

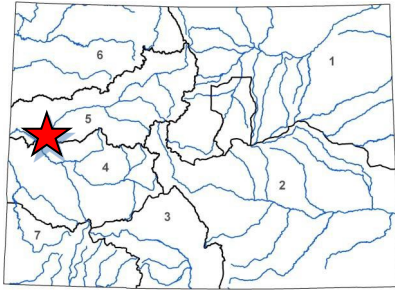


## Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative - River Planning Project RiversEdge West

March 2023 Board Meeting

### Water Plan Grant Application

Lat:39.031900  
Long: -108.340660



#### LOCATION

**County:** Mesa  
**Drainage Basin:** Gunnison, Colorado

#### DETAILS

<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	\$218,539
<b>Water Plan Grant Request:</b>	\$145,414
<b>Recommended Amount:</b>	\$145,414
<b>Other CWCB Funding:</b>	\$0
<b>Other Funding Amount:</b>	\$63,225
<b>Applicant Match:</b>	\$9,900
<b>Project Type:</b>	Planning
<b>Project Category:</b>	Watershed Health & Recreation
<b>Measurable Result:</b>	82,500 Coloradans in Planning area, 61 river miles under River Corridor Planning area, collaborative framework for GVRC Planning

The Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative (RCI) was formed in 2020 to address the acute need for enhanced coordination, planning, and collaboration on River Corridor activities. The Grand Valley's River Corridor includes the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers within Mesa County. RiversEdge West is leading the RCI coalition to create a collaborative framework for a Grand Valley River Plan.

The 2023-2025 RCI River Planning Project will evaluate riparian and floodplain health metrics, identify conservation and restoration projects, quantify water user flow preferences linked to flow metrics and trends, and support the development of a framework among local governments for inter-jurisdictional River Corridor management. It supports stakeholder facilitation and outreach activities.



From 2020-2021 the RCI conducted stakeholder outreach and workshops to identify and prioritize community priorities for the River Corridor. In 2022 the Fluvial Hazard Zone was mapped. This project will evaluate riparian and floodplain health metrics, identify conservation and restoration projects, quantify water user flow preferences linked to flow metrics and trends, and support the development of a framework among local governments for inter-jurisdictional River Corridor management. It also supports stakeholder facilitation and outreach activities. This scope is tailored to fill gaps within ongoing partner efforts and meet the needs of the Grand

Valley.

**Water Plan Support:** *Action Areas-* Resilient Planning- Conduct integrated planning, Thriving Watersheds- Healthy Lands, Wise Water Use; *BIP IPP-* Colorado River Corridor Plan- Grand Valley, Flow preference survey, Gunnison Basin Education Action Plan; *Supporting Plans:* Two Rivers Regional Partnership Initiative, Grand Valley Outdoor Coalition Recreation Planning; Grand Valley Watershed Plan

#### WPG Request:67%

Matching Funds: RiversEdge West: \$6,325 (cash) \$3,575 (in kind); American Rivers: \$10,500; Colorado River District: \$20,000; River Network: \$9,975 (cash) \$4,900 (in kind); Colorado Mesa University: \$2,250 (in kind); Regional Planning Initiative: \$7,000 (in kind); City of Grand Junction: \$1,200 (in kind); Fruita: \$1,200 (in kind); Palisade: \$1,200 (in kind); US Fish and Wildlife Service: \$5,000 (in kind)

**Funding Recommendation:** Staff recommends Board approval of \$145,414 to RiversEdge West for the Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative River Planning Project.

**COLORADO**Colorado Water  
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

**Colorado Water Conservation Board****Water Plan****Water Project Summary**

Name of Applicant	RiversEdge West
Name of Water Project	Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative – River Planning Project
Grant Request Amount	<b>\$145,413.50</b>
Primary Category	\$145,413.50
<i>Watershed Health &amp; Recreation</i>	
Total Applicant Match	<b>\$9,900.00</b>
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>	\$6,325.00
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>	\$3,575.00
Total Other Sources of Funding	<b>\$63,225.00</b>
<i>American Rivers</i>	\$10,500.00
<i>Colorado River District</i>	\$20,000.00
<i>Colorado Mesa University</i>	\$2,250.00
<i>Colorado Canyons Assoc - Regional Planning Int.</i>	\$7,000.00
<i>River Network</i>	\$9,975.00
<i>City of Fruita</i>	\$1,200.00
<i>Town of Palisade</i>	\$1,200.00
<i>US Fish And Wildlife Service</i>	\$5,000.00
<i>River Network</i>	\$4,900.00
<i>City of Grand Junction</i>	\$1,200.00
Total Project Cost	<b>\$218,538.50</b>

