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### **FINAL REPORT:**

#### **POGG1 PDAA 2023 2768 Northern San Luis Valley Watershed Restoration Planning**

Please accept the following as the Final Report for this grant. We outline our accomplishments by task below. Attached you will find referenced grant applications for the work outlined in this proposal. While we were not successful with our Bureau of Reclamation WaterSmart application, we did have a great deal of success with other federal and state grant sources that will be used as match to federal sources. We appreciate this funding and the Colorado Water Conservation Board for giving us this opportunity. If there is a need for additional information or any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

#### **TASK 1. WATERSHED OUTREACH & COORDINATION ACTIVITIES**

Within the 3 watersheds identified in this proposal, San Luis Creek, La Garita Creek, and Saguache Creek, we and our partners at Wetland Dynamics, had at least 15 landowner contacts with the actual number being much higher as it became unfeasible to tract all phone calls, emails, and meeting attendance. Additional contacts were made in other watersheds throughout the Northern San Luis Valley. At least 20 potential restoration projects were identified within these watersheds including many of those listed in the proposal plus new ones such as the Golden Hoof Conservation Easement. Partners within the San Luis Valley coordinated efforts to determine potential federal applications. These efforts are ongoing and will continue into the future. More specific information can be found in the attachments.

#### **TASK 2. PROJECT SITE RECONAISSANCE & BIO-ENGINEERING ACTIVITIES**

As mentioned above, at least 20 potential restoration projects have been identified that would be a fit for federal applications. There were at least 20 site visits conducted by we and/or Wetland Dynamics during the grant period. DU engineers were in attendance at most of these meetings.

Sites were located on public (10) and private lands (17+). More specific information can be found in the attachment. More engineering work identified by this proposal is ongoing and will be conducted going forward utilizing federal funding acquired via this proposal and future, planned federal applications.

### **TASK 3. FEDERAL GRANT-WRITING ACTIVITIES**

Numerous online and in-person meetings were conducted by the partnership. We have had discussions with U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) WaterSmart officials and participated in webinars. We submitted a BOR WaterSmart proposal that was not successful, but we will be applying using the projects, data, and information here to apply to future BOR WaterSmart grants. We were successful in securing U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife BIL funds as well as Bureau of Land Management IRA funding for Northern San Luis Valley projects identified by this effort. **Utilizing funding from this proposal, we obtained over \$2.2 million (\$2,030,000 BLM IRA; \$185,486 FWS PFW); in federal funds with the potential for at least \$3.5 million more in the near future via the sources identified in Task 4.**

### **TASK 4. IDENTIFY OTHER FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES**

We are working with partners in the San Luis Valley as well as partnering and assisting with writing of a NRCS RCPP grant proposal that will be submitted in July that includes some activities in the Northern San Luis Valley. Additionally, we will be partnering with Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust on a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant that includes Northern San Luis Valley projects that will be submitted in July. We applied in April to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Rocky Mountain Arsenal Remediation RFP and included Northern San Luis Valley projects. The source of those funds is federal (i.e. EPA) even though they are handled by a state agency. We are working with Great Sand Dunes National Park and are slated to receive funding from them as well in the near future. Non-RCPP NRCS funding will be utilized for 1 Wetlands America Trust, Inc. (DU) conservation easement that is slated to be awarded in the near future. Additionally, we are exploring various BOR WaterSmart opportunities for potential resubmittal or modification of our current proposal to fit one of those other funding sources. In all, we have or will pursue funding from 6 different federal agencies (FWS, BOR, BLM, NPS, EPA, NRCS).

### **TASK 5. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION & REPORTING**

Most of the aforementioned grant sources require non-federal match. We applied for and administered a number of Colorado Parks and Wildlife Wetlands Program and Colorado Water Conservation Board funds that were used or will be used as match. We administered and reported on the federal grants that were awarded in a timely manner to meet those grant contracts. This report represents the final administrative task of this award.