

Title Page

WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program

Phase II Application:

White River Partnership Initial Riparian Restoration Implementation

Applicant:

Tamarisk Coalition dba RiversEdge West (White River Partnership)

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Executive Summary

Date: November 17, 2020

Applicant: Tamarisk Coalition dba RiversEdge West

Location: Grand Junction; Mesa County; Colorado

White River Partnership Initial Riparian Restoration Implementation:

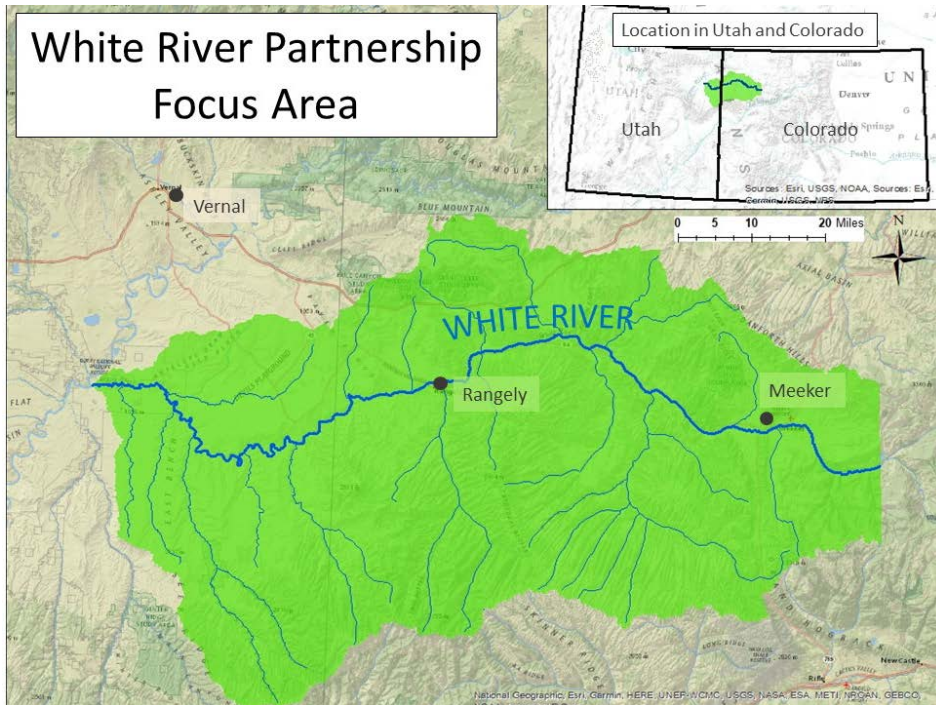
The White River Partnership (WRP) is a newly formed watershed group comprised of federal, tribal, state, county, local, non-profit and private entities with a pending Memorandum of Understanding. WRP partners are based throughout northeastern Utah and northwestern Colorado; partners involved in this proposal include: Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Vernal Field Office, BLM White River Field Office, RiversEdge West, Utah Conservation Corps, Western Colorado Conservation Corps, and the White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts. The project identified in this application is located in the White River basin in both Utah and Colorado, with the goal of implementing a holistic riparian restoration program across state and jurisdictional boundaries. Tamarisk and Russian olive (TRO) are highly invasive woody plants that have infested the White River corridor, causing myriad ecological, social, economic, and land management problems. This project is expected to provide local (site-specific) and regional (White River basin, Upper Colorado River Basin) benefits by improving the White River's terrestrial and aquatic habitat (including Endangered and Conservation Agreement fishes), recreation and grazing access, wildland fire resiliency, and river channel function through the removal of TRO and the re-establishment of healthy, native riparian vegetation species. These sites are prioritized in the WRP's collaboratively developed restoration plan (in draft form) which provides a framework and guide for riparian restoration in the White River basin.

With an anticipated start date of September 2021, if selected for funding this project is expected to take 2 years to complete, with an estimated completion date of September 2023.

This project is located on Federal Land.

Project Location

The focus area of the White River Partnership is the main stem and tributaries of the White River that have been impacted by tamarisk and Russian olive. Along the main stem, the focus area runs from the Lake Avery dam, east of the town of Meeker, Colorado, to the Green River confluence in Utah. The focus area includes the entirety of the Lower White River Watershed (HUC 14050007) and portions of the Upper White (HUC 14050005) and Piceance-Yellow (14050006) watersheds. While some small portions of the Upper White and Piceance-Yellow watersheds are located in Garfield and Moffat counties in Colorado, the focus area of the White River Partnership is within Rio Blanco County, Colorado, and Uintah County, Utah.



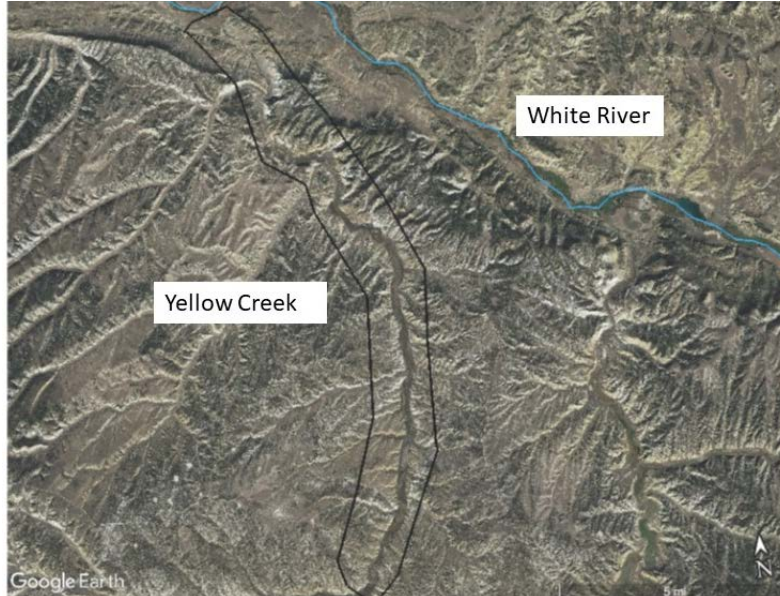
The White River Partnership Focus Area.

This proposal consists of three project sites located within the White River Partnership Focus Area: 1 on the main stem of the White River in Rio Blanco County, Colorado, 1 on Yellow Creek, a major tributary of the White River in Rio Blanco County, Colorado and 1 on the main stem of the White River in Uintah County, UT. The total project area on the main stem (CO and UT sites) is 17 acres along 5,489 linear feet of river. The total project area on Yellow Creek is 25 acres and 6 river miles.



