



Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Palmer Land Conservancy
Name of Water Project	Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide: Powering the Front Range and West Slope Tour of Mirasol, Looking at the Sun
Grant Request Amount	\$100,000.00
Primary Category	\$100,000.00
<i>Engagement & Innovation Activities</i>	
Total Applicant Match	\$95,000.00
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	\$15,000.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	\$80,000.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	\$129,000.00
<i>Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District</i>	\$100,000.00
<i>Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District</i>	\$15,000.00
<i>Private Philanthropy</i>	\$14,000.00
Total Project Cost	\$324,000.00

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Palmer Land Conservancy	
Mailing Address: 102 S. Tejon Street, Suite 920 Colorado Springs CO 80903	
Organization Contact: Rebecca Jewett	
Position/Title: President & CEO	Email: rebecca@palmerland.org
Phone: (719) 632-3236	
Organization Contact - Alternate: Kristie Nackord	
Position/Title: Vice President, External Affairs	Email: kristie@palmerland.org
Phone: 7196323236	
Grant Management Contact: Rebecca Jewett	
Position/Title: President & CEO	Email: rebecca@palmerland.org
Phone: (719) 632-3236	

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Since 1977, Palmer Land Conservancy has worked with individuals, private and public partners, and various communities to protect land forever including 20 of your favorite public parks and open spaces, important working farms and ranches, and iconic scenic views. We passionately promote the conservation and enjoyment of our region's most important natural assets that define why we love Colorado: its natural beauty, locally grown food, and outdoor recreation.

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 38.833900
Longitude -104.813499
Lat Long Flag
Water Source
Basins Arkansas; Colorado; Southwest; Rio Grande; South Platte; Gunnison; Metro
Counties
Districts

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type
Type of Water Project Education
Scheduled Start Date - Design 9/1/2024
Scheduled Start Date - Construction
Description
Produced by Palmer Land Conservancy, a nonprofit land and water conservation leader in Colorado, Mirasol, Looking at Sun, is a groundbreaking new documentary film (2024) directed by award-winning filmmaker Ben Knight. Mirasol challenges Coloradans to think about land and water use through an intimate portrait of a rural

farming community in Pueblo, Colorado as they fight to protect their water and land, and in turn their culture and livelihood. Palmer is planning a robust Front Range and West Slope tour as part of its strategic impact campaign plan, through a cross-sector of unique partnerships with water conservancy district's, land trusts, businesses, communities, and other key stakeholders and organizations.

In Mirasol, Ben Knight explores a national issue, magnified in the American West, around water scarcity, following a multi-generational Italian and Hispanic immigrant farming community living on “The Mesa” in Pueblo, Colorado. The documentary sheds light on their history and heritage, each family sharing their agricultural lineage, one that transcends every aspect of their lives, shaping their culture and livelihood.

Realizing an uncertain future due the West’s diminishing water supply, Williams Farm & Seed Store, Musso Farms, Professor Mike Bartolo and Martellaro Family Farms reflect on their passion to grow and nourish their families, communities and pastime.

Nationally we’re losing 2,000 acres of land each day. Mirasol explores how rural agricultural communities, and the food they put on our tables, is threatened by rapid development, population growth, climate change, and competing economies. Mirasol challenges us to consider what’s on the other side of the development decisions made in urban centers - and the impact to rural communities. It invites us to reflect on what’s at stake - and whether we are willing to take action to protect it.

Filmmaker Ben Knight has made a career telling big, powerful stories with compassion and artistry. Ben was first inspired to make documentaries as a young man working behind the projector at Telluride Mountainfilm. Since then, he has become widely acclaimed for his adventure and environmental filmmaking. His films include the feature length documentary DamNation (premiered at SXSW 2014 and produced in conjunction with Patagonia), The Last Honey Hunter (Mountainfilm 2018; National Geographic), Learning to Drown (Tribeca 2021; The North Face) - and a myriad of films that masterfully intertwine raw human stories with the grandeur of the natural world.

Palmer has spent the last two years producing the film directed by Ben Knight, and partnered with an Impact Strategist from the film industry to develop a comprehensive Impact Campaign to ensure as many Coloradans see the film as possible. The campaign has included a national film festival circuit and Mirasol had its World Premiere at the prestigious Big Sky Film Festival in Missoula, Montana. To date, it has been selected in 12 film festivals across the country and screened to sold-out audiences at Carbondale's 5Point Film Festival in April and Telluride's Mountainfilm Festival in May. In September, it will screen at both the Breckenridge Film Festival and Crested Butte Film Festival, and has been selected for the Denver Film Festival in November 2024. The Front Range tour of Mirasol will kick-off with the Denver premiere at the CSU Spur Center on September 18.

