



COLORADO

Colorado Water
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Board of Water Works of Pueblo
Name of Water Project	Ewing Placer Ditch Conservation and Accounting Project
Grant Request Amount	\$607,500.00
Primary Category	\$607,500.00
<i>Water Storage & Supply</i>	
Total Applicant Match	\$0.00
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	\$0.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	\$0.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	\$202,500.00
<i>The Nature Conservancy</i>	\$202,500.00
Total Project Cost	\$810,000.00

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Board of Water Works of Pueblo
Mailing Address: 319 W 4th St Pueblo CO 81006

Organization Contact: Alan Ward
Position/Title: Email: award@pueblowater.org
Phone:

Organization Contact - Alternate: Ryan Dalton
Position/Title: Email: rdalton@pueblowater.org
Phone: 719-584-0236

Grant Management Contact: Alan Ward
Position/Title: Email: award@pueblowater.org
Phone:

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Ryan Dalton
Position/Title: Email: rdalton@pueblowater.org
Phone: 719-584-0236

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Utility - Water utility associated with a municipal government

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	39.361000
Longitude	-106.306300
Lat Long Flag	TMD diversion structure location: Coordinates based on primary diversion structure of transbasin diversion project
Water Source	Piney Creek tributary to the Eagle River
Basins	Arkansas; Colorado
Counties	Lake; Eagle
Districts	37-Eagle River Basin; 11-Arkansas: Headwaters to Salida

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	Municipal
Type of Water Project	Construction / Implementation
Scheduled Start Date - Design	4/1/2026
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	

Description

The Ewing Placer Ditch is a transmountain diversion that diverts water from Piney Creek in the headwaters of the Eagle River to Tennessee Creek in the headwaters of the Arkansas River. Its diversions are 100% depletive to the Colorado River basin. It has a water right for 18.5 cfs, with an average annual diversion of approximately 900 acre-feet and a maximum annual diversion of 2,402 acre-feet. Water is typically diverted from April through October. In 2026, diversions to the ditch will be foregone and the conserved water will stay in Piney Creek.

This ditch previously successfully participated in the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC) System Conservation Pilot Program (SCPP) and methods for measurement and accounting of diversions have been

established for this location. For Water Year 2026, options for exchanging and storing the conserved water in Blue Mesa Reservoir for a provisional accounting exercise will be investigated. This means that the water may be tracked and acknowledged as conserved water in a CRSP Initial Unit, which will be novel.

The project would also provide environmental benefit to Piney Creek and the Eagle River by enhancing flows when the diversion is foregone.

Measurable Results

900 New Storage Created (acre-feet)
 New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive
 Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)
 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
 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity

Other
 Pilot for UCRC/USBR Conservation Pool MOU

Water Project Justification

The Ewing Placer Ditch Conservation and Accounting Project addresses many goals of the Water Plan and Colorado River Basin Implementation Plan by implementing a unique conservation concept and creating a new supply to be stored, enhancing streamflow, and presenting an opportunity to investigate novel conservation and accounting concepts that may help to inform future efforts on the Colorado River. This project may inform conservation and accounting practices and protocol for future efforts on the Colorado River because the water may be stored and tracked in Blue Mesa Reservoir, which is a key reservoir in Colorado River management.

In addition to the Water Storage & Supply Water Plan Grant category, this project is multibeneficial and also meets the goals of other categories, including Conservation & Land Use Planning, Watershed Restoration & Recreation, and Engagement & Innovation.

The Project addresses two Water Plan Partner Actions:

- 1) Thriving Watersheds; Healthy Lands; Improving riparian and aquatic habitat (2023 Colorado Water Plan p. 206). This Partner Action is met through improved streamflow in Piney Creek and the Eagle River when diversions to the Eastern Slope are foregone. As much as 18.5 cfs will be added to these waterways that would normally be diverted to the Arkansas River Basin. Existing CWCB Instream Flow water rights exist in Piney Creek (aka South Fork Eagle River) and the Eagle River.
- 2) Resilient Planning; Meeting Future Water Needs; Multi-purpose projects for building resiliency (2023 Colorado Water Plan p. 217). This Partner Action is met because it presents a potential opportunity to conserve, store, and account for water in a novel way that may inform future Colorado River efforts and negotiations. Tracking of accounts in the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) Initial Units has been contemplated since 2019 in the

Drought Contingency Plan (2019 DCP) and is receiving renewed interest in current discussions. This project may serve as a pilot of how water is conserved, exchanged, stored, tracked, and accounted for from the point of conservation to the point of storage in a CRSP Unit.

The Project also addresses several Colorado River BIP Project Database projects (IPPs), including:

- Contract water for environmental support - Project-00958
 - o This project meets this goal since the foregone water will remain in Piney Creek and the Eagle River and up to 18.5 cfs will be added to the streamflow.
- Demand Management Investigations - Project-00948
 - o This project will help inform and test various concepts relevant to the Demand Management feasibility investigation and ongoing Colorado River discussions, including how water may be accounted for in a CRSP Initial Unit. This is a key component of investigations into conserved consumptive use programs.
- Develop a regional market for water leasing between water users - Project-00951
 - o This project meets this goal as Pueblo's (an east slope municipality) water will be conserved on the West Slope and be exchanged and accounted for in a West Slope storage facility. There has been a strong desire for East Slope municipalities to participate in conservation programs, and this project will serve as a study and example of such an operation.
- Develop a shepherding program for local and regional conservation efforts - Project-01740
 - o While this project will not involve actively shepherded water; it is a conservation project and exchange that will involve active monitoring, administration, and accounting by the Division of Water Resources (DWR). This project will inform any future tracking and monitoring of conserved water.
- Limit export of Trans-basin Diversion - Project-00937
 - o Pueblo Water will not operate its Ewing Placer Ditch Trans-basin diversion in 2026, keeping West Slope water in Piney Creek and the Eagle River.

Related Studies

SCPP 2016 Contract (attached)
SCPP 2016 review (attached)
Maps (attached)

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

Pueblo Water is operated as an enterprise without the power to tax and is exempt from TABOR. (See Article 15-2 of the Pueblo City Charter <https://www.pueblo.us/DocumentCenter/View/21743/CityCharter?bidId=>)