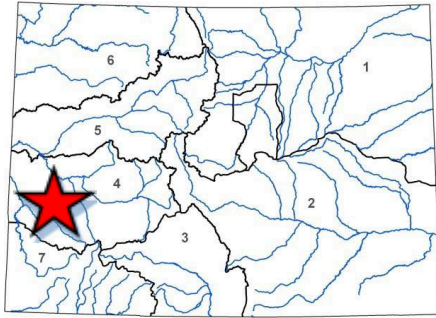




Water Plan Grant Program



LOCATION	
Counties:	Delta; Montrose
Basin:	Gunnison

DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	\$150,825.00
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$91,725.00
Recommended Amount:	\$0.00
Match Commitment:	\$59,100.00
Grant to Match Ratio	61/39
Project Type:	Capacity Building
Primary Project Category:	Engagement & Innovation Activities
Measurable Result:	90 acre-feet new annual water supplies conserved

The Freshwater Trust (TFT) is seeking Colorado Water Plan grant funding to support the acceleration of on-farm irrigation upgrades in the Lower Gunnison Project Area (LGPA). This project seeks to streamline the process for producers to access Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding for irrigation modernization, reduce project completion times, and increase producer enrollment in relevant programs.

NRCS EQIP practices 441 and 442 (drip/sprinkler irrigation) promote agriculture water conservation and efficient use. However, accessing funding assistance for converting from flood to drip/sprinkler irrigation is challenging due to the complex and lengthy application process. This limits the number of producers who successfully enroll in the program.

TFT's approach aims to improve and scale the process and provide technical assistance and contractor capacity to streamline and manage the project application including producer recruitment, design, eligibility, archaeological surveys and environmental compliance. Grant dollars would be used to adapt TFT's existing workflow processes and StreamBank Administration (SBA) System for the Lower Gunnison River Project Area, and to initiate 2-4 EQIP pilot projects. Funds will also support institutionalizing the approach with Colorado NRCS through a conservation technical assistance agreement or Memorandum of Understanding.

This project seeks to advance the Colorado Water Plan by supporting the vision for Robust Agriculture, increasing the pace and scale of on-farm irrigation efficiency improvements, and helping secure more funding for these improvements. It aims to align with the Water Plan Grant criteria by promoting water innovation, enhancing agricultural economic outputs, and improving water quality and reduced irrigation demand.

Project supporters include the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Colorado River District, Shavano Conservation District, Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association, and Bolinger and Queen (irrigation equipment supplier).

Funding Recommendation:

Staff does not recommend The Freshwater Trust be awarded a Water Plan Grant for Innovations to Scale Colorado EQIP Impact project because it did not adequately demonstrate project feasibility.