Measurable Results	
0	New Storage Created (acre-feet) New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)
0	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
 100,000 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
 Other
 No additional measurable results provided

Water Project Justification

From cover-to-cover, Colorado's 2023 Water Plan calls for public engagement and education to achieve its vision and goals. The State has long understood that to ensure all Coloradans are sophisticated water users into the future, it must support and promote balanced information, public dialogue and discourse, and education.

One of the four primary action areas within the Colorado Water Plan is identified as Robust Agriculture and states that "water supplies for Colorado's urban growth should not come at the expense of our rural communities through indiscriminate buy and dry methods. Collaborative partnerships among agriculture, environmental groups, and municipal water providers should be used to create multi-purpose projects that help keep irrigated lands in production and maintain ecosystem services." (p. 9 and 192). Additionally, Coloradoans recognize that "Agriculture is a critical part of the state's economy and supports the vitality of rural areas..." Preserving agricultural productivity and reducing the number of acres that are coming out of production are critical to Colorado." (Colorado's Water Plan, Sec 6, p. 192). In this same section, the Water Plan explicitly promotes public engagement and outreach in nearly every agency and partner action identified, and states "Agriculture is intrinsically tied to quality of life in Colorado... public engagement and non-agricultural partnerships will help educate people on agriculture, promote local food production, and support the industry through the tough challenges it faces. (p. 195). Similarly, the 2022 Arkansas River Basin Implementation Plan and the Basin's PEPO plan prioritize the preservation of agriculture in the Basin and the necessity of public education and outreach to achieve that goal. (Sec 4, p.15), and specifically, Task 1 of the plan is for: Participation, Partnership Building and Arkansas Basin Specific Education.

Palmer Land Conservancy's film, *Mirasol*, *Looking at the Sun*, and the associated strategic Impact Campaign (Project) aligns strongly with the goals outlined in the 2023 Colorado Water Plan and both the 2022 Arkansas River Basin Implementation Plan and Ark Basin PEPO Plan. Palmer's Project expertly identifies and is engaging a diverse cross-sector of collaborative partnerships from municipal water suppliers, agricultural organizations and producers, land and water conservation organizations, to more expansive partnerships with for profit businesses/corporations, foundations, public health agencies, higher education and academia, outdoor brands, and more. The vision of the Project in its entirety is centered on public education and outreach by utilizing engaging storytelling and tools. The Project will take a "full court press" approach to its marketing and outreach, engaging various communities along the Front Range and on the West Slope, and will include an integrated and strategic mix of public education and outreach efforts, leveraging the film and other storytelling opportunities to raise awareness and action.

Related Studies

For nearly 10 years, as part of its Bessemer Farmland Conservation Project, Palmer Land Conservancy has work alongside Pueblo farmers, the community, and local water utility to protect 5,000 acres of critical farmland and water resources in the face of an impending dry-up. The Bessemer Project that is working to address these complex issues has harnessed years of study and expertise and is backed by sophisticated analytics with the ultimate vision of protecting agricultural water rights in water-constrained contexts—in ways that support better economic, environmental, and land use outcomes. CWCB is a current funding partner and in the Bessemer Project. The *Mirasol* Film and Impact Campaign (Project) was conceived to ultimately promote and raise awareness not only about that Bessemer Project and its importance, but to promote balanced and win-win solutions like this across Colorado. Recognizing that more Coloradans need to not only "know about", but need to

better understand the complexities of water challenges in their communities and beyond, Palmer knows that is must double down on its efforts to create more powerful and meaningful emotional relevance and connection within the day-to-day lives of all Coloradans.

Year over year, global purpose-driven brands such as Patagonia understand this same strategy, and have yielded ROI with increased brand recognition by investing in the production of environmental documentaries and impact campaigns that have resulted in significant growth and profits. They regularly produce, fund, and promote award-winning documentaries as part of their corporate responsibility platforms that are similar in strategy - and spirit - to Mirasol. It also isn't new news that film has shaped our culture and our society since the inception of the moving image. Palmer has simply taken a play out of the Hollywood and for-profit playbook and designed a similar strategy and framework with the Mirasol Film and Impact Campaign (Project).

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

n/a