**Applicant & Grantee Information**

Name of Grantee: RiversEdge West

Mailing Address: PO Box 1907 Grand Junction CO 81502

FEIN: 270,007,315

Organization Contact: Rusty Lloyd

Position/Title: Executive Director

Phone: 9702567400

Email: rlloyd@riversedgewest.org

Organization Contact - Alternate: Shannon Wadas

Position/Title: Associate Director

Phone: 9702567400

Email: swadas@riversedgewest.org

Grant Management Contact: Rusty Lloyd

Position/Title: Executive Director

Phone: 9702567400

Email: rlloyd@riversedgewest.org

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Shannon Wadas

Position/Title: Associate Director  
Phone: 9702567400

Email: swadas@riversedgewest.org

### Description of Grantee/Applicant

RiversEdge West restores riparian ecosystems through education, collaboration, and technical assistance. We accomplish this by replacing invasive plants with native plant species along thousands of riverside acres across the Southwest, educating thousands of community members and youth to foster long-term river stewardship, training river restoration professionals through our training series and annual conference – including education and outreach about the tamarisk beetle, and researching and developing new restoration techniques to effectively restore riparian ecosystems.

### Type of Eligible Entity

- ☐ Public (Government)
- ☐ Public (District)
- ☐ Public (Municipality)
- ☐ Ditch Company
- ☐ Private Incorporated
- ☐ Private Individual, Partnership, or Sole Proprietor
- ☐ Non-governmental Organization
- ☐ Covered Entity
- ☒ Other

### Category of Water Project

- ☐ Agricultural Projects  
*Developing communications materials that specifically work with and educate the agricultural community on headwater restoration, identifying the state of the science of this type of work to assist agricultural users among others.*
- ☐ Conservation & Land Use Planning  
*Activities and projects that implement long-term strategies for conservation, land use, and drought planning.*
- ☐ Engagement & Innovation Activities  
*Activities and projects that support water education, outreach, and innovation efforts. Please fill out the Supplemental Application on the website.*
- ☒ Watershed Restoration & Recreation  
*Projects that promote watershed health, environmental health, and recreation.*
- ☐ Water Storage & Supply  
*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.*

### Location of Water Project

Latitude	39.031900
Longitude	108.340660
Lat Long Flag	Stream location: Coordinates based on general location on stream
Water Source	Colorado and Gunnison Rivers
Basins	Gunnison; Colorado
Counties	Mesa
Districts	72-Lower Colorado River; 42-Lower Gunnison River

## Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type

Type of Water Project

Planning

Scheduled Start Date - Design

4/3/2023

Scheduled Start Date - Construction

Description

The Grand Valley's River Corridor includes the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers within Mesa County. The River Corridor is the lifeblood of the community and is a vital economic, cultural, and ecological resource. Essential industries such as agriculture, tourism, recreation, and development within the River Corridor are dependent on the long-term health of our rivers.

Decision-making about River Corridor land-use, native and endangered species habitat, and flow management are largely siloed, not always considering the cumulative and long-term impacts on this resource. Given the diverse values supported by the River Corridor, the forecasted growth, and chronic stressors such as drought and fire, the Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative (RCI) was formed in 2020 to address the acute need for enhanced coordination, planning, and collaboration on River Corridor activities.

The 2023-2025 RCI River Planning Project will evaluate riparian and floodplain health metrics, identify conservation and restoration projects, quantify water user flow preferences linked to flow metrics and trends, and support the development of a framework among local governments for inter-jurisdictional River Corridor management. It also supports stakeholder facilitation and outreach activities. This scope is tailored to fill gaps within ongoing partner efforts and meet the needs of the Grand Valley.

## Measurable Results

New Storage Created (acre-feet)

New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive

Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)

New Storage Created (acre-feet)

Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)

Efficiency Savings (dollars/year)

Efficiency Savings (acre-feet/year)

Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)

Quantity of Water Shared through Alternative Transfer Mechanisms or water sharing agreement (acre-feet)

Number of Coloradans Impacted by Incorporating Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning

82,500 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity

Other

Numbers of rivers miles under new RCI planning/management - 61 miles

## Water Project Justification

This project responds to key themes in the Colorado Water Plan and is well aligned with the Colorado and Gunnison Basin Implementation Plans and basin Education Action Plans.

-Colorado Water Plan-

In focusing on the river corridor created by the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers as they pass through the Grand

Valley, which provides access to irrigation water, important riverine and riparian habitat, recreational opportunities, and both opportunities and hazards for future development, this project addresses all four of the action areas in the 2023 Draft of the Colorado Water Plan.

