

**COLORADO**Colorado Water
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

Colorado Water Conservation Board**Water Plan****Water Project Summary**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Applicant | San Miguel Watershed Coalition |
| Name of Water Project | San Miguel Watershed Wildfire Ready Action Plan |
| Grant Request Amount | \$373,500.00 |
| Primary Category | \$373,500.00 |
| <i>Watershed Health & Recreation</i> | |
| Total Applicant Match | \$0.00 |
| <i>Applicant Cash Match</i> | |
| <i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i> | |
| Total Other Sources of Funding | \$124,500.00 |
| <i>San Miguel Watershed Coalition</i> | \$4,000.00 |
| <i>Southwestern Water Conservation District</i> | \$25,000.00 |
| <i>Town of Naturita</i> | \$500.00 |
| <i>Telluride Fire Protection District</i> | \$4,000.00 |
| <i>Town of Telluride</i> | \$30,000.00 |
| <i>San Miguel County</i> | \$20,000.00 |
| <i>Norwood Water Commission</i> | \$5,000.00 |
| <i>Montrose County</i> | \$20,000.00 |
| <i>Telluride Foundation</i> | \$10,000.00 |
| <i>Norwood Fire Protection District</i> | \$4,000.00 |
| <i>Montrose County</i> | \$1,000.00 |
| <i>San Miguel County</i> | \$1,000.00 |
| Total Project Cost | \$498,000.00 |

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: San Miguel Watershed Coalition
Mailing Address: PO Box 1601 Telluride CO 81435

Organization Contact: Adrian Bergere

Position/Title:

Email: info@sanmiguelwatershed.org

Phone: (518) 817-1607

Grant Management Contact: Adrian Bergere

Position/Title:

Email: info@sanmiguelwatershed.org

Phone: (518) 817-1607

Description of Grantee/Applicant

The San Miguel Watershed Coalition (SMWC) is an independent 510(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in Telluride, Colorado, in 1997. SMWC works to maintain and improve the ecological health of all 80 miles of the

free-flowing San Miguel River. SMWC conducts and facilitates river projects, provides community education opportunities, and conducts water quality testing. SMWC engages stakeholders from throughout the 1,550 square mile watershed—from the western San Juan Mountains to the slick rock canyons of the West End—to participate in collaborative efforts that promote our river’s health and the economic vitality of our watershed’s communities.

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 | 38.130660 |
| Longitude | -108.305987 |
| Lat Long Flag | Water district Center: Coordinates based on center point of water district boundary |
| Water Source | San Miguel River |
| Basins | Southwest |
| Counties | Montrose; San Miguel |
| Districts | 60-San Miguel River Basin |

Water Project Overview

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Major Water Use Type | Environmental |
| Type of Water Project | Planning |

Scheduled Start Date - Design

3/1/2026

Scheduled Start Date - Construction

Description

Develop a Wildfire Ready Action Plan (WRAP) for the San Miguel Watershed. The San Miguel Watershed faces significant challenges due to the potential for wildfires, as highlighted by recent large-scale fires in Colorado. The WRAP will focus on reducing recovery response time, mitigating hillslope and gully erosion, controlling flooding and debris flows, and preventing the contamination of downstream reservoirs and communities. These efforts will be critical in safeguarding the watershed and ensuring the safety of its residents.

The prioritization of watershed-scale projects to enhance the natural and beneficial functions of the watershed, which are often overlooked in rapid post-fire response scenarios, is critical for long-term watershed health. By planning and implementing these projects in advance, the WRAP will ensure more effective and comprehensive mitigation of post-fire hazards.

The WRAP will cover the entire 1500 square mile San Miguel Watershed.

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) |
| 1,800 | 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 |
| 10,000 | Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity |
| Other | |
| No additional measurable results provided | |

Water Project Justification

The WRAP project is a foundational piece of Resilient Planning that supports multiple CWP Action Areas and goals set by the state. It functions by assessing local wildfire risk and proactively identifying projects to mitigate post-fire impacts to critical water resources and infrastructure.

The WRAP is designed as an implementation of the CWP Agency Action to formally establish a "Wildfire Ready Watersheds framework" that informs local strategy.

