.
- [Announcing WaterNow’s New Project Accelerator Winners](#), posted on the WaterNow Blog in September 2022.
- [Call for Proposals: Project Accelerator Applications are Now Open!](#), posted on the WaterNow Blog in July 2022.
- Now Open: Applications for the Colorado Regional Project Accelerator, emailed on [January 9, 2023](#), [January 18, 2023](#), [January 24, 2023](#), [February 2, 2023](#), and [February 10, 2023](#).
- WaterNow’s 2023 [January](#) and [March](#) newsletters.
- [WaterNow Announces New Colorado Regional Accelerator Projects](#), emailed on March 9, 2023.

Communication and outreach focus have included:

- Article describing the proposed outdoor watering standards in the Roaring Fork Valley for the RWAPA project was published by the Aspen Times in November 2022 (“[Agency Unveils Valley-Wide Outdoor Watering Standards](#)”).
- WaterNow partnered with the City of Steamboat Springs to share the outcomes of the Project Accelerator during a [webinar](#) in May 2023 (this drew 240 registrants and 130 attendees; additional details are shared in the section below).

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- An article describing Greeley, Colorado’s update of their water efficiency plan, drawing on the analysis conducted through Project Accelerator, was published in the Greeley Tribune in August 2022 (“[Greeley officials seek feedback on draft water efficiency plan](#)”).
- A press release by the City of Steamboat Springs announced the launch of their Accelerator project in February 2022 (“[City Awarded WaterNow Alliance Project Accelerator Grant](#)”).
- A presentation on Understanding Water Efficiency Program Participation in Greeley, CO, was shared with the Rocky Mountain Section of the American Water Works Association Conservation Committee in March 2023.

Resources from completed Accelerator projects in Colorado, including case studies, reports, data tracking tools, outreach and communication collateral, and example ordinances have been added to the project pages on WaterNow’s Project Accelerator landing page.¹ This “Project Accelerator Library” now includes:

- An urban agriculture policy memo and presentation on “Unearthing the Water Benefits of Urban Agriculture,” outcomes from the recent project on The Potential for Urban Agriculture and Community Gardening as a Water Resource Management Tool in the Intermountain West (available [here](#)).
- Resources from a project to develop a direct installation program for income-qualified residents in Evans, CO, including: a project summary, recruitment postcard, data tracking template, summary article, a review of direct installation program’s best practices and outreach materials, and a how-to direct installation guide for local leaders (available [here](#)).
- Outdoor efficiency program recommendations, based on the project to create a regional outdoor water efficiency program in Summit County (available [here](#)).
- A short case study and detailed report, including resources for customer surveys, and approaches to analyzing water use change resulting from conservation programs, from the water efficiency portfolio analysis done in partnership with Greeley, CO (available [here](#)).
- A project summary, graywater system design criteria manual, and a review of existing greywater ordinances and programs, from the graywater ordinance and program development project with Golden, CO (available [here](#)).
- A project summary and compilation of [Integrated Water & Land Use Planning Reports & Resources](#), developed through the project on Incorporating Water Efficiency into the Comprehensive Plan in Severance, CO (available [here](#)).
- A project summary and the proposed outdoor watering standards created in partnership with the Ruedi Water and Power Authority (RWAPA), a consortium of the local

¹ <https://waternow.org/our-work/our-work-projects/project-accelerator>

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governments in the Roaring Fork Watershed (RFW), to support their goal, identified in their Regional Water Efficiency Plan, to develop unified outdoor watering standards (available [here](#)).

- A project summary, guide to, and a template for aligning federal funds with local priority projects, and a database and description of funding sources for water projects, developed as part of the Water Resiliency and Infrastructure Funding Strategy for the City of Steamboat Springs (available [here](#)).
- A project summary of recommended code updates to reduce water use, increase water reuse, and improve stormwater management to incorporate into Centennial’s Municipal Code (available [here](#)).

Other resources, from projects outside of Colorado, may also have resources or learnings applicable to Colorado communities. These include: the development of Spanish language water use efficiency program enhancements in Santa Rosa, CA (available [here](#)); support for the creation of a grassroots customer engagement program in Cleveland, OH (available [here](#)); and the use of strategic polling and analysis to enhance the water conservation and sustainability plan of Madison, WI (available [here](#)), among others.

