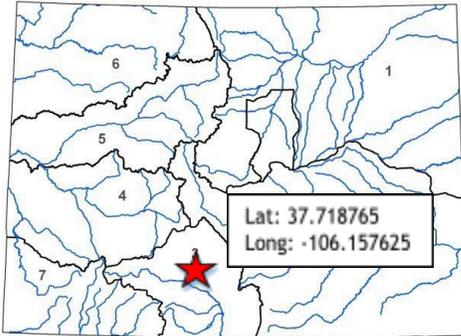




Water Plan Grant Program Application



LOCATION	
County:	Saguache
Drainage Basin:	Rio Grande

DETAILS	
Total Project Cost:	\$118,509.60
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$52,606.80
Recommended amount:	\$52,606.80
Other CWCB Funding:	\$0
Other Funding (Adams State):	\$62,412.80
Applicant Match:	\$3,490.00
Project Type:	Planning
Project Category:	Agricultural
Measurable Result:	125 Coloradans impacted by engagement activities

This Colorado Water Plan Grant will fund a research partnership between the Rio Grande Conservation District, Center Conservation District, Adams State University faculty and students, and the Colorado State University San Luis Valley Research Center. They will collaborate on drought resilience crop trials to determine potential agricultural water management plans to reduce water use without sacrificing soil health and profitability.

The Rio Grande River basin faces variable snowpack, a depleted aquifer, and economic impacts from a reduction in irrigated acres. This project furthers the Colorado Water Plan Partner Action for Robust Agriculture by exploring lower water use cropping while maintaining economic output.

Adams State University students, with guidance from faculty, will design and implement drought trials for three years to find sustainable avenues for reducing total field water usage. They will experiment with a cover crop, a drought-resilient test crop, and a traditional cash crop. Students will track data such as water usage, weather, soil health, crop quality, and yield to determine the effectiveness of the drought resiliency trial and explain its relevance for local water concerns and agricultural production.



Finally, the students will present their findings to the Rio Grande and Center Conservation Districts, the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable, and local producers at a student-hosted workshop. After the workshop, producers will be asked to participate in a survey to gauge their interest in implementing student recommendations and solicit suggestions for future research.

Match funding comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s NextGen grant awarded to Adams State University, along with in-kind support from the Rio Grande Conservation District. CWCB grant funds will be used for seed, rental equipment, irrigation, and support RGCD staff time on the project.

Funding Recommendation:

Staff recommends full funding of \$52,606.80 to the Rio Grande Conservation District for the Student-Led San Luis Valley Drought Resiliency Crop Trials.