



**Colorado Water Conservation Board**

**Water Plan**

**Water Project Summary**

Name of Applicant	River Network	
Name of Water Project	Capacity & Tech Assistance for Watershed Groups	
Grant Request Amount		<b>\$246,382.13</b>
Primary Category		\$246,382.13
<i>Watershed Health &amp; Recreation</i>		
Total Applicant Match		<b>\$41,063.68</b>
<i>Applicant Cash Match</i>		
<i>Applicant In-Kind Match</i>		\$41,063.68
Total Other Sources of Funding		<b>\$41,063.69</b>
<i>Walton Family Foundation</i>		\$41,063.69
Total Project Cost		<b>\$328,509.50</b>

**Applicant & Grantee Information**

Name of Grantee: River Network  
 Mailing Address: PO Box 21387 Boulder CO 80308  
 FEIN: 930,969,979

Organization Contact: Chelsea Silva  
 Position/Title: Healthy Rivers Program Associate      Email: csilva@rivernetwork.org  
 Phone: 208-577-0256

Organization Contact - Alternate: Brian Murphy  
 Position/Title:      Email: bmurphy@rivernetwork.org  
 Phone:

Grant Management Contact: Chelsea Silva  
 Position/Title: Healthy Rivers Program Associate      Email: csilva@rivernetwork.org  
 Phone: 208-577-0256

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Brian Murphy  
 Position/Title:      Email: bmurphy@rivernetwork.org  
 Phone:

**Description of Grantee/Applicant**

No description provided

**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 40.015000  
 Longitude 105.270500  
 Lat Long Flag Default/Proponent headquarters: If the location cannot be defined with flags above, use location of project proponent headquarters  
 Water Source  
 Basins Arkansas; Colorado; Gunnison; Metro; Yampa/White/Green; Rio Grande; South Platte; Southwest; Nort...  
 Counties  
 Districts

### Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type Environmental  
 Type of Water Project Capacity Building  
 Scheduled Start Date - Design  
 Scheduled Start Date - Construction  
 Description  
 This project aims to enhance the number of effective watershed plans throughout Colorado and bridge the gap from planning to implementation. River Network will accomplish this goal through offering statewide peer learning opportunities; creating a watershed planning roadmap; strengthening regionally-based networks of watershed groups and partners through coordination, mentoring, training, and information sharing; providing leadership

among NGO and funding partners to work together to scale up capacity for multi-benefit project implementation; and launching a pilot program in the Southwest Basin aimed at providing capacity support, resources, technical planning, and project implementation assistance and coordination.

### 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  
100 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity  
Other  
No additional measurable results provided

### Water Project Justification

The 2023 Colorado Water Plan includes several recommendations that this proposal would support, including: Agency Action 3.8 “Develop an interagency watershed planning platform” by helping the public and watershed groups evaluate local priorities by providing a single watershed planning roadmap for planning information. Agency Action 3.9 “Create a framework for prioritizing stream health with local stakeholders” by engaging stakeholders to develop a prioritization framework, working with stakeholders to initiate and complete watershed plans, and fostering implementation of projects identified in the planning process.

Partner Actions for Thriving Watersheds (p. 205-207), including: Stream management plans that identify projects and needed flows for stream rehabilitation that consider all of the benefits that a stream provides to local users; working with local decision makers to prioritize projects by balancing science, funding, risks, and values; and building strong, trust-based relationships with communities.

Partner Actions for Resilient Planning (p. 217) including: Integrated planning; expanding connections; identifying insights on adaptive practices by engaging Indigenous partners and cultures; supporting coordination on water projects; disseminating grant application information; and supporting capacity building.

In addition, many Basin Implementation Plans or Stream and Integrated Water Management Plans include goals and projects to promote healthy watersheds through watershed planning, project implementation, and capacity building. In the Southwest BIP in particular:

Goals A1 and A2 to balance all needs and reduce conflict through supporting projects important to maintaining the quality of life in the region and supporting dialogue and fostering cooperation, collaboration, and conflict resolution among water interests for the purpose of implementing strategies to mitigate risk and build resiliency for Southwest Colorado’s and Colorado’s water supply challenges.

Goal D2 to prioritize projects designed to better quantify environmental and water supply needs by supporting projects like stream management plans.

Goal F3 to promote healthy watersheds by encouraging and supporting projects that build resilient watersheds and healthy forests impacted by drought, fire, and climate change.

This project will enhance the number of effective watershed plans and bridge the gap from planning to implementation.

### Related Studies

In 2018, River Network formally launched a Peer Learning Network for those working on SMPs to improve planning outcomes through collecting and sharing best practices and connecting practitioners to each other. Through annual surveys and interviews of the SMP leads in 2017, 2019 and 2020, River Network has collected best practices and innovative approaches ([coloradosmp.org](http://coloradosmp.org)), and tracked the progress of SMPs throughout the state. In 2020 River Network launched an outcome tracking tool to begin collecting data on the various outcomes that SMPs have achieved and documented the findings in the 2021 report Stream Management Plans in Colorado: Progress at Five Years. The report identified 269 recommended projects from completed Stream Management Plans.

In 2023, River Network with funding from CWCB co-led an evaluation of the Peer Learning Network (PLN) with a third-party evaluation firm. The goal of the evaluation was to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the PLN using data collected from watershed planning leaders through surveys and interviews. Recommendations from the PLN evaluation were for River Network to: continue offering members opportunities for relationship building, peer learning, and innovation; broaden the PLN's focus, its training/resources and communications from only SMP to watershed planning to better address the diversity and scope of local watershed groups and their planning needs; and strengthen regionally-based networks of watershed groups and partners through focused coordination, technical planning, mentoring, training, information sharing, and project implementation assistance.

In 2023, River Network completed a white paper "Scaling Up Local Capacity for Multi-Benefit Projects". The white paper was prompted by the desire of River Network and partners to advance conditions and frameworks for successful multi-benefit watershed project implementation throughout Colorado. The paper evaluated River Network's Agricultural Coordinator Pilot Project, funded by CWCB, and provides lessons learned and recommendations for leading an initiative to scale-up local capacity to advance multi-benefit project implementation. Entities engaged through interviews for the paper and a debrief following completion of the paper see value in coordinating their efforts to compliment the strengths each brings to the table (e.g., CWCB - funder, TRCP - policy, TNC/TU - project development/implementation, etc.). River Network's role as convener for scaling up local capacity for multi-benefit project implementation is important to helping these entities strategize, leverage, and compliment their specific missions and resources.

### Taxpayer Bill of Rights

River Network has no TABOR limitations.