



**COLORADO**

**Colorado Water  
Conservation Board**

Department of Natural Resources

Jared Polis, Governor

Dan Gibbs, DNR Executive Director

Rebecca Mitchell, CWCB Director

**TO:** Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

**FROM:** Elizabeth Schoder, Water Supply Planning

**DATE:** May 17, 2022 CWCB Board Meeting

**ITEM:** Agenda Item #17 Water Education Colorado's Work Plan - Annual Allocation

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**Staff recommendation:** Staff recommends the Board approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Scope of Work for Water Education Colorado (WEco).

### **Background**

The CWCB has supported Water Education Colorado since its inception in 2002. This support has included board membership and guidance, partnering on numerous outreach and educational efforts, as well as financial support from the CWCB Construction Fund as well as other various CWCB grant programs.

From Fiscal Year 2002 to Fiscal Year 2020 the CWCB supported WEco (fka Colorado Foundation for Water Education) with an annual, automatic \$150,000 grant from the Construction Fund through a legislative mechanism known as a “continuous appropriation.” During the 2020 legislative session this appropriation was removed indefinitely through the 2020 CWCB Projects Bill (HB 20-1403), but was reinstated during the 2021 legislative session as an amendment to the 2021 Projects Bill (SB 21189). The Board approved the Fiscal Year 2022 WEco Scope of Work in July 2021.

As such, the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 WEco Scope of Work (Scope) is presented for Board review and approval. As in past years, the proposed Scope supports WEco’s annual operations, water education, and outreach programs. The Scope covers numerous efforts that align with both organizations’ missions in the form of four overarching tasks: Operational Support, Public Outreach, Water Education & Leadership Programs, and Content Programs. The subtasks within each section allow the CWCB and WEco to strategically prioritize work related to various aspects of the Colorado Water Plan.

Elizabeth Schoder currently serves as the CWCB representative on WEco’s Board, along with Kelly Romero-Heaney serving as the DNR representative. Jayla Poppleton, WEco’s Executive Director, will be present at the meeting to make a presentation and answer questions. The proposed Scope and summary table are attached.



## Proposed FY2023 WEco-CWCB Scope of Work

This Scope of Work identifies how the state legislative annual allocation via the CWCB Construction Fund, in sum of \$150,000, will be used to support Water Education Colorado (WEco) operations and programs in Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023).

### Operational Support

#### 1.1 Strategic Plan Implementation

##### *Overview*

In January 2020, the WEco Board of Trustees adopted a new strategic plan to guide our work from 2020-2025. The plan identifies both internal-facing and external-facing goals for long-term sustainability and expanded impact. The plan, importantly, includes a strong emphasis on achieving equity in educational programs and improved access and reach to underrepresented audiences, whether geographic, ethnic or socioeconomic.

In order to activate the plan to accomplish its goals, WEco will fine-tune a one-year work plan for FY2023 and another looking ahead to FY2024. The FY2023 plan will be used to guide and measure progress against the strategic plan's goals during the coming year.

##### *Work Plan*

- Working with WEco Board and Committees, develop and implement FY2023 work plan
- Develop FY2024 work plan

##### *Schedule and Budget*

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$17,100	\$5,000

#### 1.2 Financial Management and Reporting

##### *Overview*

Every year WEco completes a financial review, and once every three years undergoes a more thorough financial audit. WEco completed an audit in FY2022, and in FY2023 will

work with a consultant to accomplish a standard financial review. In addition, WEco produces an annual report to provide transparency in financial information, acknowledge donors, and share out on impact. This helps us stay connected to our supporters and convey the value of our work, as well as to build additional capacity through fostering ongoing membership and donation support.

**Work Plan**

- Perform FY2022 financial review
- Complete and distribute FY2022 year-end annual report

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
June 2023	\$8,000	\$1,500

**1.3 Maintain and Update Web Platform**

**Overview**

WEco developed and launched a new website in 2017 to vastly improve our digital presence and availability of our digital resources. The site serves as a hub for all things WEco, including archives of all past publications, radio programs, webinars, and more. The site requires regular maintenance in order to maintain functionality, improve Search Engine Optimization so that interested learners can readily find our information, and improve the user experience.

**Work Plan**

- Engage web developer in annual maintenance contract
- Review google analytics to understand how viewers are interacting with the site and evaluate opportunities for improvement
- Prioritize and implement improvements

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$15,400	\$3,500

**General Public Outreach**

**2.1 General Public Outreach**

**Overview**

Colorado continues to welcome thousands of new residents every month who are unfamiliar with the water resource constraints and concerns in our state. WEco has also consistently heard from members and the wider water community that more general

public education and outreach is needed in order to raise awareness, promote sustainable water behaviors, and inform decision making. Additionally, WEco staff members are regularly asked to give presentations to community groups and conferences, or to participate in and advise on educational opportunities and resources in collaborative forums.

