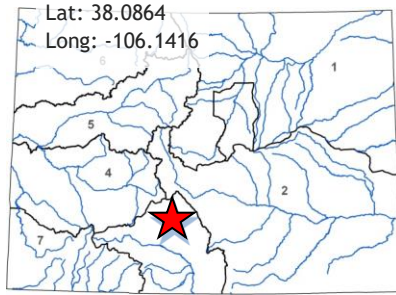


**Water Plan Grant Application**



D E T A I L S	
Total Project Cost:	\$12,049,125
Water Plan Grant Request:	\$450,000
Other CWCB Funding:	\$0
Other Funding Amount:	\$6,769,575
Applicant Match:	\$4,829,550
Project Type(s):	Conservation Easements
Project Category(Categories):	Agriculture
Measurable Result:	7,000 Acres restored or preserved; 13 miles of improved stream

L O C A T I O N	
County/Countries:	Saguache
Drainage Basin:	Rio Grande

This grant award will fund the creation of four conservation easements near Saguache, Colorado.

The San Luis Creek Conservation Partnership is an effort to preserve wetland habitat and productive agricultural land on four ranches—Lone Tree Ranch, Slash LD Ranch, Chokurei Ranch, and Albert Ranch—in the northern part of the San Luis Valley. These properties collectively encompass nearly 7,000 acres and include 13 miles of riparian habitat. Grant funds will be used for conservation easement purchases on the Chokurei and Slash LD and pay for transaction costs associated with the easements on Lone Tree and Albert.

Two of these ranches are under high development pressure and are regularly used by the vulnerable Poncha Pass population of Gunnison Sage-grouse. The other two ranches are next to the Baca National Wildlife Refuge and will add to a landscape-scale network of conserved grasslands and playa wetlands.

Furthermore, the water rights associated with these four properties are highly susceptible to export from the San Luis Valley. Past and present export plans have focused on Poncha Pass whose geography lends itself to a transbasin pipeline. These conservation easements will preserve the water rights from export pressures.

The application for this grant was submitted with support letters from the Trust for Public Land and Colorado Cattleman’s Agricultural Land Trust. Matching funds are secured from the Gates Family Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the NRCS.

**Funding Recommendation:**

Staff recommends Board approval of \$450,000 to the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust for the San Luis Creek Conservation Partnership Project.

