



COLORADO

**Colorado Water
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

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Jared Polis, Governor

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TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Ashley Garrison, Water Plan Grant Project Manager
Cole Bedford, Chief Operating Officer

DATE: March 15-16, 2024

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM: 3 Change of Water Plan Grant Project Scope - Middle Colorado Agricultural Collaborative Phase 3, Elk Creek

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends amending the scope of work and budget for the Middle Colorado Agricultural Collaborative Phase 3, Elk Creek Water Plan Grant as shown in the attached Datasheets.

Background

The Middle Colorado Agriculture Collaborative was created as a result of the Middle Colorado Watershed Steam Management Plan and associated ditch inventory. Trout Unlimited (TU) has led the collaborative effort to modernize and upgrade ditch infrastructure to improve irrigation and aquatic habitat. The CWCB Water Plan Grant Program has funded project scoping (phase 1) and engineering and design (phase 2) of the Middle Colorado Agriculture Collaborative's projects on Elk Creek and Canyon Creek.

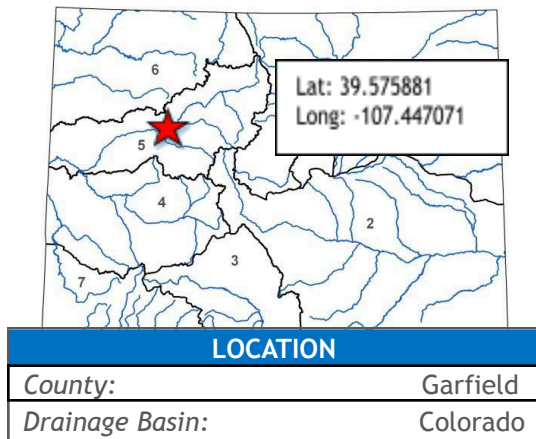
Water Plan Grant funding of \$1,500,000 for construction (phase 3) was approved by the Board in March 2024. However, as the Phase 2 designs and cost estimates have been finalized following the March meeting, the total project cost has increased. As a result, TU proposes to complete the remaining three diversion upgrades and an additional smaller diversion and water efficiency piping addition.

The recommended change does not modify the \$1,500,000 award, but only allows for the project scope modification and a decrease of the grantee's match commitment from 75% to 67.5%. TU has received approval from the Colorado River District and the Bureau of Reclamation for this change of scope and budget. The Middle Colorado Agricultural Collaborative Phase 3, Elk Creek project was highly competitive during the original review and the proposed scope modifications would not have changed the staff recommendation to approve the project in March 2024.

Attachments:

Original March 2024 Datasheet
Updated March 2024 Datasheet

Water Plan Grant Program Application



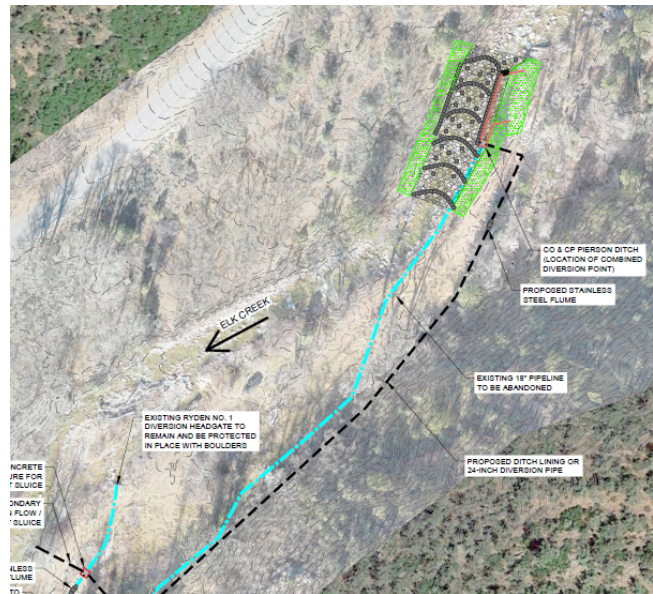
DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	\$5,671,703.00
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$1,500,000.00
Recommended amount:	\$1,500,000.00
Other CWCB Funding:	\$0
Other Funding Amount:	\$0
Applicant Match:	\$4,171,703.00
Project Type:	Construction
Project Category:	Agriculture
Measurable Result:	Diversion structure improvements benefiting 75 irrigators, 7,920 LF of stream restored for fish spawning and rearing

Colorado Trout Unlimited seeks funding to complete Phase 3: Construction of the Middle Colorado AG Collaborative project at Elk Creek. This project will open over 7 miles of the Elk Creek drainage and adjacent Middle Colorado drainages to spawning fish from the Colorado River mainstem.