Site 1: White River Main Stem, Rio Blanco County, CO
 8 acres, 1,740 linear feet of riverbank
 Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office

Latitude: 40.068466 Longitude: -108.927126



Site 2: Yellow Creek, Rio Blanco County, CO
25 acres (approx.), 6 river miles
Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office
Latitude: 40.100995 Longitude: -108.371438



Site 3: White River Main Stem, Uintah County, UT
9 acres, 3,749 linear feet of riverbank
Bureau of Land Management Vernal Field Office
Latitude: 39.966728 Longitude: -109.177839

Technical Project Description

The proposed implementation plan aims to provide multiple ecological, social, and geomorphological benefits to the White River basin through initial removal and retreatment of infestations of invasive tamarisk and Russian olive (TRO) and revegetating the areas with diverse native vegetation. Riparian vegetation is a critical restoration need in the White River watershed for a number of reasons (as described in the Evaluation Criteria Section). Principal among them are because TRO infestations reduce habitat for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife including bald eagles and endangered and conservation priority fish species. TRO infestations have also been shown to reduce water quality and quantity of rivers at a landscape scale. The proposed implementation plan is a component of the White River Partnership's riparian restoration plan (in draft form) which is designed to complement other watershed improvement efforts and plans, such as those related to water quality and quantity.

Site monitoring before, during, and after the invasive plant treatments will guide the site retreatment (such as secondary weed treatments, regrowth/resprout treatments) and active revegetation. This project will occur along the main stem of the White River in Utah and Colorado and along Yellow Creek, a major tributary of the White River in Colorado. These sites have been prioritized because the removal of TRO is likely to improve the native fish and wildlife habitat, as well as the wide range of other benefits described below. TRO mapping and in-person site visits show that these sites contain populations of native vegetation (including cottonwoods and willows) that increase the likelihood of successful passive revegetation after TRO removal. Site monitoring will determine the need for retreatments, secondary weed treatments, and/or active revegetation efforts. Success will be measured by an increase in relative cover of native vegetation and a decrease in the relative cover of invasive vegetation, the number of acres treated, the length of river miles treated, and the number of young adult conservation corps members engaged in the project.

Performance Measures

OBJECTIVES:

- **Objective 1:** Treat 8 acres of TRO along 1,740 linear feet of the main stem White River in Colorado.
- **Objective 2:** Treat 25 acres of tamarisk along 6 river miles of Yellow Creek in Colorado.
- **Objective 3:** Treat of 9 acres of TRO along 3,749 linear feet of the main stem White River in Utah.
- **Objective 4:** Monitor sites before, during, and after treatments to determine treatment success and identify areas in need of follow-up treatment and/or active revegetation; and to make monitoring information available to partners and the public.

- **Objective 5:** Maintain long-term control of invasive vegetation by treating any regrowth and/or resprouts of the target species as well as planting native plants in areas where passive revegetation is not occurring in both Utah and Colorado.

TASKS

TASK 1 – Coordination

Description of Task REW, in collaboration with the White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts (Districts), Bureau of Land Management, and conservation corps staff (Partners), will develop site-specific plans and schedules for each restoration site.

Method/Procedure: Through site visits, emails, and phone calls REW will coordinate with partners in order to develop site-specific plans and timelines for each of the proposed restoration sites. REW will visit the sites when crews begin working in order to communicate the project goals.

Deliverables:

- Site-level plans for each restoration site that include specific quantities and types of equipment and labor needs.
- An initial on-the-ground restoration approach that is agreed upon by multiple partners of the White River.
- A timeline for project completion.

TASK 2 – Implementation, Retreatment, and Active Revegetation

Description of Task: REW, in collaboration with Partners, will coordinate the initial TRO removal, site retreatment, and active revegetation in riparian habitat along the White River main stem in Utah and Colorado as well as coordinate the initial tamarisk removal, site retreatment, and active revegetation in riparian habitat along Yellow Creek. Retreatment and active revegetation needs will be determined by Task 3: Monitoring and Mapping.

Method/Procedure: REW will partner with conservation corps to implement restoration treatments for 13.5 weeks. This project will utilize one or both of the following treatment methods according to Best Management Practices. Best Management Practices and other TRO removal guides are available from REW's Resource Center for riparian restoration (<https://riversedgewest.org/resource-center>). REW will coordinate the purchase of 60 gallons of herbicide and associated adjuvants. Partners and/or conservation corps crews will provide the labor as well as all required equipment, including but not limited to vehicles, chainsaws, hand tools, and herbicide application equipment and protection.

TRO treatments will include one or a combination of the following methods:

- a. Cut-stump method: The cut-stump method involves cutting the invasive tree as close to the ground as possible with a chainsaw or hand tools and using herbicide application equipment to apply herbicide to the stump.
- b. Frill-cutting method: Frill-cutting involves using a hatchet, hand saw, or chainsaw to cut staggered pockets into the cambium layer of the tree and applying herbicide to the exposed areas.
- c. Foliar spray: Herbicide is applied to the leaves of target species.
- d. Basal bark treatment: Herbicide is applied to the bark of target invasive species during the first year of growth or regrowth.

If secondary invasive weed treatments are needed, best management practices (BMP) for those specific weeds will be followed. It is not practical to list the BMP for all potential secondary invasive weeds, however REW maintains a source for secondary weed BMP as reference (<https://riversedgewest.org/resource-center/riparian-restoration-practices>).

The biomass removed through the above methods can be utilized as habitat piles for small terrestrial animals, scattered across the site, or when feasible and safe, staged on the riverbank to reintroduce large woody debris (LWD) for native fish habitat improvements.

All sites will undergo initial TRO removal, and Task 3: Monitoring and Mapping will determine which sites require retreatment and active revegetation.

For active revegetation, REW will coordinate the purchase of \$1,500 of native plants and then partner with conservation corps to install the plants on sites that are in need of active revegetation. The quantity and species of plants will be determined by Task 3 (Monitoring and Mapping). Native plant active revegetation methods will include seeding, pole planting (e.g. cottonwood and/or willow poles), and/or potted plants. Specific plant quantities and types, active revegetation location needs, and labor needs will be determined by Task 3 (Monitoring and Mapping) in order to ensure the most economic use of crew time and plant costs as well as to ensure restoration sites have a diverse native vegetation community. Conservation corps crews will provide labor and tools required to complete this task, including but not limited to vehicles, shovels and other hand tools, and buckets.