Task 2 - Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Program Outreach & Application Assistance

Description of Task:

WaterNow’s outreach and application support for the federal WaterSMART program provided outreach and related capacity to help at least 15 -20 Colorado communities apply for federal funding for water efficiency solutions including, but not limited to: advanced metering infrastructure (AMI), turf replacement rebates, irrigation efficiency incentives, graywater and rainwater reuse programs, innovative efficiency pilot programs, water efficiency plans, drought contingency plans, conservation-oriented water budgets, among other strategies. WaterNow has been expanding our WaterSMART outreach and application support initiative in Colorado with an emphasis to serving small-to-mid sized or under-resourced communities who are often unable to navigate and access these funding opportunities on their own.

WaterNow Deliverables:

WaterNow’s primary deliverables pursuant to Task 2 included: (1) provision of outreach and promotional activities regarding WaterSMART funding opportunities with 162 Colorado communities; (2) engagement with 43 cities, towns, and other municipal water providers in Colorado interested in applying for WaterSMART funding, 33 of which received direct technical assistance; and (3) completion of two informational webinars with past successful WaterSMART applicants during the CWCB grant period. We have identified below our activities and lessons

Task 2 - Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Program Outreach & Application Assistance

learned, including key metrics, for this Task. This report includes relevant outreach and application support materials such as: PowerPoint slides and recordings, blog entries, website updates, research conducted on behalf of applicants, and links to full grant applications we provided in-depth support on (if available, Table 3).

In sum, the WaterSMART Outreach and Application Assistance program exceeded its goals. WaterNow conducted 9 outreach campaigns, paired with 4 WaterSMART funding opportunities, reaching nearly 1,000 water leaders, managers, and staff across 162 Colorado communities. We engaged in various forms with 43 of these communities, and provided direct technical assistance to 33 communities by holding meetings to discuss projects and grant options, sharing templates, etc. Of the 33 communities we assisted, we provided in-depth application review to six communities, four of which were successful (one of which is still pending). With support from WaterNow, those 4 successful Colorado communities leveraged a total of \$2,642,109 in funding, securing \$1,085,879 in WaterSMART funding (funding details enumerated below in Table 3). These projects will increase water use efficiency, reduce overall water demand locally and regionally, reduce low-income customers' annual water costs, improve per capita multi-family water use, reduce strain on water delivery systems during peak irrigation season by minimizing seepage and evaporative losses, and improve real-time water consumption data collection. In addition, we anticipate that the water savings reasonably likely to be generated by the WaterSMART projects that WaterNow supported over the grant period is 50 AF per year over the next five years, for a total of 250 AF. This estimate is based on the best available data from successful applications. We estimated water savings for projects where data in the successful applications were available to make a reasonable estimate; however, the amount of water savings is likely to be greater than we can estimate (particularly because some grants do not require applicants to quantify water savings).

Progress Against Performance Measures:

1. Performance Measure 1: Conduct outreach and promotional activities with Colorado communities as WaterSMART funding opportunities become available.

Over the course of the grant period, WaterNow successfully conducted extensive outreach to promote the USBR WaterSMART funding opportunities through email campaigns, social media posts, informational webinars, blog posts, and partner outreach. Specifically, WaterNow promoted four separate USBR WaterSMART funding opportunities through 9 email campaigns including: Water and Energy Efficiency Grants (WEEG), Environmental Water Resources Projects (EWRP), Water Conservation Field Services Program (WCFSP) – Upper Colorado Region, the new Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects (AERP) (see Table 1).

Task 2 - Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Program Outreach & Application Assistance

WaterNow's outreach campaigns targeted nearly 1,000 water leaders, managers, and staff representing 162 communities throughout the state of Colorado. Through these efforts, WaterNow further engaged with 43 cities, water districts, or organizations with water or power delivery authority that expressed interest in one or more WaterSMART grant opportunities and WaterNow's support services.

As shown in Table 1, WaterNow developed and updated our website content and corresponding fact sheets for each of the funding opportunity announcements included below. Additionally, WaterNow posted a [blog](#) and made extensive updates to our [website](#) about our Grant Application Assistance & Help Desk Program. Additionally, WaterNow promoted our program through social media posts on both LinkedIn (3 unique posts, [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), and numerous re-posts) and Twitter (3 unique posts, [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), including retweets from partners such as Colorado WaterWise, the Internet of Water Coalition, and other individuals). Additionally, WaterNow conducted more than 9 email campaigns to our Colorado member base to promote these WaterSMART opportunities and share about our support services. WaterNow also hosted two informational webinars (more details below under Task 2.3) and featured WaterSMART funding opportunities in our [monthly newsletter](#).

