



**COLORADO**

Colorado Water  
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Water Conservation Board

## Water Plan

### Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Western Resource Advocates
Name of Water Project	Implementing Residential Turf Regulations
Grant Request Amount	<b>\$176,457.00</b>
Primary Category	\$176,457.00
<i>Conservation &amp; Land Use Planning</i>	
Total Applicant Match	<b>\$58,819.00</b>
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	\$58,819.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	\$0.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	<b>\$0.00</b>
Total Project Cost	<b>\$235,276.00</b>

### Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Western Resource Advocates

Mailing Address: 2260 Baseline Road, Suite 200 Boulder CO 80302

Organization Contact: James Larson

Position/Title:

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Phone: 720-763-3733

Organization Contact - Alternate: Laura Belanger

Position/Title: Senior Policy Advisor

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Grant Management Contact: James Larson

Position/Title:

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Phone: 720-763-3733

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Laura Belanger

Position/Title: Senior Policy Advisor

Email: laura.belanger@westernresources.org

Phone: 303-215-9122

### Description of Grantee/Applicant

Western Resource Advocates (WRA) protects the West's land, air, and water to ensure vibrant communities exist in balance with nature.

### 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 39.999800  
 Longitude -105.264090  
 Lat Long Flag Default/Proponent headquarters: If the location cannot be defined with flags above, use location of project proponent headquarters  
 Water Source  
 Basins Statewide  
 Counties  
 Districts

### Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type Municipal  
 Type of Water Project Education  
 Scheduled Start Date - Design 5/1/2026  
 Scheduled Start Date - Construction  
 Description  
 HB25-1113 (HB1113) Limit Turf in New Residential Development requires that communities regulate high water use turfgrass in all new and redeveloped residential properties by Jan. 1, 2028. HB1113 also expands SB24-005's (SB5) prohibition on non-functional turf, non-functional artificial turf and invasive plant species to new multi-family residential properties with more than 12 dwelling units.

Residential turf limits can take many forms. Western Resource Advocates (WRA), and our partners at Brendle Group (project team) will research options and develop resources to guide communities in updating and enforcing their code to limit residential turf. We will also conduct extensive outreach to solicit input during project

resource development and educate communities in support of HB1113 implementation. The project will include an assessment of actual water savings associated with residential turf limits. We will also update existing SB5 compliance materials to include multi-family properties. This project will be collaborative, and resource development will be informed with community input and in collaboration with a Technical Advisory Committee and a community survey. Lastly, the project will assess local adoption of HB1113 compliant standards to identify any outstanding challenges or resource needs.

This important project will provide public benefit and will advance the Colorado Water Plan as described in the "Water Project Justification" section of this application.

### Measurable Results

	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)
31,031	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

The WRA team projects that HB1113, which prohibits the installation of non-functional turf in new multi-family properties with more than 12 units and regulates turf in all new residential development, will result in savings of 12,413 acre-feet per year by 2035 and 31,031 acre-feet per year by 2050 (approximately the water demand of 93,000 Colorado households in a year, assuming an acre-foot serves three households). By 2050, we anticipate these savings will represent 23% of Colorado's estimated outdoor municipal water use gap. The estimates are based on data from the 2023 Colorado Water Plan, 2019 Colorado Water Plan Technical Update, and WRA's own assumptions.

### Water Project Justification

#### Colorado Water Plan 2023

- (Pg.188) Action 1.7 in the Vibrant Communities section relates to this project as it is focused on opportunities for the replacement of non-functional turf throughout the state. This project will help to prevent new non-functional turf from being installed in new residential development, and addresses this portion of the action, "The CWCB will coordinate with key partners to find pathways for achieving effective outcomes that explore both retrofit and new construction standards. This will include evaluating the role and capacity of landscapers as well as contractors, developers, municipalities, and other groups to support this transformation." The project will be coordinated with municipalities, counties, developers, and landscape professionals.

- (Pg. 167) In the "Tools" segment of the plan under Municipal Conservation and Efficiency, the plan states "The CWCB recognizes municipal water conservation and efficiency will be an important tool for reducing water use." It says that an effective tool the CWCB has seen to reduce municipal use is to limit turf to functional areas, stating one tool is, "Reducing non-functional turf – establishing turf buy-back programs and enacting

comprehensive landscape ordinances that limit new turf to functional spaces.” This project is directly aligned with this strategy as it will help communities implement new regulations to limit turf to functional spaces for new multi-family properties with more than 12 units and to regulate turf on all new residential properties.

- (Pg.155) The plan addresses state and local initiatives focused on non-functional turf. This project supports communities in complying with HB 25-1113 which will limit the amount of non-functional turf that will be installed in residential properties across the state moving forward. This reduces the need for turf replacement in the future.