P6-5: - Vibrant Communities: A key element of this project is outreach and education to raise awareness of the vital role the river corridor plays in supplying water to local agriculture and homes and enhancing our quality of life, as well as how our collective decisions impact this vital community resource.

P6-22:- Robust Agriculture: This project addresses the needs of agriculture by including agricultural stakeholders in discussions about the implications of different flow levels in the rivers for water supply availability, as well as infrastructure. The RCI also provides a framework for the development of collaborative, multi-benefit projects.

P6-5: Thriving Watersheds: Healthy Lands: Shared stewardship improves watershed health and resilience across multiple jurisdictions. This project represents a collaborative effort between nonprofit organizations, private citizens, private landowners, municipal government, and federal and management agencies that restores riparian areas across jurisdictional boundaries and on multiple land ownership types.

-P6-45: Resilient Planning: Meeting Future Water Needs: Flood storage for extremes. Healthy and properly functioning riparian areas, which this project aims to maintain and establish, act as natural storage areas that absorb water during atypically high river flow events. Resilient Planning: By developing a framework for integrating planning across jurisdictions within the river corridor in the Grand Valley, as well as enhancing our understanding of potential flow scenarios and implications for watershed health and infrastructure sustainability, this project will greatly enhance our community's capacity to plan and implement multi-benefit solutions that will enhance resilience to a variety of potential water supply and flow challenges.

#### -Colorado Basin Implementation Plan-

The assessments and community conversations facilitated by this project align with the goals of the Colorado Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) and the project, listed as "River Corridor Plan, Grand Valley" is included as a Tier 1 project in the BIP project list. Specific goals the project addresses, within their respective BIP themes, include:

- Protect and restore healthy streams, rivers, lakes and riparian areas:
- Protect and maintain healthy and self-sustaining aquatic and riparian ecosystems, and rehabilitate damaged ecosystems.
- Support and provide for quality river and stream recreational opportunities with appropriate flows.
- Sustain agriculture:
- Engage, educate, learn from and collaborate with the agricultural community on Colorado River Basin Issues, and increase awareness among the broader community about the importance of agriculture.
- Develop local water conscious land use strategies:
- Support, preserve and promote local authorities' management of stream health, development and conservation efforts.

This project also aligns with the Education Action Plan within the BIP, in particular the vision to: “Encourage awareness and development of holistic locally driven collaborative solutions supported by best available hydrologic and watershed data.” This project will provide an excellent example of locally-driven collaboration supported by the best available hydrologic and watershed data.

**-Gunnison Basin Implementation Plan-**

By bringing together diverse stakeholders to enhance stewardship of the Grand Valley River Corridor, this project is particularly responsive to the following goals of the Gunnison BIP.

- Encouraging relationships among agricultural and environmental recreational water uses.

-Continuing public education, outreach, and stewardship.

This project also aligns with the Education Action Plan in the Gunnison BIP, in particular the element to “Continue and expand efforts to develop and distribute water resources information related to the Gunnison Basin, including, but not limited to, regional and basin-specific water supplies and demands, related hydrology and watershed information, water quality influences, and challenges and opportunities facing citizens.”

### Related Studies

- Grand Valley River Corridor Initiative Stakeholder Outreach and Workshops (2020-2021): The RCI conducted individual interviews and held four community workshops to identify issues and prioritize strategies for river corridor management.

- Grand Valley River Corridor Fluvial Hazard Zone Mapping Project (2022): The CWCB and the RCI funded an FHZ study of the river corridor to serve as a foundation and tool for future river corridor planning, conservation, and restoration efforts.

- Two Rivers Regional Partnership Initiative (2022-2024): A recreation and conservation planning effort funded by GOCO and CPW and lead by Colorado Canyons Association. This project aligns with the community connectivity and recreation values identified in previous RCI stakeholder engagement.

- Grand Valley Outdoor Coalition Recreation Planning (2022-2023): An outdoor / recreation business planning effort with a focus on river corridor recreation.

- Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program hydrology and habitat study (2023-2028): An in-depth flow (current and future) and in-channel habitat analysis to be conducted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service within the Grand Valley.

- Two Rivers Wildfire Coalition (ongoing): ongoing studies and restoration work related to riparian restoration and fuels management within the Grand Valley River Corridor

- Grand Valley Watershed Plan (2022): A comprehensive assessment of water quality issues in the Grand Valley with recommendations for additional data collection and development of an implementation plan.

### Taxpayer Bill of Rights

NA