Deliverables:

- 8 acres of riparian land along 1,740 feet of the main stem White River in Colorado with improved habitat, access, river function, and wildland fire resiliency as determined by reduced TRO canopy cover, an increase in relative native vegetation cover and a decrease in invasive vegetation cover
- 25 acres of riparian land along 6 river miles of Yellow Creek characterized by a reduced relative cover of tamarisk and an increased relative native vegetation cover that

improves grazing access, hydrology, terrestrial and aquatic habitat, browsing, and resilience to the hazards posed by wildland fire

- 9 acres of riparian land along 3,749 linear feet of the White River main stem in Utah with improved habitat, access, river function, and wildlife fire resiliency as determined by reduced TRO canopy cover, an increase in relative native vegetation cover and a decrease in invasive vegetation cover
- Hiring and training of conservation corps crew members. The total number of crew members engaged will be reported; however, it is hard to predict due to multiple crews working on multiple projects throughout the region during the season. This number will include crew members engaged throughout Tasks 1-3

TASK 3 – Monitoring and Mapping

Description of Task: REW will coordinate the collection of baseline and treatment data as well as post-treatment monitoring and integrate this data into a regional geodatabase. REW monitoring protocols document total vegetative cover, invasive plant species presence and relative cover, native plant species presence and relative cover, and passive native revegetation thresholds that determine the need for active revegetation. A pdf copy of the data schema is available upon request. REW staff will integrate this data into a White River riparian restoration geodatabase that tracks restoration progress and facilitates planning future restoration activities throughout the watershed.

REW will use this data to identify the need for potential follow-up treatment needs potentially to include retreatment, secondary weed treatments, and/or active revegetation and coordinate those treatments as necessary.

Method/Procedure: Throughout the grant period, crews, Partners, and/or REW staff will collect the following data:

- Pre-treatment (before Task 2): document pretreatment site conditions using vegetation monitoring protocols on GPS enabled tablets and/or establish long-term GPS-marked photo points
- During treatment (concurrent with Task 2): document daily and weekly treatment progress using GIS technologies, hand-held tablets, and/or GPS units. Record herbicide application logs. Visually document treatment progress with before-and-after photos.
- Post-treatment (concurrent with and after Task 2): REW, Partners, or crews will use monitoring protocols to determine initial treatment success through documenting changes in relative invasive and native vegetation cover and passive revegetation rates. REW, Partners, or crews will also visually document the status of sites after treatments using photographs and repeat photographs from the long-term GPS-marked photo points established during baseline data collection.

Deliverables:

- Restoration treatment data that is available to White River and regional partners that can be used as a reference for future project planning and/or to inform wildlife, recreational, or hydrological assessments
- A record of treatment that supports the adaptive management approach of the White River Partnership to ensure project success
- A streamlined process for determining potential future and follow-up restoration needs
- Geospatial data that identifies project needs for site retreatment and/or active revegetation (as described in Task 2)

Evaluation Criterion A—Project Benefits

Water availability and water needs:

TRO may not transpire significantly more water than native riparian plant species on a plant to plant comparison. However, as tamarisk frequently persists in greater densities than native vegetation and on sites that are higher above the water table and too dry for most native riparian species, tamarisk may increase the density and areal extent of transpiring vegetation and total transpiration-related water losses. Furthermore, TRO are often found in densities that far exceed those observed in native vegetation stands. Therefore, at a landscape scale, water savings could be accomplished through the replacement of TRO with native riparian and upland species.

Long-term improvements to water quality:

At the watershed scale, this project can improve water quality in three ways. Tamarisk brings up salts from the soil and deposits them on the surface, which can impact water quality by increasing salinity levels. TRO removal can also act as a preventative water quality improvement tool by reducing the risk of severe wildfire, which causes runoff and erosion that is detrimental to water quality. Additionally, studies have shown that native riparian species, particularly sandbar willow, can improve water quality by removing pharmaceuticals and other contaminants.

Benefits to aquatic or riparian ecosystems within the watershed:

The White River Partnership strategy of invasive species control of TRO along the banks and within backwater areas, in combination with changes in flow operations, should help 1) unlock trapped sediment, 2) simulate a more natural river system, particularly a more dynamic system associated with increased sediment transport, and 3) increase bed mobilization. This will benefit small-scale aquatic habitat throughout the river. This will also benefit aquatic habitat and biodiversity throughout the Upper Colorado River Basin because the White River provides key fish habitat components for the system and provides a high percentage of the Green River's sediment load.

Benefits to specific species and habitats:

This project will directly benefit the following species and habitats:

Cottonwood gallery forests: The White River is one of the few remaining southwestern rivers with naturally regenerating cottonwood forests consisting of multiple age class trees. This project will benefit these native habitat stands through:

- increased ground cover for regrowth
- decreased susceptibility to wildland fire
- natural soil salinity levels required by native vegetation
- reintroduction of natural river channel dynamics and functions required for passive cottonwood seeding

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) utilize cottonwood galleries along the White River corridor for winter roost and nesting sites. The White River corridor is home to a wide variety of terrestrial wildlife, including birds, small mammals, and reptiles. The White River corridor is a key habitat and migratory route for large herds of elk and mule deer as well as smaller populations of antelope, bighorn sheep, and moose. Monotypic stands of TRO provide little habitat, food, and browsing options for terrestrial wildlife. Replacing TRO with diverse, native plant species through active and/or passive revegetation will create a larger variety of habitat components (grasses, shrubs, trees) and more diverse food sources. These native vegetation stands also serve as seed sources that may promote future passive revegetation along the riparian corridor. Yellow Creek also provides habitat for the Northern Leopard Frog, a Bureau of Land Management Sensitive Species and also a Tier 1 (highest conservation priority) Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Colorado.

Fish: The White River contains critical habitat for two endangered fish species, the Colorado pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus lucius*) and the razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*). It also supports robust populations of the “three species”: the bluehead sucker (*Catostomus discobolus*), flannelmouth sucker (*Catostomus latipinnis*), and roundtail chub (*Gila robusta*). These fishes are Conservation Agreement Species in Colorado and Utah, and they are cooperatively managed through state and range-wide conservation agreements and management plans to preclude federal listing. Colorado Parks and Wildlife’s State Wildlife Action Plan (2015) identifies these species as Tier 1, highest conservation priority, among Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

These species are threatened by the loss of channel complexity which is caused, in part, by TRO establishment. Riparian restoration can improve in-stream habitat complexity by re-establishing the following key habitat components: side channels, backwaters, floodplain connectivity, and large woody debris.

These project benefits are both local to the restoration sites and basin-wide, due to terrestrial and aquatic wildlife moving throughout the region during their lifecycles. Habitat benefits of this project can be measured by acres and river miles along the river banks of riparian vegetation habitat with higher relative native vegetation cover than invasive relative cover

This project will directly improve 17 acres of riparian habitat along 5,489 linear feet of the main stem White River and 25 acres along 6 river miles of Yellow Creek.

Benefits to multiple water uses within the watershed:

Riparian restoration along the mainstem of the White River and Yellow Creek will provide the following benefits:

Agricultural: The White River is primarily used for agriculture in Colorado, providing the lifeblood of the small communities of Rangely and Meeker for cattle production and agricultural fields. Ranchers and farmers on private lands depend on the White River for their water source from its headwaters to the Utah state border. In Utah, grazing permittees utilize the White River to water cattle. In Yellow Creek, this project will improve sustainable grazing, access for grazing permittees on public lands, and collaboration among private landowners and local, federal, state, and non-profit entities.

