

Exhibit A

Statement Of Work	
Date Prepared	April 3, 2024
Name of Grantee:	Western Resource Advocates (WRA)
Name of Water Project:	Advancing Water Wise Landscaper Certification
Water Project Overview:	
<p>Western Resource Advocates (WRA), with project partners Colorado State University Extension (CSU Extension) and the Colorado Water Center (CoWC), will develop a comprehensive understanding of the most effective path forward for scaling up landscape and irrigation professional education and certification focused on efficient water use across Colorado, including consideration of a state-level landscape professional licensing program.</p> <p>WRA will lead the project team in further researching current state-level licensing programs around the country, assessing the content, structure, and demand for existing landscape and irrigation professional certification programs, and understanding the various agencies responsible for state-level licensure in Colorado. The project team will also engage a diverse set of stakeholders across the state to share research findings, better understand what the landscape industry needs when it comes to training and certification opportunities and hear how different policies would affect their work.</p> <p>To identify the most impactful, feasible, and preferred path forward for the expansion of landscape and irrigation professional certification in Colorado, this proposal includes the following tasks: (1) Conduct Research on Certification and Licensing Programs & Requirements, (2) Engage Diverse Set of Stakeholders on Policy Direction, and (3) Project Management Activities. These tasks – described in more detail below – were developed in consultation with the Landscape and Irrigation Professional Steering Committee (“Steering Committee”) in Spring 2023.</p>	
Project Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the development and implementation of landscape and/or irrigation professional licensure programs in the 10 states with existing programs in order to inform recommendations for expanded landscape professional certification in Colorado.• Learn about certification programs currently available in Colorado to better understand how these trainings could be incorporated into a state-level program.• Foster active engagement with a diverse set of stakeholders that work in the landscape and irrigation industry in Colorado to understand their perspectives on how certification programs and/or a state licensing program would affect their efforts.• Synthesize all research and input from stakeholders into a publicly available report that will provide a roadmap for Colorado to expand landscape and irrigation professional certification or licensing.	

Task 1
<u>Task 1 – Conduct Research on Certification and Licensing Programs & Requirements</u>
Description of Task:

In Task 1, the project team will conduct research on existing state-level licensing programs around the country, examine the ability of Colorado's current water wise landscape and irrigation training programs to meet Colorado needs, and learn about the Colorado state agencies that house state-level licensure and certification programs. Task 1 and Task 2 – stakeholder engagement – will happen concurrently and iteratively to ensure that feedback raised in Task 2 is addressed during the research phase and that Task 1 research findings are shared with stakeholders. The project team will also consult closely with the Steering Committee throughout the project to inform all research tasks and findings. The project team will meet regularly to ensure coordinated and timely progress on all research tasks.

To deepen understanding of existing state-level landscape and irrigation certification programs, WRA will reach out to learn more from the 10 states with programs that were identified in the WRA report, "Exploring Policy Options for Expanding Landscape and Irrigation Professional Certification in Colorado". WRA will conduct informational interviews to better understand how and why the states developed their policies and programs, how the implementation process has unfolded, any challenges or shortcomings, how language access and affordability issues have been addressed, and any other lessons learned. Policy mechanisms used by each state to create or administer their programs will also be addressed in the interviews including, for example, access to trainings and exams, qualifying trainings, apprenticeship requirements, licensing costs, differing certification levels, and enforcement. Interview findings, including the policy mechanisms employed by each state, will be summarized, and compiled to help address specific policy challenges that may be highlighted during Task 2, the stakeholder engagement component of the project.

WRA will also work with project partners at CSU Extension and CWC to review the various trainings and certifications currently available in Colorado (e.g., Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper, Irrigation Association trainings, Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado's Sustainable Landscape Management, etc.). Research will include review of available training materials and interviews with trainers that specialize in the various certification programs to understand the content that is currently covered by these trainings, what the certification requirements are (i.e., exam, continuing education units, in-person irrigation audits), and what type of landscape or irrigation industry professional the training is best suited for (e.g., irrigation installer vs. landscape maintenance crew member). WRA will also assess the current extent of the various training programs including the number of certified professionals in Colorado, the rate at which landscape professionals retain their certifications from year-to-year, and the types of positions they hold in the landscape industry. This review will be used to inform potential statewide licensing requirements as well as future updates to landscape professional training programs. For example, this research may help illuminate what types of certification programs could qualify under a statewide licensure program, whether a new training program(s) needs to be developed, if specific training programs could be eligible for certain levels of licensing (e.g., an irrigation technician license vs. a project manager), or how to develop a statewide exam that measures knowledge towards water wise landscaping best practices.

