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## Colorado Water Conservation Board

### Water Plan Grant Application

#### Instructions

To receive funding for a Water Plan Grant, applicant must demonstrate how the project, activity, or process (collectively referred to as “project”) funded by the CWCB will help meet the measurable objectives and critical actions in the Water Plan. Grant guidelines are available on the CWCB website.

If you have questions, please contact CWCB at (303) 866-3441 or email the following staff to assist you with applications in the following areas:

Water Storage Projects  
Conservation, Land Use Planning  
Engagement & Innovation Activities  
Agricultural Projects  
Environmental & Recreation  
Projects

Anna.Mauss@state.co.us  
Kevin.Reidy@state.co.us  
Ben.Wade@state.co.us  
Alexander.Funk@state.co.us  
Chris.Sturm@state.co.us

**FINAL SUBMISSION:** Submit all application materials in one email to

**[waterplan.grants@state.co.us](mailto:waterplan.grants@state.co.us)**

**in the original file formats [Application (word); Statement of Work (word); Budget/Schedule (excel)]. Please do not combine documents. In the subject line, please include the funding category and name of the project.**

#### Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Mountain Studies Institute, as fiscal agent for the Animas River Community Forum	
Name of Water Project	Animas River Community Forum	
CWP Grant Request Amount		\$27,586.50
Other Funding Sources <u>Membership Donations</u>		\$3,000.00
Other Funding Sources <u>National Forest Foundation</u>		\$4,000.00
Other Funding Sources <u>City of Durango</u>		\$5,000.00
Other Funding Sources <u>Water Supply Reserve Fund</u>		\$8,000.00
In-Kind Partner Match		\$5,604.00
Applicant Funding Contribution		\$7,586.50



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Total Project Cost	\$60,777.00
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Applicant & Grantee Information	
Name of Grantee(s)	Mountain Studies Institute
Mailing Address	679 E. 2nd Ave., Unit 8, Durango, CO 81301
FEIN	73-1644103
Organization Contact	Marcie Bidwell
Position/Title	Executive Director
Email	marcie@mountainstudies.org
Phone	(970) 387-5161
Grant Management Contact	Carolyn Moller
Position/Title	Finance Director
Email	finance@mountainstudies.org
Phone	(970) 387-5161
Name of Applicant (if different than grantee)	Amanda Kuenzi
Mailing Address	Same as above
Position/Title	Community Science Director
Email	amanda@mountainstudies.org
Phone	(970) 387-5161
Description of Grantee/Applicant	
Provide a brief description of the grantee's organization (100 words or less).	
<p>The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is a diverse community group that formed in the Animas River Watershed in response to the Gold King Mine (GKM) spill incident in 2015. Since its inception, ARCF's purpose has been to promote communication, coordination, and collaborative action; foster knowledge, education, and robust communication; support resiliency in our communities; and enhance planning to improve public safety and health, all while respecting the institutional authorities and decisions of governmental and community organizations. Responding to 416 Fire ARCF developed the <i>416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan</i> to lead recovery and resilience for the watershed.</p>	



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Type of Eligible Entity (check one)	
	<b>Public (Government):</b> Municipalities, enterprises, counties, and State of Colorado agencies. Federal agencies are encouraged to work with local entities. Federal agencies are eligible, but only if they can make a compelling case for why a local partner cannot be the grant recipient.
	<b>Public (Districts):</b> Authorities, Title 32/special districts (conservancy, conservation, and irrigation districts), and water activity enterprises.
	<b>Private Incorporated:</b> Mutual ditch companies, homeowners associations, corporations.
	<b>Private Individuals, Partnerships, and Sole Proprietors:</b> Private parties may be eligible for funding.
X	<b>Non-governmental organizations (NGO):</b> Organization that is not part of the government and is non-profit in nature.
	<b>Covered Entity:</b> As defined in <a href="#">Section 37-60-126 Colorado Revised Statutes</a> .

Type of Water Project (check all that apply)	
	Study
	Construction
	Identified Projects and Processes (IPP)
X	Other

Category of Water Project (check the primary category that applies and include relevant tasks)		
	Water Storage - 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. <i>Applicable Exhibit A Task(s):</i>	
	Conservation and Land Use Planning - Activities and projects that implement long-term strategies for conservation, land use, and drought planning. <i>Applicable Exhibit A Task(s):</i>	
X	Engagement & Innovation - Activities and projects that support water education, outreach, and innovation efforts. Please fill out the Supplemental Application on the website. <i>Applicable Exhibit A Task(s): Tasks 1 &amp; 2 entail education, outreach, and public engagement</i>	
	Agricultural - Projects that provide technical assistance and improve agricultural efficiency. <i>Applicable Exhibit A Task(s):</i>	
X	Environmental & Recreation - Projects that promote watershed health, environmental health, and recreation. <i>Applicable Exhibit A Task(s): Task 1&amp; 2 entail stakeholder process to facilitate watershed health</i>	
	Other	Explain:



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### Location of Water Project

Please provide the general county and coordinates of the proposed project below in **decimal degrees**. The Applicant shall also provide, in Exhibit C, a site map if applicable.

County/Countries	San Juan, La Plata
Latitude	37.8945000
Longitude	-107.6384000

### Water Project Overview

Please provide a summary of the proposed water project (200 words or less). Include a description of the project and what the CWP Grant funding will be used for specifically (e.g., studies, permitting process, construction). Provide a description of the water supply source to be utilized or the water body affected by the project, where applicable. Include details such as acres under irrigation, types of crops irrigated, number of residential and commercial taps, length of ditch improvements, length of pipe installed, and area of habitat improvements, where applicable. If this project addresses multiple purposes or spans multiple basins, please explain.

The Applicant shall also provide, in Exhibit A, a detailed Statement of Work, Budget, Other Funding Sources/Amounts and Schedule.

The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is a well-established watershed group that provides the critical exchange of information, resources, and building of collaborative partnerships across multiple stakeholder sectors. The ARCF's purpose is to: promote communication, coordination, and collaborative action; foster knowledge, education, and robust communication; support resiliency in our communities; and enhance planning, improve public safety and health; all while respecting the institutional authorities and decision making of governmental and community organizations.

For this project, the ARCF respectfully requests \$30,673.00 to achieve two primary objectives:

- 1) Continue ARCF as a forum and serve the Animas community to build watershed resilience, and
- 2) Implement *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan* goals, objectives and actions compiled with stakeholder support to guide recovery from 2018 wildfire and in the face of future wildfire events.

Fulfilling these primary objectives will strengthen coordination between stakeholders and decision-makers, provide educational resources, develop cooperative projects, and foster community and ecological resilience within the watershed to recover from discrete disturbance events and longer-term stressors.

### Measurable Results

To catalog measurable results achieved with the CWP Grant funds, please provide any of the following values as applicable:

	New Storage Created (acre-feet)
	New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive
	Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)
	Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)
	Efficiency Savings (indicate acre-feet/year OR dollars/year)



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	Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)
	Quantity of Water Shared through Alternative Transfer Mechanisms
	Number of Coloradans Impacted by Incorporating Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning
250	Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
2	Other: Deliverables including resources for response and recovery from wildfire
2	Other: Identification of restoration projects in areas impacted by wildfire
	Other Explain:

### Water Project Justification

Provide a description of how this water project supports the goals of [Colorado's Water Plan](#), the most recent [Statewide Water Supply Initiative](#), and the applicable Roundtable [Basin Implementation Plan](#) and [Education Action Plan](#). The Applicant is required to reference specific needs, goals, themes, or Identified Projects and Processes (IPPs), including citations (e.g. document, chapters, sections, or page numbers).

The proposed water project shall be evaluated based upon how well the proposal conforms to Colorado's Water Plan Framework for State of Colorado Support for a Water Project (CWP, Section 9.4, pp. 9-43 to 9-44;)

The ARCF project supports goals within Colorado's Water Plan, Southwest Roundtable Basin Implementation Plan, and Southwest Roundtable Basin Education Action Plan related to public outreach, engagement, and education, as well as promoting health and stewardship of water resources. Below we summarize goals achieved in each plan.

**Colorado's Water Plan Section 6.2** identifies five statewide long-term goals for meeting Colorado's Environmental and Recreational Needs (pg. 6-41-42).

1. *Promote restoration, recovery, and sustainability of endangered, threatened, and imperiled aquatic and riparian-dependent species and plant communities in the Hermosa and Animas.*
2. *Protect and enhance economic values to local and statewide economies that rely on environmental and recreational water uses, by increasing the Animas watershed communities' preparedness for future challenges from wildfire, incidents, and climate driven impacts.*
3. *Support the development of multi- purpose projects and methods that benefit environmental and recreational water needs, as well as water needs for communities or agriculture.* ARCF efforts are securing permanent weather radar for southwest Colorado, and through the process of assessing water user needs, will pave the way for a future stream management plan effort.
4. *Protect, maintain, and improve conditions of streams, lakes, wetlands, and riparian areas to promote self-sustaining fisheries and functional riparian and wetland habitat, and to promote long-term sustainability* through collective efforts to support the Animas and Hermosa fisheries, including the San Juan Cut Throat, removing invasive weeds and restoring native riparian vegetation, and advancing collective restoration projects to promote functional riparian and wetland habitat, and to promote long-term sustainability.
5. *Maintain watershed health by protecting or restoring watersheds that could affect critical infrastructure and/or environmental and recreational areas, such as the Animas, Hermosa, Tripp Creek, and unnamed tributaries that impact critical water supply and road infrastructure along Highway 550, Animas Gold Metal fishery, and Hermosa Recreation Area.*

Our ARCF project will meet these goals by facilitating dialogue between stakeholders to ultimately protect, maintain, and improve watershed health faced immediately through the 416 Fire Recovery and



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through longer term issues such as ecological restoration, invasive species management, and other chronic slow-moving threats to the future of the watershed.