Municipal: The White River is a municipal water source for the town of Rangely, CO. The towns of Meeker, CO and Rangely, CO are also interested in increasing the tourism and access to the White River, which runs through both towns.

Tribal: The White River runs through Ute Tribal lands for the final 25 miles (approximately) before reaching the Green River confluence. Other areas of the White River basin are considered ancestral lands to the Ute Tribe. Tribal lands will benefit from improved fisheries habitat for native fish. Increased tribal involvement as well as understanding and incorporating additional tribal benefits from restoration is a key goal of the White River Partnership and restoration planning.

Environmental: This project provides myriad benefits to the environmental needs of the White River system, including but not limited to improved aquatic and terrestrial habitat, the establishment and reestablishment of native riparian vegetation, reduced wildland fire danger, and improved river channel dynamics and geomorphology.

Recreation: This project will improve the recreationists' experience by improving river access for boating and fishing and enhancing the aesthetics of the user experience.

Other benefits to the watershed and watershed stakeholders:

This project will also:

- reduce water conflicts within the watershed by increasing communication and collaboration among diverse stakeholders. This proposed project involves collaboration between private landowners, permittees, and federal, state, local, and non-profit entities.
- reduce the risk and hazards of wildland fire through the removal of TRO that act as ladder fuels which spread fire more easily than native vegetation.
- act as the first step in a holistic, landscape-scale riparian restoration project that crosses jurisdictional and state boundaries.
- increase employment opportunities for young adults through partnerships with conservation corps, which also benefits federal and state land management agencies by providing experience to potential job candidates.

- The total number of crew members engaged will be reported; however, it is hard to predict due to multiple crews working on multiple projects throughout the region during the season.
- provide an economic benefit to local communities by improving river-based recreation opportunities.

Addressing multiple issues of concern within the watershed:

As highlighted in the responses above this project is intentionally designed to address multiple issues and will have systems-wide benefits such as:

- Reducing the presence of invasive plants
- Improving aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat
- Reducing wildfire risks and thereby preventing future water quality issues
- Reducing overall water consumption by invasive plants
- Creating improved native vegetation habitat and habitat connectivity across state lines

Evaluation Criterion B—Watershed Restoration Planning

Restoration plan:

RiversEdge West received a Phase I WaterSMART CWMP grant in May 2019 (R18AP00122) to formalize the White River Partnership and develop a riparian restoration plan for woody invasive plants in the White River basin in Utah and Colorado. To date, all Phase I deliverables have been met and future deliverables are on schedule to be met. The completion date for the Phase I grant is March 31, 2021, therefore the restoration plan is in draft form (and on schedule to be completed according to the terms of the agreement).

The completed sections of the draft restoration plan are detailed and developed to support the project in this application package. Partnership members have been involved in the development of the plan through partnership meetings, e-mail communications, restoration site visits, and phone calls. Partnership members have reviewed the sections that are included in the draft plan. The restoration plan represents a holistic approach to addressing multiple issues related to water resources in the White River Watershed and has been developed by a diverse group of stakeholders.

The draft plan is available at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KxChMvaxE3bpGo-y0-6HgTzEehlcpy2Q?usp=sharing>

Watershed management issues addressed:

This plan addresses the myriad watershed management issues related to riparian restoration through tamarisk and Russian olive removal and the reestablishment of native vegetation.

These issues include: aquatic and terrestrial habitat, water quantity, water quality, wildland fire, endangered and conservation agreement fish species habitat, restoration across state and jurisdictional boundaries, and river channel geomorphology. The plan’s approach to achieving these ecological goals is through incorporating social, economic, management, and cultural goals such as working across state and jurisdictional boundaries, engaging local communities and youth in riparian restoration, improving sustainable grazing opportunities for landowners and federal/state permittees, and improving recreational access to the river.

Stakeholder involved in preparing the plan:

RiversEdge West has led and continues to lead the development of the restoration plan. Diverse stakeholder perspectives were included in plan development. Small meetings, site visits, and one-on-one communications allowed partners to provide topical expertise to different components of the plan, and full partnership meetings, which were opened to the public, allowed for group discussions and a consensus-based decision-making process. The following entities were involved in the development of the White River Partnership and Restoration Plan:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Northwest Colorado District | Town of Meeker, CO |
| BLM Utah Aquatic Habitat Management Program | Town of Rangely, CO |
| BLM Vernal Field Office | TriCounty Health |
| BLM White River Field Office | Uintah County, UT |
| Canyon Country Youth Corps | United States Bureau of Reclamation |
| Colorado Parks and Wildlife | United States Fish and Wildlife Service |
| Colorado Water Conservation Board | Utah Conservation Corps |
| Natural Resources Conservation Service-Colorado | Utah Department of Environmental Quality |
| Private Industries | Utah Division of Wildlife Resources |
| Private Landowners | Utah State University |
| Rio Blanco County Weed and Pest Department | Ute Indian Tribe |
| RiversEdge West | Western Colorado Conservation Corps |
| State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration | White River Alliance |
| | White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts |

If the restoration plan was prepared by an entity other than the watershed group:

Not applicable.

Support for your proposed watershed management project through the restoration plan:

The restoration plan provides support for this proposal because it provides justification for the prioritization of sites where restoration should take place based on ecological, social,

economic, and management concerns and issues. The plan also outlines how site follow-up and monitoring activities should be accomplished.

Goal or need identified implemented in the restoration plan:

The restoration plan identifies site and treatment needs that are met in this proposal.

Project prioritization in the referenced restoration plan:

This proposed project is identified in the restoration plan's 2-year implementation goals.

Evaluation Criterion C—Stakeholder Support

Letters of support from the following key partners are attached with this application. Contributions are addressed in the Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment Section:

- 4m Ranch
- Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office
- Colorado Water Conservation Board
- Utah Conservation Corps
- Utah Partnership for Conservation and Development Watershed Restoration Initiative
- Walton Family Foundation
- Western Colorado Conservation Corps
- White River Alliance
- White River and Douglas Creek Conservation District

Project supported by a diverse set of stakeholders:

As identified in the above list of stakeholders involved in the plan development, this project is supported by and consistent with the policies of entities responsible for the management of land, water, recreation, or forestry within the watershed including district-level and field-level Bureau of Land Management Offices in Utah and Colorado, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts (WRDCCD) in Colorado.