WRA will coordinate on this sub-task with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) which is currently developing a related initiative to establish a set of key water conservation skills and knowledge required for effective landscape water management education in Colorado. The best practices that CSU identifies may provide key insight on several of the research questions raised above.

Finally, WRA and its project partners will explore the practicalities of developing a new statewide landscape and irrigation professional licensing program. Research and interviews will be conducted to understand current Colorado certification and licenses such as the Pesticide Applicator Certification managed by the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) and the

Landscape Architect license managed by the Colorado Department of Regulatory Affairs (DORA). WRA will connect directly with CDA, DORA and the Consumer Protection department of the Attorney General's office to better understand the process for establishing a new licensing program, the steps that individuals or companies must take to become licensed, resource and capacity needs of the agency to develop and administer the programs, any challenges or barriers to state-level licensing, and what would constitute an identified need for a state-run licensing program (e.g., public or environmental health concerns). Ultimately, this research will inform whether state-level licensing would be a viable option for landscape and irrigation professional certification in Colorado.

Throughout the project, WRA will convene the Steering Committee at least quarterly (approximately six times over the grant period). The Steering Committee will provide essential direction on both the research phase in Task 1 and the stakeholder engagement phase in Task 2 and will be given an opportunity to provide feedback on all research methodology and draft deliverables. Several of the Steering Committee Members – including CSU, the Association of Landscape Contractors of Colorado (ALCC), and CSU Extension - are working on other related landscape training development projects. The Committee provides an excellent opportunity to stay in communication with these entities and ensure that relevant tasks and findings are coordinated and additive.

All research findings will be compiled into an externally facing research report that will be used to further Colorado's collective knowledge of landscape and irrigation professional licensing programs and to inform the potential development of a Colorado-wide landscape and irrigation professional licensing effort.

Method/Procedure:

With guidance from the Landscape and Irrigation Professional Certification Steering Committee, WRA and its project partners will:

1. Interview representatives from the 10 states identified in prior research that currently require or incentivize landscape and/or irrigation professional licensing.
2. Based on research, interviews, and stakeholder input, as well as any information provided by CSU, assess the content, structure, and demand for the existing landscape certification programs.
3. Research and conduct interviews with agencies responsible for administering existing state-level certification and licensure programs.
4. Compile all relevant research findings into an externally facing report including findings from landscape and irrigation professional licensure in other states, an assessment of Colorado's current training programs, and development and administration details of other Colorado licensing programs. This report will be published and available to the public on WRA's website.

Deliverable:

WRA will provide CWCB with:

- A final, externally facing report detailing the findings of the research conducted in Task 1 including: interview questionnaires and a compilation of interview responses.

Task 2

Task 2 – Engage a Diverse Set of Stakeholders on Policy Direction

Description of Task:

Building on the research being conducted in Task 1, WRA and project partners will seek to gather feedback and information on how different potential policy mechanisms related to landscape and irrigation professional certification would affect a wide variety of landscape and irrigation industry professionals in Colorado. This feedback will be used to inform how certification policy could be developed to be impactful, feasible, accessible, and beneficial to members of the landscape and irrigation industry. The project team will meet regularly to ensure coordinated and timely progress on all stakeholder engagement tasks.

This task will prioritize engaging with a diverse set of stakeholders, particularly those that were underrepresented in WRA's previous engagement and surveying efforts. WRA's second landscape professional survey conducted in 2022 was offered in both English and Spanish and focused on understanding landscape and irrigation professionals' knowledge of - and participation in - various training programs, as well as their perspectives on a statewide licensing program. While the survey garnered 266 responses, most of these respondents worked on the Front Range and management-level staff were overrepresented compared to field technicians. The survey also garnered very few Spanish-language responses, even though many individuals working in the profession are Spanish speakers.

Targeted stakeholders will include Spanish speakers, landscape and irrigation technicians, individuals outside of the Front Range in rural areas and mountain communities, large landscape companies that function across multiple states, parks departments and school districts, and others that work closely with the landscaping industry such as developers, property managers, facilities managers, general contractors, and irrigation equipment suppliers.

The project team will identify opportunities to connect with the target audience and the most impactful ways to do so. The team will research applicable conferences, meetings, and events to participate in and engage with attendees to understand how the policy mechanisms identified in Task 1 would impact their work and livelihoods and to solicit feedback. These gatherings may include but are not limited to ProGreen, Colorado Arborists & Lawn Care Professional meeting, CPS Distributor's Spring Fling, Denver Botanic Gardens events, Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association, and the Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado's Latino Landscaping & Women in the Industry Working Group meetings.