**Colorado's Water Plan Section 9.5 (pg. 9-53)** identifies that: "Colorado's Water Plan provides technical and financial assistance for high-quality, balanced, and grassroots water education and outreach efforts that inform Coloradans about the issues so that they may engage in determining Colorado's water future." The ARCF facilitates a participatory approach for water education and outreach as well as provides opportunities for grassroots efforts to form and grow to enhance Animas River resilience through a science-based collaborative process.

This project meets the **Southwest Basin Implementation Plan's (BIP) Goal A4**: "Promote dialogue, foster cooperation and resolve conflict among water interests in every basin and between basins for the purpose of implementing solutions to Southwest Colorado's and Colorado's water supply challenges (SWSI 2010)" by supporting a collaborative approach to research, monitoring, and dialogue regarding the Animas River. Stakeholders that attend ARCF meetings and workshops engage on multiple topics regarding municipal water use, land management implication for water quality, agricultural practices and irrigation, and impacts of drought. These science-based conversations serve to foster an informed public.

The ARCF contributes to the **Southwest Basin Roundtable's Education Action Plan** priority to provide water education for constituents in the region (Southwest Basin's Public Education, Participation, and Outreach Implementation Plan).

### Related Studies

Please provide a list of any related studies, including if the water project is complementary to or assists in the implementation of other CWCB programs.

**Animas Watershed Plan (2010)** and the **Upper Animas Use Attainability Assessment (2000)** has provided significant detail to support the need for mine-related clean up and reclamation, in-stream restoration, nutrient loading, and sedimentation. While there is an incredible wealth of information provided in these plans, the implementation of them requires constant and emergent information sharing as new data becomes available in light of the increasing water quality concerns in Hermosa Creek, Cement Creek, Bonita Peak Mining District, and the area impacted by the Gold King incident. The ARCF has identified a need for more active stakeholder engagement in the lower Animas watershed in order to fully accomplish either of these plans.

**Perceptions about the Value of Facilitation & Collaboration, 2019.** Following The 416 Fire In 2019, as part of the post-fire 416 Workshops to develop the 416 Recovery and Action Plan, National Forest Foundation supported ARCF by conducting a concern gathering with the twelve most active stakeholders in ARCF to inform the action plan with a clearer picture of the spectrum of interests of these individuals for prioritization and/or planning of post-fire activities. The feedback emphasized the themes of: the importance of coordination during incidents or events such as the 416 fire; sensation of a sense of urgency to continue collaborating even after the "emergency mode" had passed to address potential debris flows and recovery actions; communication and information sharing was needed; and that love for special places, such as Hermosa Creek or Animas Valley, was a motivating factor for engaging the community in recovery, restoration, and preparedness. In particular, the community asked for additional prioritization of activities, help finding funding, restoring trail access, building resilience for future fires, and increasing communication resources.

**Colorado Water Plan, Critical Action Plan, 2016.** This project supports the Critical Action Item VI Prepare for an Uncertain Future (c)"Prepare for and Respond to [Natural] Disasters through promoting water resource resilience, strategic preparedness, and coordinated response and VII Advance





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Education and Outreach. In addition, ARCF also contributes to Goal II (b) Promote Protection and Restoration of Water Quality for the Animas watershed's current and future consumptive, recreational, and environmental water needs. Further, ARCF provides a forum for dialog for Critical action (b)2 policy initiatives, such as the Good Sam policies, and (b)3 integrates multiple efforts for stakeholder engagement across multiple communities over the full watershed. Further, for "Goal III. Promote Vibrant and Sustainable Cities" ARCF is able to connect short-term emergencies, such as spills and fires, to broader context of watershed health and threats to water quality by relating them to coexisting concerns closer to municipal infrastructure and downstream communities. Activities include III (a)1 comprehensive emergency alert systems and communication, encourage conservation, and III(b) support agricultural conservation and efficiency. Finally, "IV (b) Enhance Environmental and Recreational Economic Values" through planning to support recreation and water-based businesses to be more resilient in the face of potential future incident(s).

**Southwest Basin Round Table, Basin Implementation Plan, 2015.** Challenges related to historic mining and natural mineralization in the upper Animas River are listed as an on-going priority including improving water quality and aquatic habitats through collaborative processes (IPP 22-A, 23-A, 33-A). There is a significant need identified mine remediation and improving water quality and reducing sedimentation laden with heavy metals. The ARCF leverages the efforts of the Animas Watershed Partnership and the Animas River Stakeholders Group in addition to other Animas River Basin IPPs for watershed improvement projects by providing communication across these projects to maximize their effectiveness in reaching all water users and water rights.

**Southwest State-wide Water Supply Initiative 2010 Basin Report, by Southwest Basin Round Table.** This project supports multiple goals for the Animas River watershed and Animas River Stakeholder Group goals, including (1) reducing sediment and metal loading, and (2) improving surface water quality and instream flows impacted by historic mining activities.

**Southwest Water District Regional Five Basins Initiative, River Protection Working Groups.** The River Protection Workgroup or "RPW" is a community-driven project in Southwest Colorado that covered five river and stream segments, including the Animas. The Animas's Hermosa RPW was the most popular process, by far, and resulted in the ultimate protection of the Hermosa Watershed through a Special Management Area and Wilderness designation. The critical values of the Hermosa Valley have now been impacted by the 416 Fire, and as fire is a natural element on the landscape, the impacts of the fire are more social and economic than ecological. The implementation of the 416 Recovery and Action Plan will be to assist the community to understand and support the appropriate balance across the Hermosa forest recovery and regeneration through natural process, protecting life and property downstream from potential floods, coordinating trails restoration and recreation recovery, and preparing for future resilience over time through appropriate management.

### Previous CWCB Grants, Loans or Other Funding

List all previous or current CWCB grants (including WSRF) awarded to both the Applicant and Grantee. Include: 1) Applicant name; 2) Water activity name; 3) Approving RT(s); 4) CWCB board meeting date; 5) Contract number or purchase order; 6) Percentage of other CWCB funding for your overall project.

**CWCP IPCP 2016: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Water Activity Name:** Invasive Phreatophyte Control Program: Animas River Invasive Species Removal Program Phase I; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Roundtable; **4) SWBRT date:** November 13, 2015; **CWCB date:** April 2016; **5) Contract number:** CTGG1 PDAA 2016-1860; **6) Other CWCB funds:** 0%; **7) Completion date:** April 2018

**WSRF 2016: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Animas River Community Forum, Phase I; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** April



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2016; **5) Contract number:** POGG1 2016-794, POGG1 PDAA 2016000000000000794, **6) Other CWCB Funds:** 0%; **7) Completion Date:** September 2017

**WSRF 2017: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Animas River Community Forum in the Southwest Basin, Phase II; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** July 2017; **5) Contract number:** CTGG1 2018-201, POGG1 PDAA 201800000201, **6) Other CWCB Funds:** 0%; **7) Completion Date:** April 2018

**Colorado Water Plan 2018: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Animas River Removal and Replacement of Invasive Phreatophytes, Phase II; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** May 2018; **5) Contract number:** POGG1, PDAA, 201900002100, **6) Other CWCB funds:** 0% **7) Completion Date:** August 2023

**Colorado Water Plan- Innovation Fund 2018: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Silverton Science & Innovation Center (SSINC); **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** Nov 2018; **5) Contract number:** POGG1, PDAA, 201900002743, **6) Other CWCB funds:** 0% **7) Completion Date:** 2020

**WRP and WSRF 2018: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Watershed Grant Upper San Juan Stream Management Planning, Phase I; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** 4/27/18; **5) Contract number:** POGG1, PDAA, 201800000886; **6) Other CWCB funds:** 20.7% **7) Completion Date:** 1/31/20

**Colorado Watershed Restoration Program Grant 2019: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Animas River Removal and Replacement of Invasive Phreatophytes, Phase II; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** January 31, 2019; **5) Contract number:** Pending, **6) Other CWCB funds:** 0% **7) Completion Date:** Fall 2021

**WSRF 2019: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** *Forests to Faucets (F2F): My Water Comes from the San Juan Mountains Teacher Training Workshop Series*; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** 4/4/19; **5) Contract number:** POGG1, PDAA, 201900002804, **6) Other CWCB funds:** 0% **7) Completion Date:** 01/31/22

**WSRF 2019: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) on behalf of 416-Fire Aquatic Monitoring Research Group; **2) Project Name:** *416-Fire Aquatic Monitoring*; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** 4/4/19; **5) Contract number:** POGG1, PDAA, 201900002894; **6) Other CWCB funds:** 0% **7) Completion Date:** 5/1/22

**WSRF 2019: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership (WEP) Multiple Use Project; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** 10/10/19; **5) Contract number:** POGG1, PDAA 202000002332; **6) Other CWCB funds:** 25% **7) Completion Date:** 6/30/22

**WRP 2020: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI); **2) Project Name:** Upper San Juan Basin Integrated Water Management Plan, Phase II; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** March 2020; **5) Contract number:** Pending; **6) Other CWCB funds:** 20.7% **7) Completion Date:** April 2021





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**WSRF 2020: 1) Applicant:** Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) on behalf of 416-Fire Aquatic Monitoring Research Group; **2) Project Name:** 416-Fire Aquatic Monitoring; **3) Approving RT:** Southwest Basin Round Table; **4) CWCB Date:** March 2020; **5) Contract number:** Pending; **6) Other CWCB funds:** 0% **7) Completion Date:** April 2021

### Taxpayer Bill of Rights

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) may limit the amount of grant money an entity can receive. Please describe any relevant TABOR issues that may affect your application.

Not Applicable

### Submittal Checklist

X	I acknowledge the Grantee will be able to contract with CWCB using the <a href="#">Standard Contract</a> .
Exhibit A	
X	Statement of Work <sup>(1)</sup>
X	Budget & Schedule <sup>(1)</sup>
	Engineer's statement of probable cost (projects over \$100,000)
X	Letters of Matching and/or Pending 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Commitments <sup>(1)</sup>
Exhibit C	
X	Map (if applicable) <sup>(1)</sup>
X	Photos/Drawings/Reports: 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan
X	Letters of Support (Optional)
	Certificate of Insurance (General, Auto, & Workers' Comp.) <sup>(2)</sup>
	Certificate of Good Standing with Colorado Secretary of State <sup>(2)</sup>
	W-9 <sup>(2)</sup>
	Independent Contractor Form <sup>(2)</sup> (If applicant is individual, not company/organization)
Engagement & Innovation Grant Applicants ONLY	
X	Engagement & Innovation Supplemental Application <sup>(1)</sup>

(1) Required with application.

