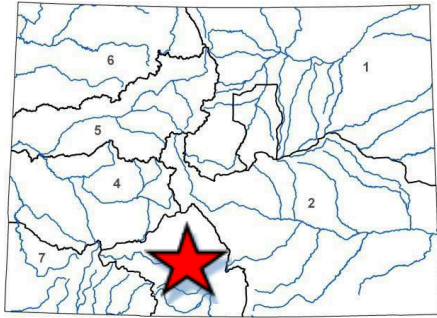




Water Plan Grant Program



LOCATION	
<i>Counties:</i>	Alamosa; Rio Grande
<i>Basin:</i>	Rio Grande

DETAILS	
<i>Total Project Cost:</i>	\$83,475.18
<i>Water Plan Grant Request:</i>	\$58,781.03
<i>Recommended Amount:</i>	\$58,781.03
<i>Match Commitment:</i>	\$24,694.15
<i>Grant to Match Ratio:</i>	70/30
<i>Project Type:</i>	Education
<i>Primary Project Category:</i>	Engagement & Innovation
<i>Measurable Result:</i>	400 Coloradans impacted by engagement activity

The Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust (RiGHT), a non-profit that works to conserve land, water, and life in Colorado's San Luis Valley, is requesting a Colorado Water Plan grant to engage students and the community in the design and painting of two water murals.

By empowering elementary, middle, and high school students to be "water ambassadors"—connecting their classroom learning with creative, high visibility public artwork—the project aims to increase water literacy in San Luis Valley communities and among visitors. The goal is to reach individuals who may not typically engage in formal water education or local water meetings.

The mural project will be launched in Del Norte and Alamosa, where two high visibility sites with space for public engagement have already been secured. The murals will be co-created through a multi-step process. First, students will participate in class sessions, including a field trip to the Rio Grande river. These sessions, co-led by educators, water partners, and artists, will explore local water topics such as aquifer health, conservation, agriculture, and water law. Curriculum will be guided by the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable Education Committee to ensure messaging aligns with basin-wide water education goals.

Then, mural designs will be shaped by student input and refined by local professional artists who will work with water experts to ensure appropriate messaging. Finally, each mural will be painted during a public community event using a "paint-by-number" style to encourage wide participation. These events will feature student presentations and educational booths with local partners. To protect the murals from vandalism, a clear anti-graffiti coating will be applied after painting.

The murals are intended to be long-lasting, with contracts requiring them to remain for a specific amount of time. Project leaders envision bringing murals to towns throughout the San Luis Valley, creating a self-led, basin-wide, water mural tour. Should this educational model prove successful, a key deliverable of the grant is a template document other basins in Colorado could use to replicate community mural projects.

The project integrates stakeholder collaboration at every step, with leadership from RiGHT and the Salazar Rio Grande del Norte Center at Adams State University, educational support from the Rio Grande Watershed Conservation and Education Initiative, and logistical assistance from local businesses and government agencies.

Grant funds would be used for project planning, curriculum development, student engagement, mural design, and community events. Funding has been secured from Adams State University and will be sought from Rio Grande and Alamosa counties, along with private sponsors like Del Norte Bank, Monte Vista Coop, and Farm Bureau Insurance.

This project has the support of the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable.

Funding Recommendation:

Staff recommends a Water Plan Grant award not to exceed \$58,781.03 to the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust for the Rio Grande Basin Water Education Mural Project.