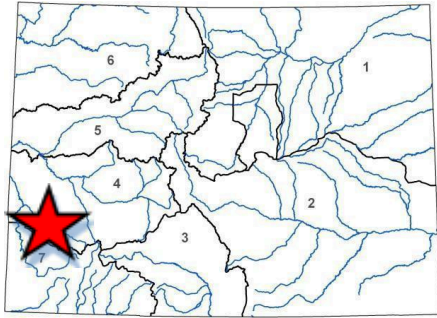




Water Plan Grant Program



LOCATION	
County:	Montrose
Basin:	Southwest

DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	\$4,440,694.85
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$1,455,785.50
Recommended Amount:	\$1,455,785.50
Match Commitment:	\$2,984,909.35
Grant to Match Ratio:	33/67
Project Type:	Construction
Primary Project Category:	Watershed Health & Recreation
Measurable Result:	26,400 linear feet of stream restored or protected; 11,616 linear feet of pipe improved; 285 acre-feet of efficiency savings

The San Miguel Watershed Coalition, a nonprofit dedicated to maintaining and improving the San Miguel River's ecological health, is seeking grant funding for the Reed Chatfield Ditch and Diversion Rehabilitation.

The project will improve the existing Reed-Chatfield Ditch diversion structure on the San Miguel River, which is a low-head dam that currently obstructs fish movement and poses a safety hazard to boaters. Preliminary project planning and design was supported by a CWCB Technical Assistance Grant. The proposed solution is to construct a rock ramp fish ladder downstream of the dam, which will create a natural streambed gradient. This ladder will allow native warm-water fish species to pass and enhance boater safety by mitigating dangerous currents.

In addition to instream improvements, the project will replace the deteriorating pipes and ditch with a new high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipeline and a downstream valve. This new system will create a pressurized, on-demand water system that will improve water delivery efficiency and reliability for the Town of Naturita and irrigators. The project is expected to conserve an estimated 285 acre-feet of water annually that is currently lost to seepage. Further, the project is expected to reduce the diversion from the San Miguel River by 30% in a reach with a CWCB instream flow.

The project is a high priority identified in the San Miguel Stream Management Plan, which was developed by a 72-person stakeholder group to address both consumptive and non-consumptive water needs. It aligns with the Plan's initiative to improve seasonal boat and aquatic organism passage by modifying or reconstructing water diversion systems.

The project will advance the Colorado Water Plan by addressing multiple action areas, including improving watershed health, supporting agricultural and municipal use, and enhancing recreational opportunities. It aligns with grant criteria as a multi-benefit project developed through a collaborative, locally-driven process with broad stakeholder commitment.

Project supporters include the Town of Naturita, the Southwest Basins Roundtable, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Uncompahgre Field Office, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), and several local landowners and stakeholders, including The H. Neil Reams Family and Preston Carver. The project also has funding from The Nature Conservancy.

Grant dollars would be used for permitting, environmental compliance, instream improvements for fish and boat passage, and the installation of the new ditch pipeline. Funds will be leveraged to apply for federal match via U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Fish Passage Program, Reclamation's WaterSMART program, or Congressionally Directed Spending.

Funding Recommendation:

Staff recommends a Water Plan Grant award not to exceed \$1,455,785.50 to the San Miguel Watershed Coalition for Reed Chatfield Ditch and Diversion Rehabilitation.