



Colorado Water Conservation Board

Projects Bill Grants

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Republican River Water Conservation District	
Name of Water Project	Retirement of Irrigated Acres in the South Fork Focus Zone	
Grant request Amount	\$5,000,000.00	
Estimated Engineering Costs		\$0.00
Estimated Construction Costs		\$0.00
Other Costs		\$0.00
Total Project Cost		\$0.00

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Republican River Water Conservation District
 Mailing Address: 410 Main St. Ste 8 Wray CO 80758

Organization Contact: Debra Daniel
 Position/Title: General Manager Email: deb.daniel@rrwcd.com
 Phone: (970) 332-3552

Organization Contact - Alternate: Debra Daniel
 Position/Title: General Manager Email: deb.daniel@rrwcd.com
 Phone: (970) 332-3552

Grant Management Contact: Debra Daniel
 Position/Title: General Manager Email: deb.daniel@rrwcd.com
 Phone: (970) 332-3552

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Debra Daniel
 Position/Title: General Manager Email: deb.daniel@rrwcd.com
 Phone: (970) 332-3552

Agency Information

Agency Type District
 Current Assessment
 Number of Shareholders or Customers
 Number of Shares
 Number of Taps
 Average Monthly Water Bill
 Annual Water Delivery (acre-feet)

Description of Grantee/Applicant

In 2004 the Colorado General Assembly enacted a law to create the District, CRS 37-50-101, et seq. In Section 37-50-104, entitled "Creation and name of district" it provided that "there is hereby created a water conservation district to be known and designated as the 'Republican river water conservation district'. The district is hereby

declared to be a body corporate under the laws of Colorado.” At other points in the organizing statute the District is referred to as “an appropriate agency” and is authorized to act “in its corporate capacity”. The District was granted a broad suite of public powers, including the power of eminent domain (CRS 37-50-107(1)(j)), the authority to levy taxes (CRS 37-50-109), the authority to issue general obligation bonds (37-50-120) and the power to impose use fees (37-50-107(1)(m)).

Location of Water Project

Latitude	40.079811
Longitude	-102.213638
Lat Long Flag	Default/Proponent headquarters: If the location cannot be defined with flags above, use location of project proponent headquarters
Water Source	Ogallala Aquifer
Basins	South Platte
Counties	Kit Carson; Phillips; Logan; Cheyenne; Yuma; Washington; Lincoln; Sedgwick
Districts	49-Republican River; 65-Arikaree River

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	Agricultural
Type of Water Project	Construction / Implementation
Scheduled Start Date - Design	
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	10/1/2024

Description

The Republican River Compact Administration Resolution requires 25,000 irrigated acres to be retired in the South Fork Focus Zone by the end of 2029. Between 2016 and 2021, the Republican River Water Conservation District retired 3,432 acres through water conservation program contracts. The District needed a higher monetary incentive per acre to reach the first deadline of 10,000 acres, by 2024. In 2021, the RRWCD voted to double the Water Use Fee assessed on all irrigated acres in the Basin. In 2022, the RRWCD was awarded funding from the American Rescue Plan Act through SB22-028. This funding, along with the increase in the Water Use Fees, allowed the RRWCD to retire 13,633 irrigated acres in the SFFZ, totaling 17,065 acres permanently retired from irrigation by July 2024. The RRWCD requests \$5M of funding to assist in retiring the final 7,935 acres. If the 2029 Resolution deadline is not met, the State of Colorado would be declared out of compliance with the Republican River Compact. If this occurred, irrigators and municipalities in the Republican River Basin would face curtailment by the State Engineer.

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)	
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)	
5,840,000	Number of Coloradans Impacted by Incorporating Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning

5,840,000 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity

Other

The RRWCD succeeding in the retirement of 25,000 irrigated acres in the SFFZ means approximately 490,000 irrigated acres in the Basin continue producing the highest yields of commodities in the State of Colorado. This ensures the multiple small communities in the Basin will be able to continue to thrive due to the additional income benefits of irrigated agriculture in the RRWCD.

Explanation of Grant Request

The Republican River Water Conservation District (RRWCD) is applying for funding to assist with the cost of retiring irrigated acres in the South Fork Focus Zone (SFFZ) of the Republican River Basin in Colorado. The RRWCD received \$29,750,000 through the American Rescue Plan Act and has encumbered these funds through water conservation contracts with well owners in the SFFZ. The district has retired 17,065 irrigated acres in the SFFZ. A total of 25,000 irrigated acres must be retired in the SFFZ prior to the end of 2029. The pursuit of additional funds is to assist with the cost of retiring the remaining acres to keep Colorado in compliance with the Republican River Compact.

Technical and Legal Consultants

Randy Hendrix - Hendrix Wai Engineering, Inc
David Robbins and Pete Ampe - Hill and Robbins, P.C.
Mike Sullivan - Sullivan WRE LLC

Related Studies or SOWs

The Republican River Water Conservation District (RRWCD) was created by the state legislature in 2004, to comply with the Republican River Compact among Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado. In 2016, the RRCA approved a resolution allowing 100% credit for the Compact Compliance Pipeline augmentation and required Colorado to retire 25,000 acres in the South Fork Focus Zone (SFFZ). In order to incentivize the voluntary retirement of irrigated acres in the SFFZ, the RRWCD increased the payments of the supplemental conservation program contracts in the SFFZ. To begin the application process, well owners contact the RRWCD to discuss the various conservation programs and discover which program fits the producer best. The CREP, EQIP and WPPP contracts require the permanent retirement of all irrigated acres. Well owners in the SFFZ may choose to retire a portion of their irrigated acreages through RAMP. Well owners provide the deed for the property and the last 6 years of FSA 578 forms and maps showing the number of acres certified as irrigated each year. The RRWCD requires the paperwork showing who has the authority to sign legal documents for the entity, if the property is owned by a partnership, company or a corporation. RRWCD staff print the final permit for the irrigation well and request the county assessor's records showing the assessed irrigated acres from the previous year. District staff compile the RRWCD worksheets with the data extracted from the requested documentation, and the general manager meets with the well owner to review and discuss the number of acres eligible for a program contract. The well owner agrees to permanently retire their irrigation water rights and signs the RRWCD worksheet. The general manager also signs the document and it is emailed to the appropriate federal agency. After the well owner is approved for a conservation program with FSA or NRCS, the RRWCD compiles a base contract, a supplemental funding contract, an incentive payment contract, a dry-up covenant agreement and a quit-claim and assignment. In the contracts, the well owner agrees to allow the RRWCD access to verify the acres retired and the well abandonment or downsizing for livestock/domestic use. The general manager meets with the well owner to review and sign the documents. The general manager notarizes the dry-up covenant and the quit-claim and assignment documents. All contracts are signed by the RRWCD board president, secretary and the lien holder also signs the contracts. The well owner receives copies of all the documents signed, the appendix for the base contract and a payment schedule. The RRWCD makes annual payments for the term of the contracts. RRWCD

verifies the retired acres to ensure Colorado's compact compliance obligation. To date the RRWCD has retired 77,585.05 acres through water conservation programs throughout the Republican River Basin, including 17,065 acres in the SFFZ.