



Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	City of Canon City	
Name of Water Project	Planning John Griffin Park Reservoir	
Grant Request Amount		\$406,875.00
Primary Category		\$406,875.00
<i>Water Storage & Supply</i>		
Total Applicant Match		\$135,625.00
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>		\$135,625.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>		\$0.00
Total Other Sources of Funding		\$0.00
Total Project Cost		\$542,500.00

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: City of Canon City
Mailing Address: 128 Main St Canon City CO 81212

Organization Contact: Brandi Sheets
Position/Title: Grant Writer Email: bsheets@canoncity.org
Phone: (719) 431-0717

Grant Management Contact: Brandi Sheets
Position/Title: Grant Writer Email: bsheets@canoncity.org
Phone: (719) 431-0717

Description of Grantee/Applicant

No description provided

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	38.437498
Longitude	105.211288
Lat Long Flag	Precise coordinates: Project coordinates are readily definable and precisely define the location of the project
Water Source	Arkansas River
Basins	Arkansas
Counties	Fremont
Districts	12-Arkansas: Salida to Portland

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	Environmental
Type of Water Project	Planning
Scheduled Start Date - Design	1/1/2026
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	
Description	<p>Following three (3) years of high-level investigations, the City believes the John Griffin Regional Park (JGRP) Reservoir project is worthy of a comprehensive feasibility study. The primary purpose is to create 500 acre-feet, off-channel reservoir for Canon City's emergency water supply. This storage would increase our supply from 7 days to 24 days, which is a critical to avoid scenarios like we experienced in 2018 following floods on the Hayden Peak burn scar. Flows released from the reservoir provide additional benefits as JGRP contains disconnected channels cut off from the once braided reach of the Arkansas River due to an uncertified levee build in the 1960s. Available LIDAR elevations prominently show the channels which could be reconnected with limited excavation. Further, conversations with DWR, CPW, and USACE have brought to our attention that the JGRP's senior water right (Phelps Ditch) and 26.6 acres of historically irrigated land that are prime for wetland creation. In this feasibility study, our objective is to fully evaluate these opportunities individually and to develop a plan that maximizes our city's water resiliency as we prepare for future fire, floods and drought as well as maximize habitat restoration and creation for the overly channelized Arkansas River.</p>

Measurable Results

500	New Storage Created (acre-feet)
-----	---------------------------------

500	New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)
500	New Storage Created (acre-feet)
7,200	Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)
9,950.00	Length of Pipe, Canal Built or Improved (linear feet)
	Efficiency Savings (dollars/year)
	Efficiency Savings (acre-feet/year)
26	Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)
	Quantity of Water Shared through Alternative Transfer Mechanisms or water sharing agreement (acre-feet)
21,000	Number of Coloradans Impacted by Incorporating Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning
21,000	Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
Other	
No additional measurable results provided	

Water Project Justification

This multifaceted project has the potential to restore and repurpose a disconnected floodplain property of approximately 75 acres in the heart of Canon City to include the creation of an off-channel, emergency water storage reservoir (up to 500 acre feet), and to wisely use the consistent reservoir outflows to reconnect abandoned side river channels (up to 7,200 feet), create wetlands (up to 26 acres), and offer these enhanced environment conditions to local recreators of all accessible needs for fishing, paddle boarding, kayaking, and bird watching. This project would be a giant step toward Canon City's preparation (and the Colorado Water Plan's desired actions) of becoming a Vibrant Community, Thriving Watershed, and Resilient Planning. Specifically, this projects' components include thoughtful storage, meeting future water needs, wise water use, healthy lands, engaged partners, and integration with other water sectors. The potential to create an emergency reservoir would greatly increase the current community water supply from 7 days to 24 days should the Arkansas River's water be unusable due to flood, fire, contamination or drought. During non-emergency times, the consistent outflows of the reservoir would feed water to the newly created acres of wetlands and reconnected side channels that discharge into the Arkansas River. As noted in the Colorado Water Plan, the Arkansas River has a 102-mile reach of Gold Metal waters, but this designation stops upstream of Canon City at Parkdale, CO. Due to the geography of the Royal Gorge and the anthropogenic development along the river from Canon City through Florence, this 20-mile reach in lacks habitat and geomorphic diversity due to an overly manipulated and channelized reach from railroad and highway infrastructure, diversions, bank protection, and levees. Adding this reservoir would provide significant sport fish habitat, and adding these side channels and wetlands would provide valuable habitat for native fish in an area where such habitat development on the main stem of the Arkansas is not likely due to heavy recreational boater use (i.e. no large woody debris).

In reviewing the Colorado Water Plan's Goals and strategic vision for the future of the Arkansas Basin (page 81), this project could help address nearly all the listed items under Municipal and Industrial Goals (e.g. meeting supply gap; collaborative solutions for municipal; environments, and recreation during drought conditions), Watershed Health Goals (e.g. improve and restore critical waters supply for environment and recreation; improve water quality due to wetland buffers), Environment and Recreation Goals (e.g. collaboration of municipal uses to enhance environment and recreation; improve native fish populations; improve recreation fishing opportunities; improve boating and non-motorized recreation; improve avian habitats), and Storage Goals (e.g. develop storage for the Arkansas Basin needs, promoting multiple uses and new storage).

During the last three years, a dedicated team of the landowners, the City of Canon City, and river engineers have conducted a high-level feasibility of this project to investigate any critical barriers to this project including water rights, USACE permitting and limitations, wildlife opportunities, and stakeholder support. At this time, all evidence indicates that this project has a lot of potential and no obvious legal barrier.

Reference

Colorado Water Conservation Board. (2023). Colorado Water Plan. Colorado Department of Natural Resources. https://dnrweblink.state.co.us/CWCB/0/edoc/219188/Colorado_WaterPlan_2023_Digital.pdf

Related Studies

Cañon City - Water Master Plan- page 33 paragraphs 2-3 and page 34 all

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

TABOR- Normal Revenue is budgeted around 8.5 million so the \$300,000 grant would not impact the TABOR status as an enterprise fund. This will not impact the future as the City does not intend to apply for any additional loans or funds under this fund.