- (Pg. 176 - 181) The project is consistent with the Water Plan’s Vibrant Communities and Resilient Planning Visions and specifically partner actions towards:

- o Meeting Future Water Need
- o Wise Water Use
- o Healthy Lands

- (Pg. 180) Under the Healthy Lands partner action section, this project will support the transition towards water wise, climate-appropriate landscapes and efficient irrigation:

- o “Colorado must start building the landscapes of the future today by identifying and planting the types of vegetation that are reflective of local natural landscapes, can thrive under warmer and drier conditions, and potentially only need irrigation one day per week or less. Irrigation efficiency should be maximized on existing and new water-wise landscapes.”

#### Colorado BIP (2022, Volume 1)

- (Pg. 13) The project will help address the basin’s theme to “Encourage a high level of basin conservation” and goal to (Pg. 20) “Pursue continued municipal and industrial (M&I) conservation”. Reducing non-functional turf areas in new multi-family development and regulating turf in all residential development are strong water conservation measures and ties directly to these themes.

#### South Platte – Metro BIP (2022, Volume 1)

- (Pg. 3) The project helps realize the BIP Strategic Vision and Strategies to meet the municipal supply gap.

- (Pg. 24) The project is consistent with the following BIP Themes:

- o “The South Platte Basin Will Continue its Leadership Role and Performance in Efficient Use and Management of Water”
- o “The South Platte Basin Must Sustain its Economy, Culture, and Environment”

- (Pg. 25) The project supports the BIP goal to:

- o “Maintain and promote municipal and industrial conservation and efficiency”

- (pg.28) Particularly sub goal 3.F to “Support and promote water efficient landscaping”, which includes:

“(Supporting) updated landscaping standards that promote water efficient landscaping and include elements such as limits on non-essential turf in new development”.

#### CWCB Water Plan Grant Guidelines Criteria and Considerations (p. 16)

- The project is intended to reduce overall future water needs through cost-effective water efficiency measures.

- o This project will support communities in adopting codes that limit the installation of non-functional turf in all residential development. It will promote the installation of water-wise plants and landscaping practices. This will prevent the need for turf replacement projects in the future which can be costly, saving both money and water in the long run.

- The project promotes a water efficiency ethic throughout Colorado
  - o As HB1113 is a statewide policy, this project to help implement it will assist Colorado communities to better prepare for Colorado's water future and to choose climate appropriate landscapes instead of non-functional turf, saving water and promoting water conservation and efficiency ethic.
- The project reduces impacts and prepares for the impacts of climate change
  - o The impacts of this project will be reduced water demand for outdoor landscapes in new residential development across the state. As climate change limits our available water supplies, this will help communities do more with less water. The alternative, water-wise plants installed will also be far more climate resilient, and drought-tolerant than cool season turfgrass.

#### Governor's Urban Landscape Taskforce Report

We would also like to highlight the applicability of the project to the recommendations made in the 2024 Urban Landscape Conservation Task Force Final Report released by Governor Polis' office. In the task force recommendations, adopting turf policy is highlighted as a top recommendation.

- (Pg.ii.) "Support legislation prohibiting installations of nonfunctional water-intensive turf as defined by the task force in new and redevelopment and support local adoption of turf limitations".
  - o This project directly supports this recommendation, as HB1113 prohibits nonfunctional turf in new multi-family properties with more than 12 units and limits turf in all new residential development. This project will help communities integrate turf limits into landscape codes across the state.

### Related Studies

**Implementing Turf Limits in Landscape Codes** – This WRA project is funded through a CWCB Water Plan Grant and will wrap up in early 2026. The project is assisting communities in meeting the requirements of Senate Bill 24-005 which prohibits the installation of non-functional turf, artificial turf and invasive plant species on new, non-residential (CII) properties statewide. The proposed water project, Implementing Turf Regulations, is complementary to and builds off this earlier CII work with a new focus on HB25-1113's residential turf limits.

**The State of Water-Wise Landscaping Standards in Colorado** – This WRA report was funded through a CWCB Water Plan Grant ("Reducing Non-Functional Turfgrass in New Development Through Smart Land Use Planning"). The report analyzes the state of water-wise landscaping codes among 40 Colorado communities. It details different turf limits in these communities, the motivations behind these policies, and anticipated changes in future years. It also highlights several communities with robust water-wise landscaping standards and provides an analysis of four communities with turf limits that align with the requirements in SB24-005. The proposed water project will assist in communities throughout the state to adopt water-wise landscape codes that are HB25-1113 compliant.

**Anticipated Water Savings from House Bill 25-1113 Implementation:** The WRA team projects that HB1113, which prohibits the installation of non-functional turf in new multi-family properties with more than 12 units and regulates turf in all new residential development, will result in savings of 12,413 acre-feet per year by 2035 and 31,031 acre-feet per year by 2050 (approximately the water demand of 93,000 Colorado households in a year assuming an acre-foot serves three households). By 2050, we anticipate these savings will represent 23% of Colorado's estimated outdoor municipal water use gap. The estimates are based on data from the 2023 Colorado Water Plan, 2019 Colorado Water Plan Technical Update, and WRA's own assumptions.

### Taxpayer Bill of Rights

N/A