(2) Required for contracting. While optional at the time of this application, submission can expedite contracting upon CWCB Board approval.

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## ENGAGEMENT & INNOVATION GRANT FUND SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION

### Introduction & Purpose

Colorado’s Water Plan calls for an outreach, education, public engagement, and innovation grant fund in Chapter 9.5.

The overall goal of the Engagement & Innovation Grant Fund is to enhance Colorado’s water communication, outreach, education, and public engagement efforts; advance Colorado’s water supply planning process; and support a statewide water innovation ecosystem.

The grant fund aims to engage the public to promote well-informed community discourse regarding balanced water solutions statewide. The grant fund aims to support water innovation in Colorado. The grant fund prioritizes measuring and evaluating the success of programs, projects, and initiatives. The grant fund prioritizes efforts designed using research, data, and best practices. The grant fund prioritizes a commitment to collaboration and community engagement. The grant fund will support local and statewide efforts.

The grant fund is divided into two tracks: engagement and innovation. The Engagement Track supports education, outreach, communication, and public participation efforts related to water. The Innovation Track supports efforts that advance the water innovation ecosystem in Colorado.

### Application Questions

\*The grant fund request is referred to as “project” in this application.

#### Overview (answer for both tracks)

In a few sentences, what is the overall goal of this project? How does it achieve the stated purpose of this grant fund (above)?

While the Gold King Mine incident was the reason the ARCF formed, there continues to be demonstrated need for an over-arching forum that could be a “table” for all sectors to communicate and collaborate. In 2018, the 416 Fire demonstrated further the value of ARCF, providing yet another event for the group to serve the Animas watershed community. Our 2020-2021 goals are: (1) to continue the dialogue between all stakeholders to build resilience in the Animas Watershed, and (2) to implement the [416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan](#) to further advance watershed resilience. ARCF supports the Colorado Water Plan by serving as a diverse, stakeholder-driven, balanced, and science-based forum to advance watershed planning in the Animas watershed.

Who is/are the target audience(s)? How will you reach them? How will you involve the community?

The target audience includes both the *engaged*—the 150 partners and stakeholders of the Animas River Community Forum—and the general public. ARCF’s partners include La Plata and San Juan Counties, the municipalities of Silverton and Durango, the Southern Ute Indian tribe, multi-county agencies such as San Juan Basin Health, numerous state agencies such as the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, Department of Public Health and Environment, Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety, and the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, federal partners such as the U.S. Forest Service, the Animas La Plata Operation, Maintenance and Replacement Association, and many local organizations, non-profits and Animas River-related businesses, such as the Animas River Stakeholder



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Overview (answer for both tracks)	
<p>Group, the Animas Watershed Partnership, Five Rivers Trout Unlimited, San Juan Clean Water Coalition, 4 Corners Riversports, and Mild to Wild rafting company.</p> <p>ARCF maintains regular communications via an emailed newsletter. The ARCF meets two to four times annually, and subcommittees meet on a regular basis throughout the year. ARCF provides a network for our partners to share updates and information, thus driving additional traffic and awareness of synergistic watershed efforts that further reach the public. In 2020, ARCF's Education and Outreach Committee will develop a Communication Plan to guide additional outreach efforts. Additionally, ARCF will update its publication, <i>Our Animas</i>, to add new data from 2018-2019 416 Fire and Recovery monitoring, as well as an online story map to reach a broader audience. Additionally, the ARCF will promote the <i>Our Animas</i> publication, in print and online, to increase watershed health awareness in the general public and in regional schools. Learning from the Gold King Mine spill and the 416 Fire, ARCF has learned to utilize current events like these to help drive interest and engagement to catch broader community interest.</p>	
<p>Describe how the project is collaborative or engages a diverse group of stakeholders. Who are the partners in the project? Do you have other funding partners or sources?</p>	
<p>The ARCF is a collaboration of stakeholders representing the full suite of diverse water users in the basin, including local, regional, state, and federal partners (see <a href="http://www.animasrivercommunity.org">www.animasrivercommunity.org</a> or our member list as an attachment). Funding for the ARCF includes support from the State of Colorado, National Forest Foundation, City of Durango, Animas Water Company, and membership donations. Past support has included Southwest Water Conservation District, Southwest Basin Roundtable, Colorado Department of Reclamation, Mining and Safety, Trout Unlimited Five Rivers Chapter, Region 9 Economic Development, Animas Consolidated Ditch Company, Animas River Wetlands, Animas Water Company, Animas Watershed Partnership, Ballantine Family Foundation, Harris Family Fund, Michael Baker International, San Juan Citizens Alliance, Mountain Studies Institute, Great Old Broads for Wilderness San Juan Chapter, Querencia Environmental, Sunnyside Gold Corporation, and local member donations/sponsorships.</p>	
<p>Describe how you plan to measure and evaluate the success and impact of the project?</p>	
<p>To measure our impact over the last five years, ARCF has conducted a series of social surveys of the general public and key decision-makers from 2015-2019 to provide a baseline of public perception about the health of the Animas River and assess changes in community priorities such as recovery after the Gold King Mine incident and 416 Fire. Additional surveys provided input about the changing public outlook on Animas River water quality. From these surveys, we developed the eight core questions to address the Animas River resilience, which is the basis for the ongoing <i>Our Animas</i> publication. Changes in these metrics will be evaluated over time for the larger goal of achieving resilience. For our CWCB goals, ARCF will measure success in terms of participation by monitoring progress towards our 416 Action Plan, the number of partners at each meeting, public outreach events hosted, resources developed for landowners, collaborations between partners, and the distribution and utilization of outreach materials (i.e. <i>Our Animas</i> booklet).</p>	
<p>What research, evidence, and data support your project?</p>	
<p>Survey feedback from ARCF partners and the public demonstrate the continued value added by bringing stakeholders together to share updates, events, and resources within the watershed, during times of emergency response and recovery. ARCF meetings provide platforms for local experts, agencies, and scientists to share research including new data and results from monitoring water quality, aquatic life, forest health, restoration projects, water treatment upgrades, etc. For example, MSI has offered regular updates on the status of water quality and benthic macroinvertebrates in the Animas River to help water suppliers, agricultural irrigators, landowners, and government managers prepare for flooding, debris flows, and source alternatives when water resources are impacted.</p>	



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Overview (answer for both tracks)
Describe potential short- and long-term challenges with this project.
<p>As more time passes since the Gold King Mine incident and the 416 Fire, the overall challenges involve keeping the general public and ARCF stakeholders engaged with relevant topics beyond the public's short attention, which cycles quickly away from current events and crisis management. The general public tends to engage immediately during these types of events, but engagement wanes when exploring long-term recovery and resilience planning. The long-term challenges are more nuanced and required sustained efforts to make progress, such as addressing nutrients, invasive species, forest health, and nonpoint source pollution. ARCF seeks to balance discussion topics between fast-moving acute events, such as wildfires, with the full suite of water quantity and quality concerns to build a larger constituency that engages in water planning. Additionally, maintaining support for baseline information and collaboration—which is the backbone for protecting water quality over time—is critical to maintain and challenging to fund. Yet, it is these data sets, such as the Colorado River Watch historical information, that provide the important context during times of rapid change or dramatic incidents. ARCF plays a critical role in bringing multiple parties together to accomplish bigger goals, such as permanent weather radar for predicting storms and coordinated restoration efforts. Finally, the future is changing, and we must continue to learn and adapt as a community. We must maintain a prepared mind and adapt, as we cannot anticipate all future disasters that threaten our watershed, the specific situations, or exact challenges and impacts. The goals of the ARCF include enhancing our preparedness and resilience so that future challenges will not permanently alter our watershed in a negative way.</p>

Please fill out the applicable questions for either the Engagement Track or Innovation Track, unless your project contains elements in both tracks. If a question does not relate to your project, just leave it blank. Please answer each question that relates to your project. Please reference the relevant documents and use chapters and page numbers (Colorado's Water Plan, Basin Implementation Plan, PEPO Education Action Plan, etc.).

Engagement Track
Describe how the project achieves the education, outreach, and public engagement measurable objective set forth in Colorado's Water Plan to "significantly improve the level of public awareness and engagement regarding water issues statewide by 2020, as determined by water awareness surveys."
<p>ARCF partners have conducted several surveys that provide a baseline for understanding public perception about the health of the Animas River. In 2016, following the Gold Kind Mine spill, ARCF conducted a survey of 188 people about their concerns for the Animas River and priorities for monitoring, communications, and action. Over half of the respondents said they were highly concerned about all of Colorado's rivers. Top issues were pollution, especially from mining, municipal use, septic systems, and recreation sources. Less than 1% of responses mentioned climate change or development (key aspects of Climate Plan) as issues for the Animas River. The community voiced a need for data sharing, transparency, and building public trust. Themes that emerged from the responses to the river health and resilience question included: 1) the river system is at or near a critical threshold as a resilient system or its ability to withstand more abuse from mining and other human impact; and 2) action needs to be taken to ensure continued river health.</p> <p>In 2016-2017, MSI received grant funding from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 8 Water Quality Program to conduct a qualitative social science study to better understand residents' and visitors' perspectives and attitudes regarding perceived water quality and information needs for the Animas River watershed. The study design incorporated a mixed methods design, surveying over 400 visitors and residents, and conducting focus groups in multiple communities. The results showed a</p>



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wide range of perceptions of and knowledge about the Animas River watershed and water quality. Part- and full-time residents were more likely to have a pro-environmental worldview than were visitors. This appeared to affect how residents versus visitors viewed water quality and the impacts to water quality (residents were more positive and less unsure). Mining, high water flow, geology, and town runoff were perceived as primary factors influencing Animas River water quality. Common themes to emerge within focus groups included acid mine drainage and pollution. Perceptions of some impacts to the watershed varied by focus group community. Silverton groups were more concerned with contamination from mining, economy, and off-highway vehicles. Durango groups focused more on acid mine drainage, agriculture, human waste and sediment. Not surprisingly, the 2015 Gold King Mine spill, an environmental disaster that began near Silverton, CO, was viewed as a catalyst for increased interest in river issues. Interestingly, most respondents expressed a desire to be involved in watershed activities, which as attendance/activity rates are never as high as these preferences indicate, there is an opportunity to connect current events such as wildfires and spills as catalysts to involve more people in watershed health activities and education.