**Work Plan**

- Provide presentations as requested for community groups
- Identify relevant resources for community groups as requested
- Present at conferences to promote educational opportunities and resources
- Participate and support collaborative forums including the Water and Land Use Alliance, South Platte River Urban Waters Partnership, Colorado Water Congress Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee, advise on Water in the West with SPUR, and respond to other miscellaneous opportunities

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$23,500	\$7,500

**2.2 Water ‘22**

**Overview**

WEco will continue to lead the Water 2022 campaign to raise awareness among a wider range of Coloradans about the value of water, the role of water management organizations, successful models of collaboration, and opportunities to continue learning. In addition, the campaign promotes engagement in sustainable water behaviors and participation in discourse and decision making processes, including the Colorado Water Plan update. The campaign will conclude in December 2022, and WEco will work with partner organizations and the Water Educator Network to identify opportunities for sustaining elements of the campaign beyond 2022. WEco will also produce a final report summarizing the activities and outcomes of the campaign.

**Work Plan**

- Continue to coordinate a broad coalition of partners to co-implement the campaign
- Continue to implement the campaign strategy, manage the timeline and share materials and event opportunities
- Plan for the continuation of certain elements of the campaign beyond 2022
- Complete a final report for the project

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
March 2023	\$145,800	\$30,000

## Water Education & Leadership Programs

### 3.1 Water Fluency Program

#### *Overview*

In its seventh year, WEco's Water Fluency Program offers elected officials, appointed water board members, students and members of the public immersion in the language and concepts of water as well as tools for navigating the culture, complexity and future of water management and policy issues. Topics covered include an orientation to basic hydrology, water law and administration, water quality protection, funding opportunities for projects (including CWCB grants and loan programs), the Basin Roundtables and Colorado Water Plan, land use and water efficiency, watershed health and protection, stream management planning, Colorado River drought contingency plans, and more.

This in-depth curriculum consistently receives strong positive feedback, and has filled or exceeded the 35-class-member capacity every year. WEco will offer the 2022 in a hybrid model, with a focus on the Gunnison Basin, and will prepare to hold the 2023 program with a focus on the Rio Grande Basin, pending local partner support.

#### *Work Plan*

- Hold 3 of 4 sessions of the 2022 program between July and September.
- Collect and analyze feedback, adjust the curriculum based upon that feedback.
- Plan, market and open registration for the 2023 program.

#### *Schedule and Budget*

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$33,900	\$10,000

### 3.2 Water Leaders Program

#### *Overview*

The Water Leaders Program is a highly regarded professional development program for water professionals who have demonstrated a sincere commitment to Colorado water as well as strong leadership potential. The curriculum instills leadership and management principles in a select group of water professionals each year and grows their peer network so that they can be more effective in charting a path toward innovative and collaborative water solutions. Since 2006, more than 200 graduates have completed the program, including a number of CWCB staff and current board members, as well as other prominent leaders in the Colorado water community.

CWCB's contribution through the Scope of Work keeps tuition for the Water Leaders Program affordable. Combined with other sponsorship support, CWCB funding keeps tuition nearly 20 percent lower than it would otherwise be.

In addition to the annual Water Leaders Program offering, WEco provides Water Leaders 2.0 training opportunities for alumni to continue to improve their skills.

#### *Work Plan*

WEco will engage in the following:

- Complete the second half of the 2022 Water Leaders Program.
- Collect and analyze feedback; adjust the curriculum based upon that feedback.
- Market the 2023 program, select applicants and run the first half of the 2023 Water Leaders Program.
- Hold a 2.0 training opportunity for program alumni.

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$100,100	\$10,000

**3.3 Water Educator Network**

**Overview**

The Water Educator Network is an affiliate group of educators who are interested in increasing the amount, quality and effectiveness of water education in Colorado. The Network’s goal is to increase the capacity of local water educators by providing members with tools, trainings and collaborations that are relevant to their work, easily accessible and simple to implement. The Public Education Participation and Outreach (PEPO) liaisons from each river basin typically participate, along with K-12 educators, public affairs professionals, nonprofit communications leads, and others. WEco also worked with Network affiliates to develop the Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP) with a five-year time horizon from 2020-2025. The plan is an outcome of the Colorado Water Plan and defines a set of shared outcomes and metrics that educators across the state can collectively work toward to achieve measurable impact.

