



**COLORADO**

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

**Colorado Water Conservation Board**

**Water Plan**

**Water Project Summary**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Name of Applicant                        | Trout Unlimited_Montrose                              |
| Name of Water Project                    | Telluride Valley Floor Post-Removal Action - Increase |
| Grant Request Amount                     | <b>\$683,141.00</b>                                   |
| Primary Category                         | \$683,141.00  |
| <i>Watershed Health &amp; Recreation</i> |   |
| Total Applicant Match                    | <b>\$1,023,375.79</b>                                 |
| Applicant Cash Match                     | \$1,008,064.91  |
| Applicant In-Kind Match                  | \$15,310.88   |
| Total Other Sources of Funding           | <b>\$203,113.35</b>                                   |
| Colorado Water Conservation Board        | \$203,113.35  |
| Total Project Cost                       | <b>\$1,909,630.14</b>                                 |

**Applicant & Grantee Information**

Name of Grantee: Trout Unlimited\_Montrose  
Mailing Address: 264 County Road 4 Montrose CO 81403  
FEIN: 381,612,715

Organization Contact: Tanner Banks  
Position/Title: Colorado Restoration Program Manager Email: tanner.banks@tu.org  
Phone: (970) 390-9492

Grant Management Contact: Tanner Banks  
Position/Title: Colorado Restoration Program Manager Email: tanner.banks@tu.org  
Phone: (970) 390-9492

Engineering Contact: Lucas Babbit  
Position/Title: Principle Water Resources Engineer & Owner Email: lucas-babbit@water-vation.com  
Phone: (720) 273-9183

**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      | 37.942440  |
| Longitude     | -107.837030  |
| Lat Long Flag | Stream location: Coordinates based on general location on stream |
| Water Source  | San Miguel River   |
| Basins        | Southwest  |
| Counties      | San Miguel   |
| Districts     | 60-San Miguel River Basin  |

### Water Project Overview

|                                     |                               |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Major Water Use Type                |                               |
| Type of Water Project               | Construction / Implementation |
| Scheduled Start Date - Design       |                               |
| Scheduled Start Date - Construction | 8/12/2024                     |

#### Description

The overarching goal of this project is to provide habitat uplift to an area of the Telluride Valley Floor (TVF) where recent EPA-led actions removed 60,000 cubic yards of fluvial mine tailings. Following completion of the project in October 2022, barren site conditions displayed apparent need for ongoing revegetation. TU began efforts to capture funds via agreements with the US Forest Service (USFS) to complete a revegetation scope focusing on a denuded riparian footprint, depleted soil matrices, and unstable slopes. TU applied for a Water Plan Grant in July 2023 with the intent of sitewide native wetland and riparian revegetation. Following the award during the September board meeting, TU informed CWCB that the anticipated Phase-1 construction had been postponed based on the 2023 site assessment data captured by TU and WaterVation. The data indicated deficiencies in physical channel form, poorly installed riprap, and all riparian habitats. This resulted in the need for more extensive restoration than was initially presented by TU in July 2023. Therefore, TU decided to postpone

contracting the former grant while spending down allocated funds to fully understand the scope and scale of sitewide restoration required to achieve long-term ecological health. With this CWCB award, restoration will commence in 2024.

### 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)   |
| 3,200 | 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)   |
| 15    | 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              |
|       | Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity  |
| Other |   |
|       | No additional measurable results provided   |

### Water Project Justification

The project will promote healthy ecological and recreational conditions in a high-use reach of the San Miguel River, situated between the Town of Telluride Conservation Easement landholdings outside of Telluride, Colorado. The proposed project is considered a post-removal restoration following an EPA Time Critical Removal Action (TCRA). The EPA-led TCRA occurred on Town of Telluride landholding and National Forest System (NFS) Lands. The TCRA did not include sufficient vegetative or in-stream channel restoration after removing hazardous fluvial tailings. Visitors and the communities surrounding Telluride are subject to an evident and degraded river corridor with two trails paralleling the project area.

The project will support and implement education and outreach efforts to the diverse communities of Southwest Colorado to create a water-fluent public by providing relevant opportunities to the local community and visitors of the site. TU will participate in stakeholder meetings and prioritize public outreach and educational events leading to and throughout restoration implementation. Through this outreach, the project will increase awareness and understanding of a functioning river and riparian corridor. Also, through implementation, TU and project stakeholders will host volunteer planting events to encourage community involvement.

Restoration of the U.S. Forest Service reach will help maintain, protect, and enhance the long-term recreational values of the site. This funding request will ultimately improve goal-related outcomes for visitors to the area by increasing ecological function throughout the project reach.

The Telluride Valley Floor Trails and Stream Restoration Plan lists six segments or reaches within their Stream Restoration Plan. The proposed project will commence on Reach 2, a partially functioning channel that, before the EPA-led TCRA, had incised and abandoned floodplain habitats. According to the Stream Management Plan, restoration in Reach 2 would include instream improvements within the existing channel alignment, with significant bank stabilization and revegetation required from the stream corridor up to adjoining upland habitat. Restoration will increase environmental health by restoring the San Miguel River corridor, reconnecting floodplains, and providing protection through the symbiotic relationships exhibited by the lotic, riparian, and

upland environments.

The restoration approach will encourage the recovery and sustainability of endangered, threatened, and imperiled aquatic and riparian-dependent species and plant communities. Riverine function, coexistence, and restoration in the San Miguel Watershed may benefit the Northern Leopard Frog, SW Willow Flycatcher, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Beaver and Elk, and other local flora and fauna.

The project's objective is to protect, maintain, monitor, and improve the condition and natural function of the San Miguel River and its associated wetland and riparian habitat to sustain a wildy producing native fishery and promote the potential for reclamation of native species. The restoration approach will also encourage the expansion of beaver populations along the valley floor, diversifying the functional aquatic and terrestrial habitat connectivity along the Telluride Valley Floor. If successful, restoration will promote long-term site succession and provide site plasticity for long-term adaptation to changing climatic conditions.

Finally, this project aims to increase the health of the San Miguel Watershed by enhancing riparian corridors through coexistence and restoring degraded areas of the San Miguel River through floodplain reconnection through natural channel design and process-based restoration.

### Related Studies

Mountain Studies Institute & Colorado Water Quality Control Division-Measurable Results Program. Telluride Valley Floor Post-Mitigation Surface Water Sampling and Analysis Program  
Town of Telluride. Reach Planning and Restoration Implementation Plan  
San Miguel Watershed Coalition. Integrated Hydrological Modelling: A Modern Tool for Water Resource Evaluations

### Taxpayer Bill of Rights

N/A