Through social science metrics gained through these surveys, MSI has assessed a baseline to measure progress towards “water awareness” through ARCF’s outreach and education efforts.

Describe how the project achieves the other measurable objectives and critical goals and actions laid out in Colorado’s Water Plan around the supply and demand gap; conservation; land use; agriculture; storage; watershed health, environment, and recreation; funding; and additional.

The ARCF supports the objectives, goals and actions of Colorado’s Water Plan by fostering collaborative processes between diverse stakeholders of water user groups to collectively identify local water issues and develop innovative solutions to address such issues and/or supply gaps. The information and resources provided through ARCF address community concerns for current and future water supplies for all designated uses in the watershed, including municipal, agricultural, environmental, and recreation.

The enhanced understanding and collaboration fostered in ARCF leads to community actions to protect, maintain and improve water resources within the Animas Watershed. Examples of such action include the formation of the Community Advisory Group (CAG) for the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund site in the upper watershed, the publication of watershed education materials via the *Our Animas* booklet, and the development of the *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan* (Plan).

The goals and objectives outlined in the 416 Action Plan provide a recent opportunity to support the Colorado Water Plan by considering variables such as land use, conservation, watershed health, and funding sources to support these goals. Categories within the Plan include: collaboration, education and outreach, mitigation and stewardship, research and monitoring, and emergency response. Each category identifies specific objectives, success measurements, leaders, funding options, as well as short- and long-term actions.

Describe how the project achieves the education, outreach, and public engagement goals set forth in the applicable Basin Implementation Plan(s).

The ARCF contributes to the Southwest Basin Roundtable’s Education Action Plan priority to provide water education for constituents in the region (Southwest Basin’s Public Education, Participation, and Outreach Implementation Plan).

This project meets the Southwest Basin Implementation Plan’s (BIP) Goal A4: “Promote dialogue, foster cooperation and resolve conflict among water interests in every basin and between basins for the purpose of implementing solutions to Southwest Colorado’s and Colorado’s water supply challenges (SWSI 2010)” by supporting a collaborative approach to dialogue regarding the Animas River. Stakeholders that attend ARCF meetings and workshops engage on multiple topics regarding municipal water use, land management implication for water quality, agricultural practices and irrigation, and impacts of drought. These conversations serve to foster an informed public.



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Describe how the project achieves the basin roundtable's PEPO Education Action Plans.

The 2016/2017/2018 Southwest Basin Roundtable Public Education, Outreach, and Participation Education Action Plan includes, as one of the educational priorities: "Provide educational material as necessary to support the Roundtable."

In 2019, the ARCF produced the *Our Animas* publication as an educational document to address community concerns, use locally collected data, promote the understanding of river health, and share actions that community members can take to support river resiliency. The ARCF intends to update this document every other year. PEPO funds were used for printing costs of hard copies of this document, as well as postcards to drive water users to the online version of the document.

### Colorado Water Conservation Board

### Water Plan Grant - Exhibit A

#### Statement Of Work

**Date:** 1/31/2020

**Name of Grantee:** Mountain Studies Institute, as fiscal agent for the Animas River Community Forum

**Name of Water Project:** Animas River Community Forum

**Funding Source:** Colorado Water Plan

#### Water Project Overview:

The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is a well-established watershed group that provides the critical exchange of information, resources, and building of collaborative partnerships across multiple stakeholder sectors. This project has two primary objectives: 1) to provide ARCF services to the community to build watershed resilience and 2) implement the *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan* goals, objectives and actions. Fulfilling these primary objectives and tasks will strengthen coordination between stakeholders and decision-makers, provide educational resources, develop cooperative projects, and foster community and ecological resilience within the watershed to recover from discrete disturbance events and longer-term stressors.

#### Project Objectives:

##### **Objectives for 2020-2021 include:**

1. **Coordinate ARCF as a forum and exchange for information** among watershed partners by hosting two to four annual ARCF meetings and disseminating partner information via emails and webpage postings.
2. **Implement the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan**, by working through a sub-committee structure, members of the forum will help implement the plan, which was developed in 2019 through a series of workshops. The tasks outlined in the plan were developed through a collaborative process, to aid in the recovery from the 416 Fire, while also working toward a more resilient future in the face of natural disasters.
  - a. **Education/Outreach-** Support coordinated communications, information, and education; Develop professional outreach materials and publications; Support coordinated education to youth and the general public.
  - b. **Monitoring/Research-** lead research workgroup to coordinate multi-stakeholder monitoring and evaluation of water quality and forest recovery.
  - c. **Stewardship/Mitigation-** advance stewardship projects to restore vegetation.
  - d. **Emergency Response Preparedness-** prepare for future fires and incidents by informing the La Plata County Resilience Plan; and develop "Wildfire Playbook" of





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strategies to lead preparations for future fire.

Tasks
<b>Task 1 – Capacity for Animas River Community Forum</b>
<p>Description of Task:</p> <p>ARCF will coordinate the forum of partners to: <b>Strengthen Coordination</b>- advance dialogue and information sharing to avoid redundancy and maximize resources; <b>Connect Resources to People</b>- support community progress towards post-fire recovery, connecting stakeholders and the community with the best/most useful information, technical assistance, funding, and help as is possible; and <b>Plan for the Future</b>- position the community for proactive preparation before, effective response during, and successful recovery after disturbances (e.g., wildfire).</p> <p>This task primarily fosters the relationship and coordinated actions among watershed stakeholders in order to strengthen and bolster trust internally and credibility externally of individual efforts. Ultimately, the regular exchange of information and face-to-face dialog will continue the development of true, collaborative relationships that yield outcomes greater than any one partner could achieve acting in isolation. ARCF is keenly aware of the breadth of expertise that already exists in our communities in the form of multiple government agencies, businesses, neighborhood organizations, higher education, and non-profit organizations. Hence, the Forum does not aspire to duplicate efforts. Rather, the Forum strives to network, support and bolster the existing efforts and bring credibility and greater impact to their efforts through a coordinated collaborative effort addressing watershed issues.</p>
<p>Method/Procedure:</p> <p>The ARCF will promote community awareness of river health and resiliency issues and build trust regarding monitoring data results by using data collected by multiple entities to validate data results and educate the community. This task is also aimed at maintaining and building upon the public's heightened awareness and interest in the Animas River's resilience that was galvanized by the GKM spill.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Work with ARCF Partners to support dialog, information sharing, and collaboration to address the protection of the Animas River watershed.</li><li>2. Host meetings and events to bolster trust internally to strengthen partnerships and collective action across the entire watershed.</li><li>3. Support regular exchange of information with stakeholders and the public through emails, social media, publications, newsletters, meetings, and events.</li><li>4. Analyze the data collected in 2015-2020 through the committee process, and develop an updated assessment of Animas Watershed's needs for improving watershed health as an initial assessment for updating the Animas Watershed Plan (2010).</li></ol>



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Tasks
Deliverable:
<b>Specific measurable deliverables will be:</b> (1) regular Forum meetings (2-4 meetings, 40-80 attendees); (2) offer communication updates by email and website (1-2 per month); (3) coordinate four working committees (Education-Outreach, Monitoring, Stewardship, Emergency Response); (3) serve as a resource for the communities of the Animas River to discuss issues, share lessons, and strengthen relationships necessary to improve the resiliency of the river; and (4) provide meeting minutes and bi-annual reports to partners, funders, and citizens to document the progress of the partners and ARCF collaborations.

Tasks
<b>Task 2 – Implementation of the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan</b>
Description of Task:
ARCF will implement the <i>416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan (Action Plan)</i> to promote recovery from the 416 fire and assist with preparing our community for improved resilience in the face of potential future fires. The Action Plan is complete with outlined objectives, immediate and long-term actions, and success measurements, as well as identified committees and action leaders. The Action Plan outlines several action categories, and specific tasks below include short- and long-term actions to implement. The major elements of the plan include: Education/Outreach, Monitoring/Research, Stewardship/Mitigation, and Emergency Response Preparedness. ARCF partners will update and distribute the <i>Our Animas</i> publication to promote community awareness of river health and resiliency issues, and to build community trust regarding monitoring data results by using data collected by multiple entities to validate data results. ARCF will also maintain communication and outreach between landowners impacted by the 416 Fire and the agencies working on the Emergency Watershed Protection Plan and the Watershed Restoration Plan. These agencies include: La Plata County, SGM Engineering, the NRCS, and the Army Corps of Engineers. ARCF will connect resources, partners, landowners impacted by the 416 Fire, and the agencies working on the Emergency Watershed Protection Plan and the Watershed Restoration Plan. Partners include: Animas River Keepers, Fort Lewis Water Resources Center, La Plata County, SGM Engineering, NRCS, Trout Unlimited, San Juan Mountains Association, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
Method/Procedure:
MSI will work with our network of partners via committees to complete the following tasks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Education/Outreach</b><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Create a communications plan to guide ARCF's engagement activities</li><li>b. Update, print, and distribute "Our Animas" publication with 2018-2020 data and a new post-fire chapter, and create a new online and interactive version as a Story Map</li><li>c. Support youth education via partnerships for classroom events with materials and learning tools</li><li>d. Develop funding for public education and outreach seminars</li></ol></li><li><b>2. Monitoring/Research</b><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Convene workshop for data collection groups (forest, hydrology, water quality, air quality, etc.)</li><li>b. Schedule a data swap and research review to share work and results</li><li>c. Assess data gaps to ensure cohesive effort capturing the "right" data</li><li>d. Identify gaps in data collection and seek solutions to meet information needs</li></ol></li><li><b>3. Stewardship/Mitigation</b></li></ol>