This proposed project complements two specific ongoing watershed management activities. The WRDCCD recently initiated Coordinated Resource Management Plans (CRMP) for public lands that border private lands and/or have grazing permittees. The Yellow Creek site identified in this proposal is a high priority in the first CRMP that was developed in a partnership of WRDCCD, REW, Trout Unlimited, the US Forest Service, and the BLM. In Utah, Utah State University is developing a White River Conservation, Restoration, and Monitoring Plan for fish habitat. Since TRO infestations are key habitat concern for native fish of the White River, this proposal will support the implementation of Utah State University's plan. A priority of this proposal, and the White River Partnership and

restoration plan, is to complement and add to ongoing restoration efforts by entities throughout the White River basin. A list of these efforts is presented in the next section.

Other relevant efforts:

An early accomplishment of the White River Partnership was to identify relevant and related plans in the White River basin. Many of the authors of these plans are involved in the White River Partnership and restoration plan development. In addition, many plans specifically mention the benefit that TRO removal and riparian restoration would bring to their plans. Partners recognize that healthy riparian vegetation is one of many factors that contribute to the sustainability of the White River basin’s land and rivers. In addition to meetings and partner feedback, this restoration plan is informed by related regional planning efforts and studies. It is also intended to support related efforts in the White River basin. The following plans, studies, and documents either inform this restoration plan and/or are related regional planning efforts that this plan is intended to support:

Title	Lead Entity/Author	Year
Colorado’s Water Plan	Colorado Water Conservation Board	2015
Conservation and Management Plan for the Three Fish Species	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)	2006
A Consolidated Woody Invasive Species Management Plan for Colorado’s Colorado, Gunnison, Uncompahgre, Dolores, White, and Yampa/Green Watersheds	Colorado Headwaters Invasives Partnership	2008
Coordinated Resource Management Plans	White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts	Ongoing
Framework for Strategic Conservation of Desert Fishes	Desert Fish Habitat Partnership (DFHP)	2015
Geomorphic Assessment of the Lower White River	Utah State University ETAL Lab	2018
Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors 2019-2020	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	2019
Land and Natural Resources Plan and Policies-Rio Blanco County	White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts	2016
Recovery Implementation Program Recovery Action Plan (RIPRAP)	Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program	updated annually

Rio Blanco County Noxious Weed Management Program	Rio Blanco County Weed and Pest Control	2014
State Wildlife Action Plan	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	2015
Uintah County Resource Management Plan	Uintah County	2017
West Slope Mule Deer Strategy	Colorado Parks and Wildlife	2014
The White River and Endangered Fish Recovery: A Hydrological, Physical and Biological Synopsis	Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)	2000
White River Management Plan and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Programmatic Biological Opinion	Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program	2020-2021
White River Planning Advisory Committee/Integrated Water Initiative	White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts	2020-2022
White River Restoration, Conservation and Monitoring Plan	Utah State University	In development
Yampa/White/Green Basin Implementation Plan	YWG Basin Roundtable	2015

Specific to riparian restoration, the BLM Vernal Field Office, Utah Conservation Corps, and RiversEdge West manage ongoing restoration work on federal and state lands in Utah. Under RiversEdge West’s Phase I WATERsmart CWMP grant, the White River Partnership was expanded both geographically and in the number of stakeholders involved. The goal of formalizing the White River Partnership and developing the restoration plan is to expand the restored area of the White River, so that the initial sites are incorporated into a landscape-scale restoration approach instead of a smaller-scale site-by-site approach. This proposal represents the first step towards a landscape-scale implementation of riparian restoration in the White River basin. The BLM and Utah Conservation Corps are partners in the White River Partnership and provided letters for this application.

Project located on Federal land or a Federal facility:

This project proposal is located on Federal lands that are managed by the Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office (Colorado) and Vernal Field Office (Utah). Both field offices support the project and have established Assistance Agreements with RiversEdge West (REW) in order to continue and implement the restoration partnership and planning. REW brings over 15 years of experience in riparian restoration and partnership development. As a non-profit, REW is able to dedicate time and resources that are sometimes limited within federal offices, and provide an efficient and effective means for getting project work done through collaboration with a variety of stakeholders

Opposition to the proposed project:

We are unaware of any opposition to this proposed project.

Evaluation Criterion D—Readiness to Proceed

The following chart refers to Tasks 1-3 identified in the Technical Project Description. Specific methods and deliverables are discussed in the Technical Project Description.

Task 1: Coordination	Date	Activity
	September 2021- December 2021	REW and Partner staff coordinate site visits to develop site-specific plans and schedules for all sites.

Task 2: Implementation, retreatment, and Active Revegetation	Date	Activity
	September 2021- October 2022	Conservation corps crews and/or local contractor and complete initial TRO treatments, site retreatment, and active revegetation on all sites. Specific dates and the order in which sites are treated will be determined by seasonal effects on site accessibility and safety (weather, river levels), as well as conservation corps, contractor, and/or partner availability
	September 2021- September 2023	REW will conduct site visits to assist corps/contractor training and project implementation
	January 2022- September 2023	Conservation corps crews conduct site retreatment on select sites
	January 2022- September 2023	Conservation corps crews conduct active revegetation on select sites

Task 3: Monitoring, Mapping, and Retreatment	Date	Activity
	September 2021- May 2022	REW will coordinate or lead the collection of baseline data at each site
	September 2021- April 2022	REW will coordinate initial treatment data collection and integrate the data into the geodatabase
	December 2021- December 2022	Based on monitoring data, REW and Partners will identify needs and sites for active revegetation and site retreatment
	January 2022- December 2022	REW will coordinate or lead post-treatment monitoring and integrate monitoring data into the geodatabase
	January 2022- September 2023	REW will coordinate final data collection and integrate the information into the geodatabase

NEPA is required on federal lands and has already been completed on the Utah and Colorado project sites. Work on the BLM lands on Colorado may require an update that the BLM office is prepared to complete.

Engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project:

Not Applicable

Access to the land or water source where the project is located:

RiversEdge West has access to the land where the project is located. No easements are required. Access to project land is not an issue for this proposal because the work will take place on federal land. However, access to the land is documented in the associated Letters of Support.

Amount equal to 5 percent of the total project costs included in project budget to cover costs associated with environmental and cultural resource compliance:

5% of the total project costs is included in the project budget to cover costs associated with environmental and cultural resource compliance.

Evaluation Criterion E—Performance Measures

Performance measures that will be used to quantify actual project:

Many of the benefits of this project are on a landscape-scale and difficult to quantify. Specific performance measures that will be used to quantify project benefits are:

- Acres of riparian land with increased relative cover of native vegetation and a decreased relative cover of invasive vegetation. This measure will indicate improvements to riparian vegetation composition, which in turn indicates improvements in available habitat.
- An increase in the number of native riparian plant species, which indicates habitat richness.
- The number of river miles treated will indicate the length of the river with a higher likelihood of reconnecting or maintaining connection with the floodplain. This will indicate river channel health as well as increase the likelihood of passive cottonwood gallery forest regeneration. It will also indicate the amount of fish habitat that was likely improved.
- The number of young adults engaged in this project through partnering with conservation corps. This number will show the number of young adults who have been trained in ecological restoration, first aid, and job skills.