1. Resilient Planning

The WRAP directly embodies the Resilient Planning vision, which calls for adaptive measures to address acute and chronic risks and build water security.

Partner Action: Healthy Lands (p. 218)

The WRAP is a foundational "Adaptive strategy... for climate change resilience" by anticipating hydrological changes and risks caused by post-fire events (like floods and debris flows).

Partner Action: Thoughtful Storage (p. 217)

The susceptibility analysis explicitly informs planning to protect "critical water supply infrastructure" and storage facilities from post-fire debris and sedimentation, aligning with the goal that "Storage can help communities develop reliable water supplies while mitigating natural hazard risk".

2. Thriving Watersheds

The WRAP supports the goal of enhancing watershed health and building ecosystem resilience, acknowledging that "Colorado's watersheds hold the future of our water supply security".

Partner Action: Healthy Lands (p. 206)

The development of pre- and post-fire action plans promotes "Shared stewardship" that "improves watershed health and resilience across multiple jurisdictions".

Partner Action: Meeting Future Water Need (p. 205)

By assessing and planning for hazards like water quality impairment and erosion, the WRAP supports "Efforts to improve stream health and infrastructure efficiency" that "benefit all water use sectors while enhancing the environment and recreation opportunities".

3. Vibrant Communities

The WRAP provides tangible planning outcomes that safeguard the economic and physical security of Colorado's communities.

Partner Action: Effective Engagement (p. 181)

The WRAP requires extensive Stakeholder Collaboration and Outreach to define community values-at-risk, fulfilling the call for "Fostering information sharing, education, and innovation at the state and local level".

Partner Action: Meeting Future Water Need (p. 179)

The resulting mitigation actions identify strategies that protect critical public assets, including "life safety, and property", ensuring communities "conserve and provide for future demands".

4. Robust Agriculture

The plan supports the CWP's vision to sustain agriculture and protect it from indiscriminate "buy and dry" methods.

Partner Action: Healthy Lands (p. 194)

The WRAP mitigates post-fire hazards like hillslope erosion and sedimentation that can severely damage productive agricultural lands, aligning with the goal that "Agriculture can increase water use efficiency, protect its economy, and provide ecosystem and other benefits".

Partner Action: Meeting Future Water Need (p. 194)

By prioritizing the "Rehabilitation and modernization of farming and ranching infrastructure," the project helps secure and protect the agricultural economy from the threats of extreme events.

The Wildfire Ready Action Plan (WRAP) is a fundamental instrument for the Southwest Basins Roundtable (BRT) to achieve the strategic water goals outlined in the Basin Implementation Plan (BIP), directly countering the major challenges presented by long-standing drought and climate change. The devastating impact of "large, uncontrolled forest fires" threatens critical water supplies, infrastructure, and all water-dependent sectors, making proactive planning essential. The WRAP functions as a high-priority, cohesive undertaking that satisfies the BRT's explicit objective to deliver balanced, collaborative solutions.

The project directly supports Goal F: Promote Healthy Watersheds by immediately engaging in strategies for creating resilient watersheds and healthy forests (Strategy F3). This proactive planning counters threats to water resources, as wildfires are explicitly listed as major stressors that "threaten critical water resource infrastructure, increase flooding, and sedimentation in streams". By implementing an integrated strategy that identifies these hazards, the WRAP ensures that the integrity of the natural systems that moderate runoff and filter water is protected, a key necessity given the basin's reliance on high-altitude headwaters.

Furthermore, the WRAP embodies the core collaborative mandate defined in Goal A: Balance all needs and reduce conflict by requiring extensive multi-stakeholder engagement (Strategy A2). This approach ensures that mitigation plans protect all at-risk sectors, including Robust Agriculture (Goal B) by safeguarding existing water supply and preventing post-fire shortages (Strategy B3), and Vibrant Communities (Goal C) by protecting municipal and industrial water infrastructure against damaging floods and debris flows. This integrated, collaborative planning model makes the WRAP a high-value project that strategically moves the basin toward its collective goals to effectively mitigate risk and secure its water future.

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

N/A