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Tasks
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Host a meeting between residents and agencies to coordinate actions, facilitated conversations make connections neighbors and agencies</li><li>Highlight at least one pilot stewardship project in the 416 recovery areas</li><li>Inform the public on ecological restoration principles to enable their input into the prioritization process within the County's CWCB Watershed Restoration grant</li></ol> <p><b>4. Emergency Response Preparedness</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Participate in the Resilience Planning Project with La Plata County and the CO Department of Local Affairs Resiliency Office</li><li>Create a "Wildfire PlayBook" with strategies to lead preparations and actions for future fires</li><li>Educate the community and provide them tools to utilize at home further enhancing their awareness of risk, ways to mitigate risk and a preparedness plan</li><li>Develop community plans with specific call trees for different emergency situations, helping to inform contact list for wildfire playbook</li></ol>
Deliverables:
<b>Specific measurable deliverables will be:</b> (1) Communications Plan; (2) Updated <i>Our Animas</i> publication and Online Story Map, (3) Monitoring and Research Workshop to produce outreach materials for available data sources, including Post-416 chapter in <i>Our Animas</i> publication; (4) Wildfire Playbook with critical contacts and resources for the public; (5) Two meetings between 416 Fire impacted residents with local agencies implementing recovery efforts; and (6) integration of 416 Action Plan into La Plata Resilience Plan lead by La Plata County and the CO Department of Local Affairs Resiliency Office.

Budget and Schedule
This Statement of Work shall be accompanied by a combined Budget and Schedule that reflects the Tasks identified in the Statement of Work and shall be submitted to CWCB in excel format.

Reporting Requirements
<p><b>Progress Reports:</b> The applicant shall provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of issuance of a purchase order, or the execution of a contract. The progress report shall describe the status of the tasks identified in the statement of work, including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues.</p>
<p><b>Final Report:</b> At completion of the project, the applicant shall provide the CWCB a Final Report on the applicant's letterhead that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Summarizes the project and how the project was completed.</li><li>Describes any obstacles encountered, and how these obstacles were overcome.</li><li>Confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled.</li><li>Includes photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.</li></ul> <p>The CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the budget when the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.</p>



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### Payment

Payment will be made based on actual expenditures and must include invoices for all work completed. The request for payment must include a description of the work accomplished by task, an estimate of the percent completion for individual tasks and the entire Project in relation to the percentage of budget spent, identification of any major issues, and proposed or implemented corrective actions.

Costs incurred prior to the effective date of this contract are not reimbursable. The last 10% of the entire grant will be paid out when the final deliverable has been received. All products, data and information developed as a result of this contract must be provided to CWCB in hard copy and electronic format as part of the project documentation.

### Performance Measures

Performance measures for this contract shall include the following:

(a) Performance standards and evaluation: Grantee will produce detailed deliverables for each task as specified. Grantee shall maintain receipts for all project expenses and documentation of the minimum in-kind contributions (if applicable) per the budget in Exhibit B. Per Water Plan Grant Guidelines, the CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the budget when the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

(b) Accountability: Per Water Plan Grant Guidelines full documentation of project progress must be submitted with each invoice for reimbursement. Grantee must confirm that all grant conditions have been complied with on each invoice. In addition, per Water Plan Grant Guidelines, Progress Reports must be submitted at least once every 6 months. A Final Report must be submitted and approved before final project payment.

(c) Monitoring Requirements: Grantee is responsible for ongoing monitoring of project progress per Exhibit A. Progress shall be detailed in each invoice and in each Progress Report, as detailed above. Additional inspections or field consultations will be arranged as may be necessary.

(d) Noncompliance Resolution: Payment will be withheld if grantee is not current on all grant conditions. Flagrant disregard for grant conditions will result in a stop work order and cancellation of the Grant Agreement.



**COLORADO**

**Colorado Water  
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

**Colorado Water Conservation Board**

**Water Plan Grant - Exhibit B  
Budget and Schedule**

**Prepared Date: 1/30/2020**

**Name of Applicant: Mountain Studies Institute**

**Name of Water Project: Animas River Community Forum**

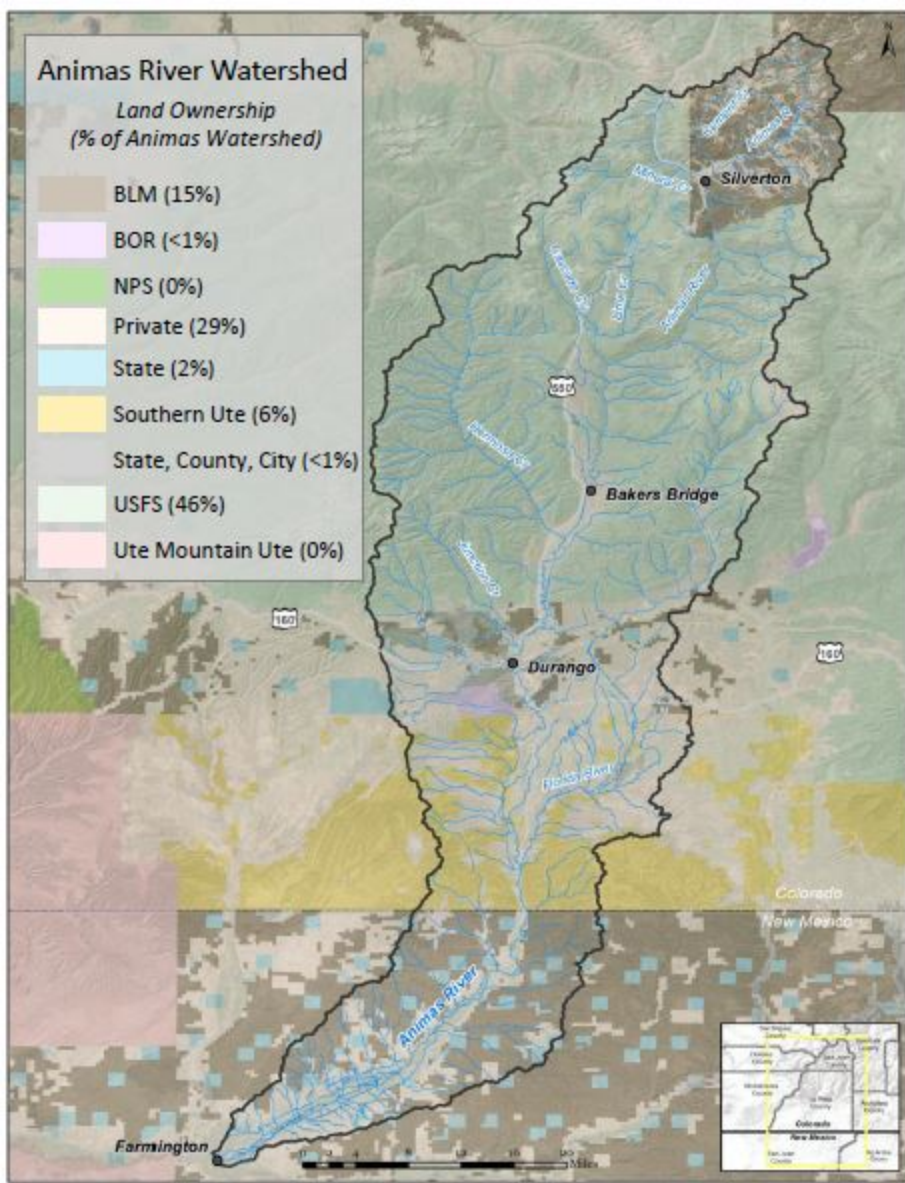
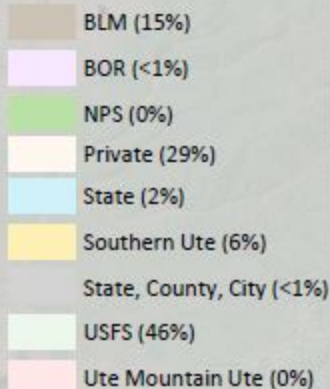
**Project Start Date:**

**Project End Date: 10/31/2021**

<b>Task No.</b>	<b>Task Description</b>	<b>Task Start Date</b>	<b>Task End Date</b>	<b>Grant Funding Request</b>	<b>Match Funding</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Capacity for Animas River Community Forum	Upon Award	10/31/2021	\$14,393.00	\$15,052.00	\$29,445.00
2	Implementation of the <i>416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan</i>	Upon Award	10/31/2021	\$13,193.50	\$18,138.50	\$31,332.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$27,586.50</b>	<b>\$33,190.50</b>	<b>\$60,777.00</b>

# Animas River Watershed

Land Ownership  
(% of Animas Watershed)





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ANIMAS RIVER COMMUNITY FORUM

**416 FIRE  
RECOVERY  
AND  
RESPONSE  
ACTION  
PLAN**

*[www.animasrivercommunity.org](http://www.animasrivercommunity.org) / [animasriverforum@gmail.com](mailto:animasriverforum@gmail.com)*

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# BACKGROUND/PROCESS

In June 2018, the 416 Fire swept through the Hermosa Creek watershed and San Juan National Forest. Burning over 54,000 acres, the 416 Fire was one of the largest in Colorado's recent history and has led to flood events and further damage to fish and wildlife habitat, recreation areas, and water resources. While most of the wildfire occurred on the San Juan National Forest, post-fire impacts were/are being experienced on both public and private lands, with risks and significant damage to infrastructure and property from flooding and debris flows.