Evaluation Criterion F—Department of the Interior and Bureau of Reclamation Priorities

Department of the Interior Priorities

- Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt
- Utilize science to identify best practices to manage land and water resources and adapt to changes in the environment

For over 18 years REW has been advancing the science of riparian restoration through partnership building, implementation, communication, conferences, and workshops. This project and the site selection are informed by wildlife and land management agencies, local, federal, and state wildlife and resource management plans, and GIS technology. The WRP

supports adaptive management, so that restoration projects can inform future needs and improve restoration success in the region.

- **Foster relationships with conservation organizations advocating for balanced stewardship and use of public lands**

This project involves the goals of regional and local non-profit entities as well as their collaboration with federal, state, tribal, and local governments and private landowners.

- **Identify and implement initiatives to expand access to Department lands for hunting and fishing**

TRO infestations grow dense and prevent access to river banks and rivers for recreationists such as boaters and anglers. Their removal increases accessibility to federal (Bureau of Land Management) and state lands.

- **Utilizing our natural resources**
- **Manage competition for grazing resources**

This project will improve access for grazing permittees on federal and state lands in Utah and Colorado by removing non-palatable invasive vegetation and replacing it with native species that provide a diversity of grazing resources that are more palatable to livestock.

- **Restoring trust with local communities**
- **Be a better neighbor with those closest to our resources by improving dialogue and relationships with persons and entities bordering our lands**

This project will improve grazing access for a grazing permittee who owns land bordering the project location and has also engaged in TRO removal on their own property. This project will therefore show goodwill to that owner and encourage their continued beneficial land management practices. This project also involves collaboration between local entities and federal land management.

- **Expand the lines of communication with governors, state natural resource offices, Fish and Wildlife offices, water authorities, county commissioners, tribes, and local communities**

This project is part of a larger restoration plan and partnership that has been developed collaboratively by bringing together diverse regional stakeholders including state natural resource offices, Fish and Wildlife management offices, resource conservation districts, county commissioners and county weed management programs, tribal entities, and local community organizations and landowners.

Bureau of Reclamation Priorities

- **Address Ongoing Drought**

This project mitigates problems caused by ongoing drought by making riparian areas more resilient to drought and to the wildland fire risks that often accompany drought conditions. This project is also part of a larger plan that specifically mentions the need to use adaptive management techniques to account for projected changes in both climate and river flow levels and timing.

- **Improve Water Supplies for Tribal and Rural Communities**

The White River is a municipal water source for the Town of Rangely, Colorado. In addition, the Ute Indian Tribe owns the land that borders the furthest downstream sections of the White River. As shown above, this project may increase water quantity and quality at a landscape scale, thus benefitting these communities.

Project Budget

Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment

- The Utah Partnership for Conservation and Development Watershed Restoration Initiative granted REW \$127,000 for restoration work on the White River in 2020. REW proposes using \$19,000 of this funding (the total amount of non-federal funding) to cover Utah Conservation Corps time for a portion of this project.
- A funding proposal was submitted to the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) on 11/5/20. Of the total \$73,441 requested in that proposal REW proposes using \$50,622 as matching funds to cover REW staff time and conservation corps time on this project.
 - REW is committed to ongoing fundraising efforts to support this project. If funding is denied from CWCB the implementation work would have to be adjusted in the case additional funding was not secured from another source.
- REW has a grant in place with the Walton Family Foundation, which will cover REW staff time expenses associated with conducting monitoring work on the White River. This proposal reflects \$4,169 of this grant as match.
- In-kind contributions will be made by the following entities to cover staff time and other expenses associated with this proposal:
 - White River and Douglas Creek Conservation District will provide \$2,970 in staff time.
 - Western Colorado Conservation Corps will provide \$1,700 of in-kind for 2 weeks of corps work.

- RiversEdge West will provide \$2,514 in in-kind travel costs associated with this project as well as \$4,403 in-kind costs for environmental and regulatory compliance.

The budget proposal does not include any project costs that have been or may be incurred prior to the award.

Budget Proposal

The total project cost is the sum of all allowable items of costs, including all required cost sharing and voluntary committed cost sharing, including third-party in-kind contributions, that are necessary to complete the project.

Table 1 - Total Project Cost Table SOURCE	AMOUNT
Costs to be reimbursed with the requested Federal funding	\$ 84,748
Costs to be paid by the applicant	\$ 73,831
Value of third-party in-kind contributions	\$ 11,227
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$ 169,806

Budget Narrative

Salaries and Wages

The following is an overview of the REW staff and hours projected to be spent on this project over a twenty-four-month period. This proposal will be executed with a diverse group of agencies and organizations in addition to REW staff as indicated in the qualification evaluation section above.

- Associate Director, Shannon Wadas – 105 hours = .05 FTE
- Restoration Coordinator, John Leary - 560 hours = .26 FTE
- Funding Program Coordinator, Kristen Jespersen - - 60 hours = .03 FTE
- Outreach Coordinator, Cara Kukuraitis—20 hours = .01 FTE
- GIS Coordinator, Ben Bloodworth - - 25 hours = .01 FTE

Task 1: Partnership Coordination

- Shannon Wadas, Associate Director for REW, will be the Project Manager for this project and will oversee all associated staff and project work.
- The REW Restoration Coordinator will conduct partner coordination and project planning.
- The Funding Program Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator will provide assistance with outreach and communications and funding resources development

Task 2: Implementation, Retreatment and Revegetation

- The REW Restoration Coordinator will communicate with partners and Conservation Corps crews to schedule restoration work, work through implementation and maintenance logistics, and travel to project sites in Utah and Colorado to help conduct implementation work for two years.
- The REW Associate Director will oversee the work of the Restoration Coordinator and provide support as needed over two years.

Task 3: Monitoring and Mapping

- The REW Restoration Coordinator will schedule work, work with partners and Conservation Corps, and conduct monitoring work on treated sites to track overall restoration progress. This will amount to 200 hours over two years including travel to project sites in Utah and Colorado.
- The REW GIS Coordinator will provide assistance inputting monitoring data into the WRP GIS database.
- The REW Associate Director will oversee the work of the Restoration Coordinator and provide support as needed over two years.