The Middle Colorado Watershed Council completed an Integrated Water Management Plan for the Middle Colorado River which identified 25 different irrigation diversions that are fish barriers in the basin. The goal of the Middle Colorado AG Collaborative is to continue opening Elk and Canyon Creeks to spawning and migrating fish from the Colorado River while supporting agricultural use. TU works with agricultural water diverters to make their diversion structures fish friendly.

Phases 1 and 2 (Planning and Design) were supported by CWCB grants. This project will construct improved diversions at four project sites along Elk Creek.

Projects #1 & #2 will combine four points of diversion into two diversion points, supporting new diversion dams that incorporate fish ramps, redesigned headgate structures, telemetry actuated headgates, fish screens, sluiceways and ditch/pipe enlargement to accommodate increased flows. Project #3 will relocate a point of diversion downstream to a pumping station thereby abandoning 1.45 miles of porous ditch and an in-channel push up dam. The relocation will increase flows through a highly productive reach of Elk Creek and enable reductions in future water diversions. Project #4 will retrofit an existing diversion with a rock ramp (fish passage) and reconstruct the headgate/sluiceway system. Modernizing and upgrading these diversions will improve irrigation operations.



Funding Recommendation:

Staff recommends Board approval of \$1,500,000.00 to **Colorado Trout Unlimited** for the Middle Colorado AG Collaborative Phase 3: Elk Creek project.

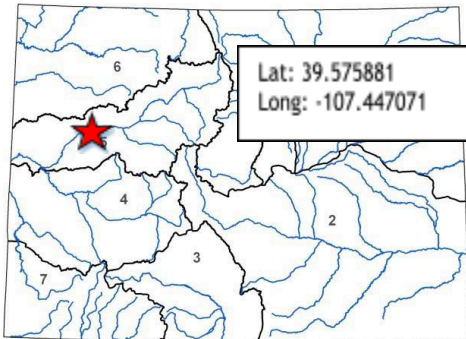
****Applicant change to Colorado Trout Unlimited from National Trout Unlimited.***



Middle Colorado AG Collaborative Phase 3:Elk Creek Colorado Trout Unlimited

March 2024 Board Meeting

Water Plan Grant Program Application



LOCATION	
County:	Garfield
Drainage Basin:	Colorado

DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	\$4,619,540.00
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$1,500,000.00
Recommended amount:	\$1,500,000.00
Other CWCB Funding:	\$0
Other Funding Amount:	\$0
Applicant Match:	\$3,119,595.00
Project Type:	Construction
Project Category:	Agriculture
Measurable Result:	Diversion structure improvements benefiting 75 irrigators, 7,920 LF of stream restored for fish spawning and rearing

Colorado Trout Unlimited seeks funding to complete Phase 3: Construction of the Middle Colorado AG Collaborative project at Elk Creek. This project will open over 7 miles of the Elk Creek drainage and adjacent Middle Colorado drainages to spawning fish from the Colorado River mainstem.

The Middle Colorado Watershed Council completed an Integrated Water Management Plan for the Middle Colorado River which identified 25 different irrigation diversions that are fish barriers in the basin. The goal of the Middle Colorado AG Collaborative is to continue opening Elk and Canyon Creeks to spawning and migrating fish from the Colorado River while supporting agricultural use. TU works with agricultural water diverters to make their diversion structures fish friendly.

Phases 1 and 2 (Planning and Design) were supported by CWCB grants. This project will construct improved diversions at three project sites along Elk Creek.

Elk Creek Phase 3 has three construction projects:

Project 1- Combine two points of diversion at Ryden #1 Ditch and C.O./C.P. Pierson Ditch

Project 2- Combine two points of diversion at Ryden #2 and Benson-Pierson-Nelson Ditch, pipe to Benson-Pierson-Nelson splitter structure (0.5 mi)

Project 3- Reconstruct Roseman Ditch headgate and diversion, reconstruct Thompkins headgate at Roseman diversion

Projects #1 & #2 will combine four points of diversion into two diversion points, supporting new diversion dams that incorporate fish ramps, redesigned headgate structures, telemetry actuated headgates, fish screens, sluiceways and ditch/pipe enlargement to accommodate increased flows. Project #2 will also pipe the shared ditch to a splitter system, improving efficiency. Project #3 will retrofit an existing diversion with a rock ramp (fish passage) and reconstruct the headgate/sluiceway system on two ditches that share the diversion point. Modernizing and upgrading these diversions will improve irrigation operations.

Funding Recommendation:

Staff recommends Board approval of \$1,500,000.00 to *Colorado Trout Unlimited* for the Middle Colorado AG Collaborative Phase 3: Elk Creek project.