



Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Plan

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Roaring Fork Conservancy	
Name of Water Project	Watershed PenPal Program	
Grant Request Amount		\$136,947.70
Primary Category		\$136,947.70
<i>Engagement & Innovation Activities</i>		
Total Applicant Match		\$46,080.90
Applicant Cash Match		\$24,186.40
Applicant In-Kind Match		\$21,894.50
Total Other Sources of Funding		\$0.00
Total Project Cost		\$183,028.60

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Roaring Fork Conservancy	
Mailing Address: 22800 Two Rivers Road Basalt CO 81621	
FEIN: 841,376,379	
Organization Contact: Megan Dean	
Position/Title: Director of Education	Email: megan@roaringfork.org
Phone: 970-927-1290	
Organization Contact - Alternate: Rick Lofaro	
Position/Title: Executive Director	Email: rick@roaringfork.org
Phone: 9709271290	
Grant Management Contact: Megan Dean	
Position/Title: Director of Education	Email: megan@roaringfork.org
Phone: 970-927-1290	
Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Rick Lofaro	
Position/Title: Executive Director	Email: rick@roaringfork.org
Phone: 9709271290	

Description of Grantee/Applicant

Since 1996, Roaring Fork Conservancy has inspired people to explore, value, and protect the Roaring Fork Watershed. We bring people together to protect our rivers and work hard to keep water in local streams, monitor water quality, and preserve riparian habitat.

As one of the largest watershed organizations in Colorado, Roaring Fork Conservancy serves residents and visitors throughout the Roaring Fork Valley through school and community-based Watershed Education programs and Watershed Science and Policy Projects including regional watershed planning, water resource policy initiatives, stream management, and restoration.

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	39.370000
Longitude	-107.080000
Lat Long Flag	Default/Proponent headquarters: If the location cannot be defined with flags above, use location of project proponent headquarters
Water Source	Roaring Fork River and Fryingpan River
Basins	South Platte; Colorado
Counties	Eagle; Arapahoe; Garfield; Pitkin
Districts	38-Roaring Fork River Basin; 1-South Platte: Greeley to Balzac

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type	
Type of Water Project	Education
Scheduled Start Date - Design	9/7/2023
Scheduled Start Date - Construction	
Description	

Watershed PenPals connects students across watershed basins by fostering relationships built on shared experiences and old-fashioned letter writing. Through a series of shared classes, slides, Google Meets, videos, activities, and a summer experience program, students in both Aurora and the Roaring Fork Valley learn about where their water comes from and why it's important to value, conserve, and protect this life-giving resource. Students that come from different geographical areas and cultural backgrounds develop relationships by sharing information about their hobbies, interests, and personal connections to water. To date, over 500 students have participated.

With additional funding, this program will expand to incorporate more schools, teacher training, and add the summer experience program; Meet your Headwaters, giving a group of students from Aurora an opportunity to travel to the Roaring Fork Valley to meet their pen pal and explore their headwaters. Students will develop an understanding of the natural systems that their headwaters support while building relationships with each other. Participants will create and deliver visual displays and presentations to their hometown schools, and city councils, educating communities about the imperative need for conservation and connecting people from both sides of the Divide to their shared water source.

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)
- Length of Pipe, Canal Built or Improved (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
- 800 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
- Other
- No additional measurable results provided

Water Project Justification

The Watershed PenPal Program supports the goals of the Colorado Water Plan, Colorado Basin Round Table Basin Implementation Plan, and the Education Action Plan by meeting multiple objectives including unique education programs, community building, and diverse experiences.

Roaring Fork Conservancy's (RFC) Watershed Pen Pal program unites students from the Roaring Fork Valley, with students in Aurora, Colorado, reaching across the Continental Divide to create relationships through letter writing, guided hands-on experiences, and current technology. Aurora Water's Environmental and Educational Outreach program helped forge a connection with the partner schools in Aurora Public Schools. The city of Aurora and the Roaring Fork Valley both utilize water from the headwaters of the Fryingpan and Roaring Fork Rivers, creating a link by trans-basin diversions unknown to many community members. With today's increased demands for water, we often face conflict and territorial battles, with dividing lines drawn by the Continental Divide. This project aims to create connections by teaching about water systems, building positive relationships, and finding commonalities between water users. Students learn that the best way forward is by understanding earth's natural systems, each other, and the shared knowledge that we are all water users.

This program creates an informed public with creative, forward-thinking solutions that are sustainable and resilient to changing conditions and result in strong, equitable communities that can adapt and thrive in the face of adversity. (Pg. 4 Executive Summary, Colorado Water Plan)

After 5 months of programming and letter writing a group of students from Aurora will have the opportunity to travel across the Continental Divide to the Roaring Fork Valley to meet their pen pal and experience their shared headwaters. Students will engage in activities that demonstrate a strong environment with healthy watersheds, rivers, streams, and wildlife. (Pg. 2 Executive Summary, Colorado Water Plan)

After spending 3 days exploring their headwaters and meeting their pen pals, students and RFC staff members will create a presentation, visual display, and short video to share with their city council and school. Students will understand the benefits of working collaboratively and value the perspectives of water users from across the state. (pg. 3 Executive Summary, Colorado Water Plan)

Through activities and letter writing, students will learn about prioritizing conservation and efficiency in water use and management. All Coloradans can participate in strategies to lower water use. This program will develop a shared understanding of why conservation is needed and how each person can make a difference. (Pg. 19 Executive summary, Colorado Water Plan)

Is the project collaborative? Does it involve a diverse group of stakeholders? Does it involve and engage the community? (Colorado Basin Roundtable pg. 85, Colorado Water Plan)

This collaborative project connects a diverse group of stakeholders through shared experiences and positive relationships. Parents, teachers, and communities from two different Colorado watershed basins will learn from students who, through thoughtful experiences, will develop an understanding that to be able to successfully share the limited resource of water in Colorado with all stakeholders, including the natural systems, all must have a seat at the table.

This project embodies shared stewardship—a commitment to partnership in which the state government and every Coloradan must work together toward greater action, starting with our youngest residents. Inclusive public engagement risks associated with critical issues such as climate change, potential future water shortages, and natural hazards require that Coloradans be educated and ready to act on water-related challenges. Coloradans must collaborate on adaptive planning and ensure education and outreach efforts are inclusive, open-minded, and broad-reaching. This will provide Coloradans the opportunity to understand what is at stake and participate in equitable, diverse, and inclusive solutions (pg. 161 Colorado Water Plan). Participants will gain the opportunity to learn from each other and make conservation goals together.

Related Studies

N/A

Taxpayer Bill of Rights

N/A