Table 1. WaterSMART Grants that WaterNow Supported During the CWCB Grant Period

WaterSMART Program	Opportunity	Fiscal Year	Post Date	Close Date	Link to Funding Opportunity	WNA Developed Content
WaterSMART Grants	Water and Energy Efficiency Grants	FY23	5/2/22	7/28/22	WEEG	Website Fact Sheet
	Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects	FY23	3/14/23	6/1/23	AERP	Website Fact Sheet
	Environmental Water Resources Projects	FY23	1/24/23	3/28/23	EWRP	Website Fact Sheet
Water Conservation Field Services Program	Upper Colorado Basin Region	FY22 and FY23	6/24/22	5/31/23	WCFSP - UCB	Website Fact Sheet

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Additional USBR WaterSMART funding opportunities that WaterNow typically supports, including FY23 Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects (SWEF), FY24 Drought Resiliency Projects (DRP), FY23 Drought Contingency Planning (DCP) and FY24 WEEG, are anticipated to open after the close of this grant. WaterNow will continue providing outreach and application support for these opportunities through our renewed CWCB Water Plan Grant which begins in July 2023.

2. Performance Measure 2: Provide direct assistance to at least 15-20 cities, towns, and other municipal water providers interested in applying for WaterSMART funding.

WaterNow exceeded the goal set forth in the 2021 proposal of providing direct assistance to 15 – 20 communities applying for WaterSMART funding. Over the course of the grant period, WaterNow engaged with 43 Colorado communities and directly supported 33 Colorado communities seeking information and support in connection with various WaterSMART opportunities (see Table 2). Such support included, but was not limited to: researching applicant questions and compiling research on applicable successful relevant projects (example [here](#) and [here](#)), developing and providing detailed fillable application templates that carefully follow the NOFOs (example [here](#)), strategizing a competitive application, providing letters of support (example [here](#)), connecting applicants with USBR staff, and more.

Table 2. CO Communities Supported During the CWCB Grant Period

Community/Entity	Community/Entity
Aurora Water, City of Aurora	Dominion Water & Sanitation District
Centennial Water and Sanitation District	Eagle River Water & Sanitation District
Colorado Springs Utilities	Fountain Creek Watershed District
City and County of Denver	Fred Diehl Consulting, LLC
City of Alamosa	High Line Canal Conservancy
City of Aspen	Rad Earth Solutions, LLC*
City of Brighton	Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project
City of Cortez	Spring Valley Metropolitan District No. 1
City of Federal Heights - Public Works	Town of Carbondale
City of Fort Collins	Town of Collbran
City of Fountain	Town of Limon
City of Lamar	Town of Lyons
City of Longmont	Town of Superior
City of Manitou Springs	Ute Pass Water District
City of Salida	YearOut Energy*
City of Steamboat Springs	Zancanella and Associates*
Dave Miller Mutual Ditch Company	

* We've included consulting agencies WaterNow engaged with who wrote WaterSMART grant applications on behalf of Colorado communities.

Additionally, of those 33 communities, we supported six communities by providing an in-depth and detailed review of their respective grant applications (see Table 3). Two communities were awarded the Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects grant in January of 2023 and two communities were awarded the Water and Energy Efficiency Grant in April 2023 (see Table 3.) These successful SWEP and WEEG projects support the goals contained in Colorado's Water Plan and will 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. We anticipate that the water savings reasonably likely to be generated by the SWEP and WEEG WaterSMART projects that WaterNow supported over the grant period is 50 AF per year over the next five years, for a total of 250 AF.

Considering the FY23 and FY24 grant cycle is in progress and more WaterSMART opportunities will become available in the coming months, we anticipate an increase in requested support, especially

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by small and under-resourced communities, as we continue our WaterSMART outreach and application support services in Colorado.

Prior to this CWCB grant period, WaterNow also supported many successful Colorado WaterSMART WEEG and SWEP applications that are anticipated to result in quantifiable water savings of 6,953 AFY, which will be sustained over many years to come.