**Work Plan**

- Develop and recruit additional participation in the WEN affinity group structure, where water educators convene to work on shared SWEAP strategies.
- Hold the annual WEN Symposium, including training and presentations centered on a theme identified by affiliates as a top priority.
- Continue to serve as the host institution for Project WET (Water Education Today) curriculum, offering at least one training for facilitators and/or educators.
- Continue to recruit and build relationships with new water educators to grow WEN
- Maintain regular communications, including through a quarterly e-newsletter, to connect WEN affiliates with shared resources, professional development, and opportunities for collaboration

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$82,000	\$25,000

### 3.4 Tours

#### **Overview**

WEco's one-day and multi-day tours are an opportunity for decision makers, water professionals and interested citizens to see water management in action and to get an up-close look at the challenges and opportunities currently before the industry. Tours regularly hit capacity, and generally one-half of tour attendees are individuals new to WEco.

#### **Work Plan**

- WEco will produce one multi-day Annual Basin tour in the Yampa River Basin. The Yampa Basin Roundtable will be invited to provide input in the planning of the Annual Basin tour in order to focus a portion of the agenda on their Basin Implementation Plan. The CWCB will receive a seat on the tour free of charge.
- WEco will support local partners in planning and delivering 2-3 Urban Water Cycle Tours focused on water quality and other challenges related to urban waterways. Locations may include Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins (tentative), and an advisory role for a new Pueblo tour (tentative).

#### **Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$70,200	\$15,500

## Content Programs

### 4.1 Headwaters Fall 2022 issue: The Federal Role

#### **Overview**

WEco has published Headwaters magazine since 2003 and now boasts more than 50 issues in its archives, all of which are available online. The magazine continues to tackle tough issues in an accessible, engaging way, highlighting diverse perspectives, case studies and human interest stories from across Colorado and the west, and providing opportunities for engagement and further learning.

Coverage highlights recent innovations, collaborations, policy developments, and challenges/opportunities on the given topic in order to inform the statewide water community, decision makers, and interested citizens from a non-advocacy perspective. Many of the topics highlighted in the past five years have centered on goals and priorities identified in the Colorado Water Plan, such as land use and water efficiency, reuse, storage, climate change and improved permitting processes.

The first issue in FY23 will focus on the federal role in water policy, funding, regulation and management, with a look at the key agencies and levers that influence Colorado's water picture.

#### **Work Plan**

WEco will produce the following:

- Fall 2022 issue of *Headwaters* magazine on the Federal Role

- CWCB will receive 25 copies of the *Headwaters* magazine free of charge and be invited to serve on the peer review work group

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
July-November 2023	\$38,300	\$10,000

**4.2 Headwaters Spring issue 2022: Topic TBD**

**Overview**

WEco will work with its Publications and Program Development Committees to select a timely and relevant topic for the Spring 2023 issue.

**Work Plan**

WEco will produce the following:

- Half-day gathering of experts to identify the issues, current research, challenges and opportunities that WEco should focus on
- Spring 2023 issue of *Headwaters* magazine on Tribes and the Colorado River
- CWCB will receive 25 copies of the *Headwaters* magazine free of charge and be invited to serve on the peer review work group

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
August 2022-April 2023	\$38,300	\$10,000

**4.3 Headwaters Summer issue 2023: Topic TBD**

**Overview**

WEco will work with its Publications and Program Development Committees to select a timely and relevant topic for the Summer 2023 issue.

**Work Plan**

WEco will produce the following:

- Half-day gathering of experts to identify the issues, current research, challenges and opportunities that WEco should focus on
- Summer 2023 issue of *Headwaters* magazine
- CWCB will receive 25 copies of the *Headwaters* magazine free of charge and will be invited to serve on the peer review work group

**Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
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November 2022-June 2023	\$38,300	\$10,000
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#### 4.4 Companion content

##### **Overview**

Following the publication of each issue of Headwaters magazine, WEco produces companion content in other non-print channels, including webinars and the Your Water Colorado blog. Build on description

##### **Work Plan**

- Publish series of related blog articles authored by WEco staff and experts following each issue of Headwaters.
- Host one webinar following each issue of Headwaters, based on selected content

##### **Schedule and Budget**

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$16,500	\$4,500

#### 4.5 Citizen’s Guide Translation and Distribution

##### **Overview**

WEco has built its Citizen’s Guide series over time, and currently offers 10 reference guides, which serve as comprehensive primers on key aspects of water management, history, law and quality. Many of these guides have been updated to new editions in recent years, and the Citizen’s Guide library is currently well stocked. Identifying new opportunities for distribution to reach new audiences is a high priority.

WEco has also identified a need to provide more educational resources in Spanish in order to increase access and equity in water education. In 2020, we published our first-ever issue of Headwaters in Spanish, and in FY22 we convened a focus group to identify two high-priority Citizen’s Guides to translate. We started with the Citizen’s Guide to Where Your Water Comes From in FY22, and in FY23, we will translate the Citizen’s Guide to Colorado Water Law.

