West End Economic Development Corporation (WEEDC) is the convening agency working with a coalition of eight organizations developing a water plan leading toward a sustainable water future for the Wright’s Mesa Region of Colorado. The parties recognize that by collaborating, sharing information, and supporting the needs of individual entities they are more likely to efficiently implement much needed water projects to benefit agriculture, municipal, fire-fighting/wildland mitigation, and environmental water supplies. WEEDC will act as fiscal agent for the grant and as project coordinator.

The project includes hiring an engineering firm to conduct a collaborative water infrastructure planning and prioritization analysis for the Wright’s Mesa area in San Miguel County. Wright’s Mesa is an agricultural community with approximately 1,200 residents, including the Town of Norwood. With limited water supplies in a region prone to drought, there are numerous identified projects to meet the wide array of needs. Despite this, there has been little progress to date that would ensure a sustainable water future for the area since there are several organizations that manage water, each with multiple improvement projects. This grant will help to bring municipal, agricultural, environmental and public safety stakeholders together to discuss ways to optimize operations, and to prioritize improvement projects to effectively utilize limited funds. Included in the effort is an analysis of the feasibility of additional storage with the development of Straw Dam, which would be adjacent to the existing Gurley Reservoir.

Funding Recommendation: Staff is recommending a grant of $110,590 from the Storage and Supply category of funding. This is approximately 67% of the project costs. The project advances work towards adding additional storage, in alignment with the goals of the Water Plan.