Table 3. CO Communities That Received In-Depth Application Review From WaterNow

Applicant	Project Title	Funding Opportunity	Reclamation Funding (or requested amount)	Total Project Cost	Link to USBR Announcement
Dave Miller Mutual Ditch Company	Ditch Piping Project	FY 22 Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects	\$84,325.00	\$225,000.00	FY22 SWEP
Colorado Springs Utilities	High Efficiency Toilets for Affordable Housing	FY 22 Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects	\$100,000.00	\$224,767.00	FY22 SWEP
City of Fountain	Water Meter Upgrade Project	FY 23 Water and Energy Efficiency Grant	\$401,554.00	\$892,342.00	FY23 WEEG
City of Steamboat Springs	Smart Irrigation Central Control System	FY 23 Water and Energy Efficiency Grant	\$1,300,000.00	\$2,600,000.00	Not awarded
City of Alamosa	Cattails Golf Course Irrigation Efficiency Project	FY 23 Water and Energy Efficiency Grant	\$500,000.00	\$1,300,000.00	FY23 WEEG
Rio Grande Headwaters	Farmers Union Multi-Benefit Diversion Infrastructure Improvement Project	FY 23 Environmental Water Resources Projects Grant	\$898,895.00	\$1,838,895	Announcement Expected Fall 2023

WaterNow also supported an in-depth application review for 4 successful WaterSMART grant applications in the Western US outside of Colorado over the grant period which have yielded sustained water savings across the Colorado River Basin (No CWCB funds were used to support these out of state projects). These include the DRP [Water Demand Rate Study](#) for the Town of Chino Valley, CA; the SWEP [Grass Removal Program](#) for Desert Water Agency, CA, and the SWEP [Drought Tolerant Landscaping](#) for the City of Millbrae, CA; and the WEEG [Water-Wise Landscape Rebate Program](#) for Santa Barbara County Water Agency, CA.

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3. Performance Measure 3: Facilitate 2 follow-up webinars with past successful WaterSMART applicants in Colorado.

WaterNow met this goal, hosting two webinars with key USBR staff and past grant recipients over the course of the grant period. On November 30, 2022, WaterNow hosted a webinar in partnership with Colorado WaterWise. The webinar featured USBR Program Coordinator Robin Graber and City of Greeley Water Conservation Specialist, Dena Egenhoff, and explored federal funding and financing opportunities for Colorado water providers, provided an overview of the WaterSMART program and upcoming grant opportunities, and shared learnings from the City of Greeley's experience applying for and receiving two USBR WEEG grants for an AMI installation project. The webinar had over 40 attendees and was bilingual, in both English and Spanish. The full presentation is available [here](#) and the webinar was promoted via email and social media through both WaterNow's and Colorado WaterWise's networks.

On May 24, 2023, WaterNow hosted a webinar focused on how utility and community leaders can navigate new federal funding opportunities made available through the American Rescue Plan Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and Inflation Reduction Act. The webinar featured Carolyn Berndt from the National League of Cities, Irene Hoiby and Sheri Looper from USBR, and Julie Baxter from City of Steamboat Springs. NLC provided an overview of the new federal funding streams and their technical assistance opportunities, Steamboat Springs provided an overview of their federal funding roadmap developed by WaterNow through [Project Accelerator](#), and USBR provided an overview of their WaterSMART program including highlighting the new AERP opportunity and other upcoming grants. The webinar had nearly 240 registrants and 130 attendees. The full presentation is available [here](#) and the webinar was promoted via email and social media posts through WaterNow's network.

Obstacles and How Obstacles Were Overcome

1. As indicated above, WaterNow selected Northern Water as a first Accelerator Project last summer when circumstances internal to the District put the project on hold. To ensure that we met our commitment to launch at least 4 Colorado-based projects, WaterNow's next Accelerator round was focused entirely on Colorado communities. This strategy proved successful as described above.
2. The shifting structure of USBR's WaterSMART program over the past year due to the influx of new BIL funding presented a challenge in our efforts to connect communities with the various WaterSMART grants. The additional funds were certainly a net benefit for Colorado communities seeking funding for water conservation initiatives, but the debut of the new

Obstacles and How Obstacles Were Overcome

Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration Program required WaterNow to pivot quickly to become familiar with a new set of requirements, criteria and priorities, and to develop materials to communicate these details to the communities we support. We met successfully met these challenges by reprioritizing staff resources, iterating our existing strategies based on feedback from internal and external stakeholders, and working with USBR through the May 24th Webinar to effectively and accurately communicate the opportunities represented by the new grant to our Colorado communities.

Matching Commitments

WaterNow has met its matching commitment. Staff time valued at \$139,235.00, and funded from other sources, was devoted to the project in excess of billed services.