The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF), a longstanding community stakeholder group, has taken on a role of collaborating and coordinating post-fire response activities among stakeholders throughout the watershed. In the summer of 2019, the group undertook a process, convened by Mountain Studies Institute and supported by National Forest Foundation and Johnson Family Foundation, to prioritize post-fire restoration, recovery and community engagement activities as well as examine the vision of ARCF beyond post fire recovery. National Forest Foundation surveyed a subset of ARCF stakeholders to understand needs, challenges and opportunities for post-fire community engagement/recovery actions and ongoing efforts of ARCF. The assessment was followed up by two facilitated ARCF workshops. The information gained from these three activities, in addition to ongoing stakeholder engagement, resulted in the following action plan.

## VISION

A resilient Animas River watershed and community, led by the commitment of a diverse group of local leaders and stakeholders that are positioning residents, businesses and management agencies to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disturbance and disasters, and provide long-term ecological stewardship.

### Purpose

- promote communication, coordination and collaborative action;
- foster knowledge, education, and robust communication;
- support resiliency in our communities; and
- enhance planning to improve public safety and health; all while respecting the institutional authorities and decisions of governmental and community organizations.

# GOALS

**Strengthen Coordination-** Advance dialogue and information sharing to avoid redundancy and maximize resources.

**Connect Resources to People-** Advance community progress on post-fire recovery, connecting stakeholders and the community with the best/most useful information, technical assistance, funding, and help as is possible.

**Plan for the Future-** Position the community for proactive preparation before, effective response during, and successful recovery after disturbances (e.g., wildfire).

## ACTION PLAN CONTEXT

This action plan represents a snapshot in time, informed by partners and stakeholders based on what was deemed appropriate at the time of discussion. Though this action plan represents a focus on post-fire community actions, the intention of stakeholders is to maintain focus on the overall vision, purpose and goals of ARCF as these actions are pursued. As future iterations of the plan are developed stakeholders will strive to incorporate participation and actions that support broad definitions of resiliency for the watershed.

The goal is for this plan to be continuously developed and adapted based on community needs and feedback. Suggestions to improve and expand this plan are welcomed. Please email [animasriverforum@gmail.com](mailto:animasriverforum@gmail.com).



# ACTION PLAN

## COLLABORATION

**Objectives/Goals:** ARCF is a strong framework for ongoing collaboration and coordination to share, maximize and leverage resources among stakeholders.

**Success Measurement:** ARCF is utilizing this action plan to guide near-and long-term actions for post-fire recovery and opportunities to build resilience within the watershed.

**Who's Responsible:**

Mountain Studies Institute

San Juan Citizens Alliance

Trout Unlimited

Fort Lewis College

San Juan Mountains Association

**Potential Funding Sources:** Colorado Water Conservation Board, SW Basin Roundtable, Southwestern Water Conservation District, Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund

### 12 Month Actions/Timelines

**By Spring 2020:** Develop a concept/work plan with funding to support coordination.

### Long Term Actions

**Timeline TBD:**

- Seek models/occurrences where public land management agency resources have been expanded/leveraged to support work on private lands (e.g. Headwaters Economic Group).
- Explore Colorado Department of Agriculture's soil health priority.
- Evaluate policy opportunities to expand resources to communities after fire.



# ACTION PLAN

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

**Objectives/Goals:** Raise awareness, enhance understanding of differences between forest and river health, and how they are interconnected

**Success Measurement:** Public acceptance of management mitigation decisions (i.e. prescribed fire), increased number of landowners participating in fuel mitigation/defensible space programs, ample volunteer group available for variety of projects, continued collaboration on Our Animas editions, etc.

**Who's Responsible:**

Marcel Gaztambide, Animas Riverkeeper (Chair)

Megan Graham, La Plata County

Mandy Eskelson, Mountain Studies Institute

Amanda Kuenzi, Mountain Studies Institute

Gigi Richard, Water Resources Center at Ft. Lewis College

**Potential Funding Sources:** Southwest Water Conservation District, Colorado Water Conservation Board, Department of Local Affairs, PEPPPO funds?

### 12 Month Actions/Timelines

**By Nov. 2019:** Form a communications sub-committee to outline communication plan/actions.

**By Jun. 2020:** Create a communications plan to:

- Assess/prioritize audience, goals, strategies and actions.
- Share education materials and messages to enable speaking as a larger voice on important issues.
- Map the stakeholder network to share information across efforts, organizations, and agencies.
- Disseminate information from experts, and customize to local communities if possible, and ensure accuracy through partners.
- Prioritize events; create calendar.
- Identify partnerships and/or overlaps with other resilience-focused collaboratives and efforts for increasing efficiency/effectiveness of messaging, such as ARCF partners, the Columbine Collaborative, and Animas Watershed Partnership.

**By December 2020:** Add post-fire chapter in Our Animas document (potential for story map; print more quantities; consider a condensed version and/or selling copies.

# ACTION PLAN

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

### Long Term Actions

#### Timeline TBD:

- Create opportunities for classroom events with materials/learning tools, create resource of wildfire/disturbance contacts/playbook, utilize school networks, classrooms and events, include ditch contributions to wetland conditions, forest assessments/predictions shared with public in understandable language (visuals to imagine future conditions)
- Report out on assessments, monitoring and planning (i.e. BAER treatments (?), EWP, DOLA Restoration, forest and aquatic monitoring from multiple entities)
- Host meetings/events throughout entire watershed. Not just in Durango, visit NM or bring in lower watershed topics.
- Engage the recreation community to understand needs around communicating (before, during, after fire) and determine how ARCF can support.

#### Ongoing (from Post-416 Updated Project List):

- Fire Adapted Colorado Post-Fire Learning Exchange
- Animas River Community Forum Meetings



# ACTION PLAN

## MONITORING & RESEARCH

**Objectives/Goals:** Capture usable, relevant data for a purpose.

**Success Measurement:** Access to a coordinated inventory of research (who's doing what, where), data turned into information for public, more technical version of Our Animas, published papers in scientific journals through research partnerships. Sharing mechanisms exist and are available to stakeholders and utilized in decision making.

**Who's Responsible:**

Anthony Culpepper, Mountain Studies Institute  
Gigi Richard, Water Resources Center at Ft. Lewis College  
Marcel Gaztambide, Animas Riverkeeper  
Eric Hassel, Purgatory Metro District  
Eric Herchmer, San Juan National Forest

**Potential Funding Sources:** Need to find long-term, sustainable sources. Current mechanisms available/potential to leverage: Collaborative Landscape Forest Restoration Program, crowdsourcing to pay for sampling (i.e. riverkeepers event), Southwestern Water Conservation District.

### 12 Month Actions/Timelines

**By Mar/April 2020:** Convene workshop for data collection groups (forest, hydrology, water quality, air quality, etc.). Future use by utilities, mines, academic institutions, CO Dept. of Public Health and Environment, BPMD Citizen Advisory Group, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Environmental Protection Agency, tribes.

- Mountain Studies Inst./Ft. Lewis College as potential hosts
- Opportunity to share research and results
- Assess if entities are capturing the needed data
- Identify gaps in data collection
- Produce publication/ conference

### Long Term Actions

**Timeline TBD:**

- Develop more cohesive monitoring plan/ framework for ARCF
- Foster citizen science with monitoring: develops community buy-in, engages students and teachers, promotes education/outreach. Use RiverWatch expertise and volunteer network.
- Develop tools: Arc Online map of locations researchers are working (access, online): know who to contact for needs, request tabular data, online/living document of developments when monitoring results/efforts updated. Possibly held on MSI or FLC platforms.

# ACTION PLAN

## STEWARDSHIP & MITIGATION

### Long Term Actions

#### Timeline TBD:

- Replicate/model activities/plans from one geographic “complex” area to the others, using lessons learned/mapping applied across the landscape.
  - Falls Creek HOA is prime example.
  - Use a systematic approach of assess, act, plan
  - Be realistic, each “complex” is unique; it can be extremely challenging to coordinate with landowners upstream/downstream/watershed-wide to conduct projects.
- Incentivize sustainable development for current and future uses (i.e. build around wetlands, avoid more downslope drainages, regulation).
- Support the development/implementation of the Columbine Forest Resilience Partnership.
- Explore the opportunity to use the La Plata County neighborhood networks to coordinate actions, resources, and updates.
- Anticipate wide-spread weed issues and support weed management activities (e.g., bolster the La Plata County weed department).
- Track: Colorado State University WAVE Program.
- Track: Potential for a private-lands version of the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Report.

# ACTION PLAN

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Objectives/Goals:** Educate the public on natural/man-made hazards/disasters; the need for mitigation efforts among residents; self-preparedness in the home in the event of (fire, flood, evacuation, severe storm); emergency response process. Maintain internal and external communication between agencies and stakeholders before, during and after incidents. Promote a more resilient and educated community.

**Success Measurement:** Citizens are aware of their risk for various disasters and knowledgeable of how they can mitigate their risk and further be prepared before disaster strikes. Response to disasters is smoother and damages are limited.

**Who's Responsible:**

Danielle Coronado, La Plata County Office of Emergency Management  
Butch Knowlton, La Plata County Office of Emergency Management

**Potential Funding Sources:** No current funding options, however the County has applied for the Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire (CPAW) grant.

### 12 Month Actions/Timelines

**During 2020:**

- Successfully interface the IPAWS notification program with the existing CodeRed system for enhanced warning & alerting capabilities. \*CodeRed is a geographical based notification system, only sending emergency notification if one is registers with CodeRed program. Interfacing with IPAWS will allow to notify more citizens regardless of whether or not they are registered. An extension of this action plan is to also enhance the numbers of citizens registered for CodeRed.
- US Army Corps of Engineers to meet with La Plata County Office of Emergency Management to discuss tools available, funding options, etc.

**Ongoing (from Post-416 Updated Project List):**

- Permanent radar to be installed, with construction anticipated to begin in 2020.
- Discussions to install rain gauges in La Plata County to help anticipate flooding and debris flows various drainage systems/creeks (TBD).