The project team will participate in four to six conferences, events and/or meetings. At these events, the project team will develop presentation materials and interactive exercises to share the initial research findings from Task 1 and WRA's prior research efforts and to gather input to inform final Task 2 outcomes. Feedback may be gathered through live polling, online or in-person surveying, small group discussion, Q&A, and/or one-on-one conversations. Specific discussion topics may include: the value of landscape professional certification, knowledge and resource gaps amongst industry professionals, language, geographic and economic access to certification programs, and potential challenges and opportunities presented by statewide certification. The project team will ensure at least two of the conference or meeting presentations are accessible to Spanish speakers and at least one presentation or meeting is outside of the Front Range.

Additionally, WRA will conduct at least ten one-on-one informational interviews with the targeted industry professionals described above to gather more detailed feedback. Interviews will be conducted by CSU Graduate student interns in both English and Spanish and participants can elect to receive a gift card or similar in appreciation of their time. All interviews will be transcribed using a transcription service and will be reviewed for accuracy. Interview findings will be included in the final project report.

As described in Task 1, WRA will also continue to convene the Steering Committee at least quarterly to receive feedback on the stakeholder engagement phase and to remain coordinated with the Steering Committee members that are conducting related efforts.

All findings from Task 2 stakeholder engagement will be synthesized into an externally facing report which, alongside the Task 1 research findings, will be used to develop a series of recommendations and a roadmap for accelerating landscape and irrigation professional certification in Colorado.

Method/Procedure:

1. The project team will identify conferences, meetings, events, or other opportunities to connect with target audiences.
2. The team will organize presentations and/or workshops at four to six industry-related conferences or meetings and prepare presentation materials. Two presentations will be accessible to Spanish speakers through translated materials and live Spanish interpretation or will be conducted in Spanish with English translation available.
3. Presentation materials will include all related materials from Task 1 and WRA's previous policy research. Feedback from participants will be solicited through polling, surveys, Q&A, small group, and one-on-one discussions.
4. The team will conduct at least ten one-on-one interviews with industry professionals in both English and Spanish.
5. Convene the Steering Committee quarterly to provide input on both research and stakeholder engagement.
6. The project team will compile all relevant stakeholder feedback into an externally facing report. This report will be reviewed by the Steering Committee. Findings will be Part II of the report referenced in Task 1 and, based on both the research findings and the stakeholder feedback, the project team will develop a series of recommendations and next steps for advancing landscape and irrigation professional certification in Colorado.

Deliverable:

WRA will provide the CWCB with:

- A public-facing research paper summarizing key findings from both Task 1: Research and Certification and Licensing Programs & Requirements and Task 2: Stakeholder Engagement, as well as policy recommendations.

Task 3

Task 3 – Project Management Activities

Description of Task:

WRA will be responsible for ensuring all project work is completed in an efficient manner and consistent with the project budget. WRA will manage and coordinate work with project partners – CSU Extension and CWC. WRA will ensure all project invoicing and reporting (including six-month progress reports and a final report) are consistent with CWCB requirements.

Method/Procedure:

WRA will:

- Manage and pay CSU Extension and CWC.
- Develop and submit project invoices to the CWCB.
- Provide the CWCB with a progress report every six months including a final report at the end of the project.

Deliverable:

WRA will provide CWCB with:

- Invoices and progress reports every six months, and
- a final report at the end of the project.

Budget and Schedule

This Budget and Schedule reflects the tasks identified in the Statement of Work.

Task No.	Task Description	Estimated Task Start Date	Estimated Task End Date	Grant Funding	Match Funding	Total
1	Conduct Research on Certification Programs & Requirements	Jun-24	25-Jun	\$37,616.95	\$12,538.85	\$50,155.80
2	Engage a Diverse Set of Stakeholders on Policy Direction	Jul-24	26-Feb	\$107,472.30	\$35,824.10	\$143,296.40
3	Project Management Activities	Jun-24	26-Feb	\$7,068.75	\$2,356.25	\$9,425.00
Total				\$152,158.00	\$50,719.20	\$202,877.20

Reporting Requirements

Progress Reports: The grantee shall provide the CWCB a progress report every six months, beginning from the date of issuance of the grant agreement. The progress report shall describe the status of the tasks identified in the statement of work, including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues.

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

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

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

Payment

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

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

Performance Measures

Performance measures for the grant agreement shall include the following:

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

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

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

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