The Citizen’s Guide to Colorado Water Conservation is the next guide in our series in need of an update. In FY23, we will begin updating the guide to reflect the latest advances and priorities for water conservation in the municipal, agricultural and industrial sectors. We will also prepare this guide to be published in both English and Spanish in early FY24.

##### **Work Plan**

- Increase distribution of existing Citizen’s Guide library to reach new audiences
- Translate and publish the Citizen’s Guide to Colorado Water Law in Spanish
- Identify and work distribution channels for new Spanish guides
- Convene a work group of experts to advise on the Conservation guide update

- Begin the updating process and prepare to publish the Conservation guide in both English and Spanish in early FY24

***Schedule and Budget***

Timeframe	Total Budget	CWCB Contribution
Throughout FY2023	\$25,600	\$7,500

**WEco Construction Fund Allocation FY2023 Scope of Work Summary Table**

<b>Task #1: Operational Support</b>					
<i>Subtask</i>	<i>Time of Deliverable</i>	<i>Description of Deliverable</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>CWCB Contribution</i>	
1.1	Strategic Plan Implementation	June 2023	Develop and implement FY23 work plan and track progress on strategic plan; develop FY24 work plan	\$17,100	<b>\$5,000</b>
1.2	Financial Management and Reporting	June 2023	Complete FY2022 year-end financial review and final report	\$8,000	<b>\$1,500</b>
1.3	Maintain and update web platform	June 2023	Maintain website functionality and identify opportunities to improve user experience and viewer metrics	\$15,400	<b>\$3,500</b>
<b>Task 1 Total</b>				<b>\$40,500</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Task #2: Public Outreach</b>					
<i>Subtask</i>	<i>Time of Deliverable</i>	<i>Description of Deliverable</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>CWCB Contribution</i>	
2.1	General Public Outreach	June 2023	Provide presentations to various community groups and conferences, promote educational opportunities and resources, support EDI work with Colorado Water Congress, advise on Water in the West with SPUR, and other miscellaneous opportunities	\$23,500	<b>\$7,500</b>
2.2	Water '22	June 2023	Implementation of second half of campaign strategy and activities, including basin mini-tours, plan post-campaign continuity, final reporting	\$145,800	<b>\$30,000</b>
<b>Task 2 Total</b>				<b>\$169,300</b>	<b>\$37,500</b>
<b>Task #2: Water Education &amp; Leadership Programs</b>					
<i>Subtask</i>	<i>Time of Deliverable</i>	<i>Description of Deliverable</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>CWCB Contribution</i>	
3.1	Water Fluency Program	June 2023	Deliver 2022 program and plan, market and open registration for 2023 program	\$33,900	<b>\$10,000</b>
3.2	Water Leaders Program	June 2023	Complete second half of 2022 program and first half of 2023 program	\$100,100	<b>\$10,000</b>
3.3	Water Educator Network	June 2023	Build out affinity groups around SWEAP strategies, host annual symposium, continue to serve as state lead for Project WET, ongoing communications	\$82,000	<b>\$25,000</b>
3.4	Tours	June 2023	Host multi-day tour of Yampa River Basin and urban water cycle tour series in 2-3 locations	\$70,200	<b>\$15,500</b>
<b>Task 3 Total</b>				<b>\$286,200</b>	<b>\$60,500</b>
<b>Task #4: Content Programs</b>					
<i>Subtask</i>	<i>Time of Deliverable</i>	<i>Description of Deliverable</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>CWCB Contribution</i>	
4.1	Headwaters Fall '22 - The Federal Role	November 2022	Publish and distribute fall issue	\$38,300	<b>\$10,000</b>
4.2	Headwaters Spring '23 - Topic TBD	April 2023	Publish and distribute winter issue	\$38,300	<b>\$10,000</b>
4.3	Headwaters Summer '23 - Topic TBD	June 2023	Publish and distribute spring/summer issue	\$38,300	<b>\$10,000</b>
4.4	Complimentary content including webinars and blog posts tied to Headwaters topics	June 2023	Produce one webinar and 1-2 blog posts following publication of Summer '22, Fall '22, and Winter '23 issues of Headwaters, digging deeper into the same topic focus area	\$16,500	<b>\$4,500</b>
4.5	Citizen's Guides - Translating one guide to Spanish, increased distribution, begin update of CG to Water Conservation	June 2023	Publish one Spanish language Citizen's Guide, expand distribution of existing guide library, begin update of Citizen's Guide to Water Conservation	\$25,600	<b>\$7,500</b>
<b>Task 4 Total</b>				<b>\$157,000</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$653,000</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>