Shannon Wadas, Associate Director - Shannon has worked for REW since November of 2018. Shannon holds a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and Outdoor Recreation with a minor in Biology. Shannon worked for Colorado Parks and Wildlife for 10 years and most recently served as the northwest regional representative for U.S. Senator Michael Bennet. She covered six counties and filled various congressional aide roles including constituent advocacy, outreach on legislation and specific policy objectives, and planning and staffing the senator on official visits to the region. As the Associate Director of RiversEdge West, Shannon enjoys utilizing her natural resource experience, along with her management and leadership skills, to support staff and the overall mission of the organization

John Leary, Restoration Coordinator – John has been with REW since June of 2019 and holds a Bachelors in Geography and Spanish from the University of Montana and Masters Degree in

Environmental Science and Policy from Northern Arizona University, where he researched ecosystem services and habitat connectivity on agricultural lands in Costa Rica. After graduating he spent several years working on backcountry trails, vegetation monitoring, and ecological restoration projects in Montana and the Southwest, including two years restoring riparian areas along Arizona's Verde and Gila rivers.

Kristen Jespersen, Funding Program Coordinator - Kristen works with practitioners to procure short-term and long-term funding for project work and coordinates capacity building activities with partnerships. Kristen has more than 15 years of experience with land management and conservation planning both in the private and public sectors. She earned a Master of Arts in International Policy Studies from the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Monterey, CA and a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from Reed College in Portland, OR.

Ben Bloodworth, GIS/Beetle Program Coordinator – Ben has worked at REW since 2013. He works as a Program Coordinator, focusing on the Tamarisk Beetle Program and organization-wide GIS responsibilities. He worked in wetlands for almost twenty years, with an emphasis on restoration for the last twelve. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina, and a Masters of Science in Environmental Science from Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage, Alaska.

Cara Kukuraitis, Outreach Coordinator - Cara manages RiversEdge West's community outreach, education, and marketing strategies ranging from coordinating RiversEdge West's annual conference, annual Raft the River fundraiser, and Education Program, to managing REW's website, outreach materials, and social media pages. Cara received her Bachelors of Science in Public and Environmental Management from Indiana University in 2008. Prior to joining RiversEdge West, Cara worked as a Naturalist, teaching environmental education in Chicago, IL; a Biology Technician, conducting backcountry stream surveys in Oregon; and coordinated sustainability efforts at Lake Powell in Utah.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefit costs are calculated at 35% and are based on actual costs of health insurance allowance, FICA, Social Security, 403(b)7 match, Employee Education Fund, and Paid Time Off.

Travel

Task 1

- 3 trips from Grand Junction to Meeker, CO (~200 miles roundtrip) for partnership meetings to take place over twenty-four months for two staff carpooling at the GSA rate of \$.58 per gallon equals a total of \$348.
- Lodging estimates are for a one-night stay per trip for two staff at the GSA rate of \$96/night for the area. Three nights for two people at the \$96 rate equals \$576.

- The standard meals and incidentals rate for Colorado is \$55/day. For three trips of two days for two people the total is \$660.

Task 2

- Two trips from Grand Junction to the Meeker, CO area (~200 miles roundtrip) and two trips from Grand Junction from Vernal area (~300 miles roundtrip) to visit and do work on project sites at \$.58 per gallon equals a total of \$580.
- Lodging estimates are for a one-night stay per trip for two staff at the average GSA rate of \$100/night. One night per visit equals four nights for a total of \$400.
- The standard meals and incidentals rate for Colorado is \$55/day. For four trips of two days each this amounts to \$440.

Task 3

- Two trips from Grand Junction to the Meeker, CO area (~200 miles roundtrip) and two trips from Grand Junction from Vernal area (~300 miles roundtrip) to conduct monitoring on project sites over twenty-four months at \$.58 per gallon equals a total of \$580.
- Lodging estimates are for a one-night stay per trip for two staff at the average GSA rate of \$100/night. One night per visit equals four nights for a total of \$400.

The standard meals and incidentals rate for Colorado is \$55/day. For four trips of two days each this amounts to \$440.

Materials and Supplies

Approximately 60 gallons of herbicide will be needed to conduct initial removal and retreatment on both the Colorado sites. Herbicide costs \$56.25 a gallon so the total amount required for this project is \$3,375. This total does not include the amount of herbicide that will be used to treat the Yellow Creek site or the Utah sites.

Native plant materials such as cottonwood seedlings, sumac, and box elder will be purchased for the revegetation work of this project. Plant material costs vary by type and size but on average they cost \$25/ea and REW expects to purchase 60 plants for revegetation on the 16 acres. This will cost a total of \$1,500.

Contractual

Contractual selection is based on the assigned geographic region of the associated conservation corps.

The weekly rates for Western Colorado Conservation Corps and Utah Conservation Corps (UCC) are \$8,500 a week for a saw crew comprised of 8 people. This rate includes the following expenses:

Personnel	\$ 5,826.00
Fringe	\$ 757.38
Staff/Program Management	\$ 379.99
Food	\$ 224.63
Tools and Supplies	\$ 580.75
Travel	\$ 81.25
Training	\$ 650.00
Total Direct Costs	\$ 8,500.00

For half a week of retreatment work UCC is charging just under half the weekly rate \$4,000.

Initial removal on 16 acres in Colorado over twenty-four months will amount to two weeks of work and retreatment and revegetation on 16 acres will amount to two weeks of work over two years.

25 acres of treatment are scheduled for work on the Yellow Creek site over twenty-four months. This is estimated to take 7 weeks total. At \$8,500/week this will amount to a total of \$59,500. REW has requested \$26,775 from the Colorado Water Conservation Board to cover a portion of this cost.

Initial removal on 9 acres of riparian lands along the mains stem of the White River in Utah over twenty-four months will amount to two weeks of work, which will cost a total of \$17,000. Retreatment work on 9 acres will amount to an additional half a week of work over twenty-four months, which will cost a total of \$2,000.

Third-Party In-Kind Contributions

Identify all work that will be accomplished by third-party contributors or volunteers, including a breakdown of all tasks to be completed, and a detailed budget estimate of time, rates, supplies, and materials that will be required for each task.

White River and Douglas Creek Conservation District staff will coordinate implementation on the Yellow Creek site for two years, which entail working with the private landowner and scheduling conservation corps time. Staff will provide 60 hours of staff time to oversee this project over two years. At \$49.50/hour this will amount to a total of \$2,970 in in-kind staff hours.

Western Colorado Conservation Corps will donate \$850 in staff time for project coordination and planning per week (for two weeks) of crew time spent on initial removal amounting to an in-kind donation of \$1,700.

Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Costs

5% of the total project costs has been included in the budget, cost- shared by REW and Reclamation.

Indirect Costs

REW will charge the de minimus 10% indirect costs to all BOR expenses outlined in the budget and the two Western Colorado contracts up to \$25,000.

Required Permits or Approvals

The NEPA process has already been completed for work in Utah and Colorado.