# ACTION PLAN

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

### Long Term Actions

#### Timeline TBD:

- Develop call networks of contacts/partnerships to engage during different stages of emergency response, depending on incident at hand. Potentially completed through the MACG meetings held by LPC-OEM
- Quarterly to bi-annual multi-agency coordination group meetings with various agencies and stakeholders.
- Evaluate resources needed to accommodate vulnerable populations (elderly, disabled, etc.) and their locations (i.e. completed via a demographics survey).
- Develop funding for public education and outreach seminars. Educate the community and provide them tools to utilize at home further enhancing their awareness of risk, ways to mitigate risk and a preparedness plan.
- Track Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire (CPAW) grant program (approval notice 11/27/2019):
  - Free educational program of multiple professionals/experts offering agencies training, workshops, versatile tools, hazard assessments and much more.
  - Potential to assist La Plata County in determining best implement practices for mitigation requirement in regards to wildland fire.
- An example of measuring success is: wildland fire, a populated subdivision is evacuated due to fire, the subdivision is able to be protected as a result of the home-owners successful mitigation of their risk and the maintained defensible space provided a buffer for FD's to safely fight the blaze.



# ACTION PLAN

## ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

At the first workshop, ARCF stakeholder expressed an interest in developing economic funding to support local business through prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response (i.e. coaching, education, resources). Supporting the business community in these areas leads to a stronger community (i.e., health, infrastructure/resources, etc.). This type of action could be accomplished through the La Plata County/Department of Local Affairs resiliency framework development, which is focused on fiscal sustainability, economic development, climate and equity. There is ongoing question as to whether the ARCF is the appropriate venue to tackle economic resilience at this time.

## RECREATION

Recreation was not prioritized for discussion at either ARCF workshop. The group discussed the urgency/needs of these types of user groups. There was a need to engage with recreation groups immediately post-fire to support the US Forest Service in reopening trails in the Hermosa area; however, the urgency/need has dissipated. It was determined that recreation (trails, angling, boating, etc.) is a priority audience within the Education and Outreach efforts. ARCF stakeholders will continue to identify opportunities to advance conversations and determine needs with recreation interests.





# GET INVOLVED

This action plan will continue to evolve and build based on participation from the Animas River Community Forum stakeholders and partners. The plan will be hosted on the [www.animasrivercommunity.org](http://www.animasrivercommunity.org) website, and welcomes feedback and invites interested participants to join committees. Contact [animasriverforum@gmail.com](mailto:animasriverforum@gmail.com) to get involved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to all the stakeholders and partners that took time to thoughtfully participate in the focused workshops to develop this plan. Funding support for this plan was provided by Johnson Family Foundation and National Forest Foundation. The plan process was facilitated and plan prepared by Strategic By Nature, Inc. Thank you to Mountain Studies Institute for leading/coordinating this action planning effort.

### Sponsored by:

**Animas Consolidated Ditch Company, Animas River Wetlands; Animas Water Company; Animas Watershed Partnership; Ballantine Family Foundation; City of Durango; Colorado Dept. of Reclamation, Mining and Safety; Colorado Water Conservation Board; Harris Family Fund; Hermosa Company Ditch; Great Old Broads for Wilderness South San Juan Chapter; Michael Baker International; National Environmental Education Center; National Forest Foundation; Querencia Environmental; Region 9 Economic Development District of SW Colorado; San Juan Basin Public Health; San Juan Citizens Alliance; Southwest Water Conservation District; Sunnyside Gold Corporation; Trout Unlimited 5 Rivers Chapter.**



## ATTACHMENT A: LETTERS OF MATCHING AND/OR PENDING 3<sup>rd</sup> PARTY COMMITMENTS

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January 31, 2020

Chris Sturm and Ben Wade  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Animas River Community Forum, Letters of Commitment

Dear Chris Sturm and Ben Wade,

The purpose of this letter is to confirm matching contributions and commitments on behalf of Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) and our partners. First, MSI has committed to be the fiscal agent of the Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) since 2016. In 2018, MSI further agreed to serve as the ARCF coordinator and communications liaison to serve as the backbone organization to organize the contributions of our core partners. This agreement is renewed annually by the Steering Committee as the ARCF continues to serve the community.

Second, in our role as fiscal agent and a committed partner, MSI has raised the following cash matching funds to accomplish the ARCF 2020 goals and objectives to serve.

- **416 Celebration Funding, \$7586.50 committed-** On November 20, MSI hosted a fundraiser on behalf of 416 Recovery and Action Plan which raised \$7586.50 to support recovery activities.
- **National Forest Foundation Award, May 1, 2019- October 31, 2020, \$4000 committed-** MSI was granted \$29,987 to “Enhancing Community Resilience in Response to the 416 Fire” and supported the development of the 416 Recovery and Action Plan, facilitated workshops and events, and lead ARCF activities and communications. In 2020, MSI has reserved \$4000 of our remaining balance as a match to CWCB proposal.
- **City of Durango 2020 services agreement, includes \$5000 for Our Animas Publication-** MSI is partnering with the City of Durango to provide updated and transparent science information on the state of the Animas River through the update and publication of the [Our Animas](#) publication.

The time period in which expenditures for our matching activity will occur is between January 2020 and October 2021. The above contribution will be supported by non-state funds, not used as match for any other state-funded project, and will be documented in the general accounting records of our organization.

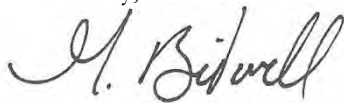
In addition to our letter of commitment, MSI will seek support from ARCF membership, Southwest Basin Round Table, Southwest Water Conservation District and additional matching funds from our partners.

Specifically, these sources are listed as:

- **Southwest Basin Round Table Water Reserve Supply Fund, \$8000, Letter of Support included-** At the January 15, 2020 meeting, ARCF partners presented a concept proposal to the SWBRT with our intent to request funding from WRSF this spring.
- **ARCF annual membership support, \$3000-** Each spring, ARCF membership drive produces \$2000-5000 in support for ARCF activities and publications. The Animas Water Company has initiated this process with a gift of \$500. Past supporters have included Animas Valley Wetlands, Animas Consolidated Ditch, Southwest Water Conservation District public outreach funds, Trout Unlimited Five River Chapter, and additional business and individual contributions.
- **In-Kind support, \$5604-** MSI anticipates 200 volunteer hours from partners assisting with producing materials, outcomes, meetings and events. Value is based on the current hourly volunteer rate for the State of Colorado, which is \$28.02.

Thank you for your consideration of support for the Animas River Community Forum. We appreciate the opportunity to advance the application of science and assessment to meeting the Colorado Water Plan and the future water supply needs of the Animas River stakeholders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Bidwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "M" being large and prominent.

Marcie Bidwell  
Executive Director



**GRANT AGREEMENT**  
2019 Strategic Projects

**Award Recipient:** Mountain Studies Institute (DUNS: 118536460)  
**Project Name:** Enhancing Community Resilience in Response to the 416 Fire  
**Project ID:** RL-202  
**Award Amount:** \$29,987.00  
**Award Period:** May 1, 2019 through May 1, 2020

**Payment Type:** Full Advance

**Reimbursement Type:** Not Applicable

**Reimbursement Documentation:** Not Applicable

By signing below, the Award Recipient certifies that they are eligible to receive this award. Further, the Award Recipient agrees to apply the award funds specifically toward the above project for the approved scope of work, agrees to the terms of this grant agreement in their entirety, and agrees to implement it as expeditiously as practicable.

**Upon receipt of this fully executed agreement the National Forest Foundation will release the entirety of award funds.**

M. Bidwell 5/13/2019  
Award Recipient Signature Date

Marie Bidwell  
Printed Name

Executive Director  
Title

Adam Liljeblad 05/10/19  
Adam Liljeblad Date  
Director, Conservation Awards  
National Forest Foundation

Grant Payment Information		
To be completed by Award Recipient if not on file. Fiscally sponsored organizations must provide fiscal sponsor's information.		
Name on Account	on file	
Bank Name	no changes	
ABA/Routing Number		
Account Number		
Account Type (Check One)	Checking	Savings
Check box if account is a new account for NFF records: <input type="checkbox"/>		

Please return this signature page to [grants@nationalforests.org](mailto:grants@nationalforests.org) with "Signed Agreement" in the subject line, or mail it to National Forest Foundation, Building 27, Suite 3, Fort Missoula Road Missoula, MT, 59804. If mailed, keep a copy for your records.



4166 County Road 203  
Durango, Colorado 81301  
[www.animasriverwetlands.com](http://www.animasriverwetlands.com)

January 24, 2020

Colorado Water Conservation Board  
ATTN: Chris Sturm  
ATTN: Ben Wade  
1313 Sherman St. Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Animas River Community Forum Water Plan Grant Application

Dear Colorado Water Conservation Board,

I am writing in support of Mountain Studies Institute's application for funding to support the Animas River Community Forum. The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is an asset to Animas River Wetlands, LLC efforts in the wake of the 416 Fire. The ARCF has served as a platform for impacted landowners to interact with County staff, as well as the project management staff for the Emergency Watershed Plan. Since the 416 Fire, the Forum has brought stakeholders together to create a draft *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan*.

The ARCF facilitates dialogue between stakeholders to ultimately protect, maintain, and improve watershed health. Stakeholders that attend ARCF meetings and workshops engage on multiple topics regarding municipal water use, land management implication for water quality, agricultural practices and irrigation, and impacts of drought. These conversations serve to foster an informed public.

Animas River Wetlands, LLC supports funding the tasks outlined by the Animas River Community Forum, including capacity for continuing the functions of the Forum, including outreach, communication, data updates for the *Our Animas* publication, as well as implementation of the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Patti Zink". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Patti Zink  
Managing Member  
Animas River Wetlands, LLC



1309 East Third Avenue  
PO Box 2461  
Durango, CO 81302  
970.259.3583  
sanjuancitizens.org

**January 27th, 2020**

**Colorado Water Conservation Board  
ATTN: Chris Sturm  
ATTN: Ben Wade  
1313 Sherman St. Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203**

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**Subject: Animas River Community Forum Water Plan Grant Application**

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Dear Colorado Water Conservation Board,

I hope that this letter finds you well. I'm writing on behalf of San Juan Citizens Alliance (SJCA) in support of Mountain Studies Institute's (MSI) application for funding to sustain the Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) – an important asset for our communities in Southwest Colorado.

Founded in 1986, SJCA is a 501(c)(3) organization that advocates for clean air, pure water, and healthy lands – the foundations of resilient communities, ecosystems and economies in the San Juan Basin. Representing more than 1,000 dues-paying members, and thousands more supporters, SJCA works to protect healthy river and forest systems in Southwest Colorado. Working towards those goals, the ARCF has been important to SJCA's efforts in our region, especially in the wake of the 416 Fire.

SJCA frequently partners with federal agencies, local governments and other non-profits to ensure the long-term health of our region's natural and human communities. As an open group, the ARCF has served as an excellent platform for creating and sustaining partnerships and collaborations across agencies, governments, and organizations in Southwest Colorado. Specifically after the 416 Fire, the ARCF allowed for community members impacted by the 416 to interact directly with County staff and project management staff for the Emergency Watershed Plan. The ARCF has also been particularly helpful in connecting impacted landowners (including SJCA members) with critical resources needed for fire recovery and has brought stakeholders together to create a draft *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan* – an important roadmap for the years ahead.

In the interest of improving and protecting the health of our forest and river systems, SJCA supports funding the tasks outlined by the Animas River Community Forum,

including capacity for continued functions of the Forum, outreach, communication, data updates for the *Our Animas* publication, and implementation of the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan. We hope that you will take the benefits to our community highlighted above into consideration when reviewing MSI's application and ultimately approve funding for this important community resource.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MG', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

---

**Marcel Gaztambide**

Animas Riverkeeper

**San Juan Citizens Alliance**

1309 East Third Avenue

PO Box 2461

Durango, CO 81302

office: 970.259.3583 Ext. 6

[marcel@sanjuancitizens.org](mailto:marcel@sanjuancitizens.org)

[sanjuancitizens.org](http://sanjuancitizens.org)



**SOUTHWEST BASINS ROUNDTABLE**

**Michael Preston, Chair**  
**c/o Dolores Water Conservancy District**  
**P.O. Box 1150**  
**Cortez, Colorado 81321**  
**970-565-7562**

January 27, 2020

Chris Sturm and Ben Wade  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1580 Logan Street, Suite 600  
Denver, Colorado 80203

SUBJECT: SWBRT Letter of Support, Mountain Studies Institute, Animas River Community Forum

Dear Chris and Ben,

I am writing in support of Mountain Studies Institute's application for funding to support the Animas River Community Forum. The proposed project was discussed at the January 15, 2020 Roundtable and I was authorized to provide this letter of Roundtable support. A quorum of Roundtable members was present.

The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is a community group that formed in the Animas River Watershed in response to the Gold King Mine (GKM) spill incident of August 5, 2015. Since its inception, the Forum's purpose has been to promote communication, coordination and collaborative action; foster knowledge, education, and robust communication; support resiliency in our communities; and enhance planning to improve public safety and health, all while respecting the institutional authorities and decisions of governmental and community organizations. Since the 416 Fire, the Forum has brought stakeholders together to create a draft *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan*.

The work of the ARCF supports goals within Colorado's Water Plan in Sections 6.2 and 9.5, related to public outreach, engagement, and education, as well as promoting health and stewardship of water resources.

This project meets the Southwest Basin Implementation Plan's (BIP) Goal A4: "Promote dialogue, foster cooperation and resolve conflict among water interests in every basin and between basins for the purpose of implementing solutions to Southwest Colorado's and Colorado's water supply challenges (SWSI 2010)" by supporting a collaborative approach to dialogue regarding the Animas River. Stakeholders that attend ARCF meetings and workshops engage on multiple topics regarding municipal water use, land management implication for water quality, agricultural practices and irrigation, and impacts of drought. These conversations serve to foster an informed public.

The ARCF also contributes to the Southwest Basin Roundtable's Education Action Plan priority to provide water education for constituents in the region (Southwest Basin's Public Education, Participation, and Outreach Implementation Plan).

Please feel free to contact me at 970-739-4181, or [mpreston@frontier.net](mailto:mpreston@frontier.net), if you have questions or wish to discuss this application in more detail.

Sincerely,



Michael Preston, Chair  
Southwest Basin Roundtable



**Four Corners Water Center**  
Fort Lewis College  
1000 Rim Road  
Durango, CO 81301

Dr. Gigi Richard  
ph +1.970.247.6561  
email: garichard@fortlewis.edu

January 28, 2020  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
ATTN: Chris Sturm  
ATTN: Ben Wade  
1313 Sherman St. Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Animas River Community Forum Water Plan Grant Application

Dear Colorado Water Conservation Board,

I am writing in support of Mountain Studies Institute's application for funding to support the Animas River Community Forum. The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is an asset the Animas River watershed, the Durango community and LaPlata county as an educational and community forum. The ARCF has served the community after both the Gold King Mine spill and the 416 Fire by helping to educated impacted citizens and to connect them to needed resources and information. Their regular meetings are well-attended by the community and have also served as a resource to Fort Lewis College students interested in water-related issues in the region.

The ARCF facilitates dialogue between stakeholders to ultimately protect, maintain, and improve watershed health. Stakeholders that attend ARCF meetings and workshops engage on multiple topics regarding municipal water use, land management implication for water quality, agricultural practices and irrigation, and impacts of drought. These conversations serve to foster an informed public.

The Four Corners Water Center at Fort Lewis College supports funding the tasks outlined by the Animas River Community Forum, including capacity for continuing the functions of the Forum, including outreach, communication, data updates for the Our Animas publication, as well as implementation of the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan.

Sincerely,

Gigi Richard, Ph.D.  
Director  
Four Corners Water Center





**COLORADO**

**Parks and Wildlife**

Department of Natural Resources

151 East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Durango, CO 80301  
P 970.382.6667 | F 970.247-4785

January 24, 2020

Colorado Water Conservation Board  
**ATTN: Chris Sturm and ATTN: Ben Wade**  
1313 Sherman St. Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Animas River Community Forum Water Plan Grant Application

Dear Colorado Water Conservation Board,

I am writing on behalf of Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) in support of Mountain Studies Institute's application for funding to support the Animas River Community Forum. The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is an asset to CPW in many ways. The Forum was a critical element of the response, healing and recovery for wildlife, recreation opportunities, business and the overall community from the Gold King Mine Spill. The Forum's commitment to stay relevant and continue to be a key player in keeping the Animas Watershed as a whole, healthy and resilient continued in the wake of the 416 Fire. One example of many is the Forum brought stakeholders together to create a draft *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan*.

The ARCF facilitates dialogue between **key and diverse** stakeholders to ultimately protect, maintain, and improve watershed health. It truly takes a team and that team is not effective without leadership, commitment and resources. The Forum provides connections, information, opportunities and impacts that would otherwise not exist and CPW could not create on our own. CPW has invested resources into the Forum and plans to continue.

CPW has been part of developing the tasks outlined by the Animas River Community Forum and supports this request for funding to assist in implementation. This includes capacity for continuing the functions of the Forum, including outreach, communication, data updates for the *Our Animas* publication, as well as implementation of the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan. Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

Barb Horn. Water Resource Specialist  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife





January 23, 2020

Colorado Water Conservation Board  
ATTN: Chris Sturm  
ATTN: Ben Wade  
1313 Sherman St. Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203

Subject: Animas River Community Forum Water Plan Grant Application

Dear Colorado Water Conservation Board:

I am writing in support of Mountain Studies Institute's application for funding to support the Animas River Community Forum. The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is an asset to the Falls Creek Ranch (Homeowner) Association's efforts in the wake of the 416 Fire. The ARCF has served as a platform for impacted landowners to interact with County staff, as well as the project management staff for the Emergency Watershed Plan. Since the 416 Fire, the Forum has brought stakeholders together to create a draft *416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan*.

The ARCF facilitates dialogue between stakeholders to ultimately protect, maintain, and improve watershed health. Stakeholders that attend ARCF meetings and workshops engage on multiple topics regarding municipal water use, land management implication for water quality, agricultural practices and irrigation, and impacts of drought. These conversations serve to foster an informed public.

The Falls Creek Ranch Association supports funding the tasks outlined by the Animas River Community Forum, including increasing the capacity for continuing the functions of the Forum, maximizing outreach, maintaining communication, providing data updates for the *Our Animas* publication, as well as implementation of the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan.

Sincerely,

Paulette Church  
President and  
Firewise Ambassador  
Falls Creek Ranch Association, Inc.

6350 Falls Creek Main, Durango, CO, 81301

[www.fallscreekranch.org](http://www.fallscreekranch.org)



Board of County Commissioners

Clyde Church, Chair • Gwen Lachelt, Vice Chair • Julie Westendorff, Commissioner

1101 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave  
Durango, CO 81301  
(970) 382-6219

Chris Sturm and Ben Wade  
Colorado Water Conservation Board  
1313 Sherman Street, Room 721  
Denver, CO 80203

February 1, 2020

Dear Chris and Ben,


The La Plata County Board of County Commissioners expresses its strong support for Mountain Studies Institute's application for funding to support the Animas River Community Forum. The Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) is an asset to La Plata County's efforts to protect life and property as well as restore the Animas and Hermosa watersheds in the wake of the 416 Fire. The ARCF has served as one platform for impacted landowners to interact with county staff, as well as the project management staff for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. Since the 416 Fire, the Forum has brought stakeholders together to create a draft 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan.

The ARCF facilitates dialogue between stakeholders to ultimately protect, maintain, and improve watershed health. Stakeholders that attend ARCF meetings and workshops engage on multiple topics regarding municipal water use, land management implication for water quality, agricultural practices and irrigation, and impacts of drought. These conversations serve to foster an informed public.

La Plata County supports funding the tasks outlined by the Animas River Community Forum, including capacity for continuing the functions of the Forum, including outreach, communication, data updates for the *Our Animas* publication, as well as implementation of the 416 Fire Recovery and Response Action Plan.

Sincerely,

LA PLATA COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
Clyde Church  
Chair