Documentation in Support of Applicant Eligibility

Relationship Between RiversEdge West and the White River Partnership



Bureau of Reclamation Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
86-69200 P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

November 17, 2020

Re: RiversEdge West as the fiscal agent on behalf of the White River Partnership

Ms. Morgan,
RiversEdge West (REW) is applying as the fiscal agent on behalf of the White River Partnership (WRP). REW was awarded funding through the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Phase I program to formalize the WRP and develop a restoration plan. As the lead coordinator of the WRP, REW is an appropriate entity to request and manage funding for the WRP through this opportunity. Letters from key WRP partners in support of REW acting as the fiscal agent for this funding opportunity are attached as a separate document in this application package. In addition, support for REW acting as the fiscal agent for this funding opportunity is also reflected in the Letters of Support provided by WRP partners. As a 501c(3) non-profit organization, RiversEdge West meets the requirements to serve as a fiscal agent for the purposes of applying for, accepting, and administering Federal funding on behalf of the WRP as described in Section C.1 of the FOA.

Sincerely,
John Leary
Restoration Coordinator, RiversEdge West

FEIN 27-0007315
www.RiversEdgeWest.org
P.O. Box 1907 | Grand Junction, CO 81502
Advancing the restoration of riparian lands through collaboration, education, and technical assistance.

Letters of Support for RiversEdge West to Serve as Fiscal Agent for the White River Partnership

Bureau of Reclamation Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
86-69200 P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

November 17, 2020

Ms. Morgan -


This letter recognizes RiversEdge West as a legitimate fiscal sponsor on behalf of the White River Partnership (WRP) for this Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase II Grant Application. WRP is a newly formed watershed group comprised of multiple stakeholders and is not a formal non-profit organization, but a coalition of federal, state, local, non-profit and private entities with a pending Memorandum of Understanding and a draft riparian restoration plan. As the main coordinator of the WRP, RiversEdge West is an appropriate entity to request and manage funding for the WRP.

Sincerely,

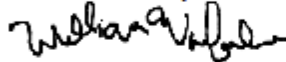
4m Ranch: See attached letter below.

Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office: See attached letter below.

Bureau of Land Management Vernal Field Office: See attached letter below.

 Grant and Contract Officer, USU Sponsored Programs

Utah Conservation Corps: Maren Redd of Utah State University on behalf of Utah Conservation Corps



Utah State University Ecogeomorphology and Topographic Analysis Lab: William Macfarlane, Research Associate



Western Colorado Conservation Corps: Matt Jennings, Associate Director

White River Alliance: Shawn Welder, President: See attached letter below.



November 16, 2020

To the Water Resources and Planning Office of the BOR,

The 4M Ranch strongly supports the White River Partnership project and its recent grant request to the Bureau of Reclamation to remove tamarisk and Russian Olive in the Yellow Creek and White River main stem.

The 4M Ranch supports RiversEdge West applying for this funding on behalf of the White River Partnership.

These invasive plants are spreading quickly and as the world's number one elk habitat it is important to us as ranchers and habitat managers to ensure that the native habitat has the opportunity to thrive and be a healthy riparian for native wildlife.

With best regards,

Deirdre Macnab
Owner, 4M Ranch
Meeker, CO

Cc: John Leary, RiversEdge

37669 State Highway 64
Meeker, Colorado 81648



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Vernal Field Office
170 South 500 East
Vernal, Utah 84078

In Reply Refer To:
6740 (LLUTG01000)

17 NOV 2020

Ms. Avra Morgan
Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Mail Code 86-69200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Morgan:

Regarding the proposal by Rivers Edge West on behalf of the White River Partnership, this letter confirms that the NEPA process has been completed for the Environmental Assessment (EA), "White River Enhancement Project" DOI-BLM-UT-G010-2014-009-EA.

Section 2.1 of this document states: " Under the Proposed Action, the BLM, in cooperation with other federal, state, and local agencies, proposes to mechanically and chemically remove approximately 1,209 acres of Russian olive and tamarisk from the lands located within the White River Corridor during the spring through fall months. The project area is located in Utah County. Total river miles for the project area are 47.8 river miles which consists of multiple land ownerships (54% is BLM, 24% is private, 12% is State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA), and 10% is Indian Trust). The main focus of the proposed action will include BLM administered lands. However, this EA analyzes impacts to all land ownerships within the White River Corridor as project activities may occur on private, SITLA, and tribe lands through other agreements or contracts that may arise. It is acknowledged that not all land ownerships may participate in the project as they may decline the opportunity for proposed treatments on their lands; therefore, project activities would not occur in those areas. Due to the scale of the project, removal may have to be done over the next ten years as funding and time will allow."

If you have any questions, please contact me at 435-781-3416.

Sincerely,

Roger Bankert
Field Manager

INTERIOR REGION 7 • UPPER COLORADO BASIN
COLORADO, NEW MEXICO, UTAH, WYOMING



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
White River Field Office
220 East Market Street
Meeker, CO 81641



In Reply Refer To:
L1160 (LLCON05000)

November 12, 2020

Bureau of Reclamation Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
86-69200 P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Ms. Morgan:

This letter recognizes RiversEdge West as a legitimate fiscal sponsor on behalf of the White River Partnership (WRP) for this Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase II Grant Application. WRP is a newly formed watershed group comprised of the BLM White River Field Office and Vernal Field Office, Western Colorado and Utah Conservation Corps, White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts, and Utah State University. This group is not a formal non-profit organization, but a coalition of federal, state, local, non-profit and private entities with a pending Memorandum of Understanding and a draft riparian restoration plan. As the main coordinator of the WRP, RiversEdge West is an appropriate entity to request and manage funding for the WRP.

Please contact myself at 970-878-3800 or one of the White River Field Office Riparian Coordinators (Jessica Sanow at 970-878-3836 or Mary Taylor at 970-878-3807) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kent E. Walter
Field Manager

INTERIOR REGION 7 • UPPER COLORADO BASIN
COLORADO, NEW MEXICO, UTAH, WYOMING

WHITE RIVER ALLIANCE

November 16, 2020

To the Water Resources and Planning Office of the BOR,

The White River Alliance is a non-profit organization of stakeholders who are committed to the protection and preservation of the White River.

As president, I am writing on behalf of our members to strongly support the White River Partnership project and its recent grant request to the Bureau of Reclamation to remove tamarisk and Russian Olive in the Yellow Creek and White River main stem.

The White River Alliance supports RiversEdge West application for this funding on behalf of the White River Partnership.

These invasive plants are spreading quickly and this grant will be an important step in the right direction. This initiative will be an important program to help protect the native riparian habitat along the White River.

With best regards,

Shawn Welder, president
White River Alliance

White River Partnership and the Definition of “Watershed Group” Mission Statement, Membership, and Regular Meetings Schedule



Bureau of Reclamation Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
86-69200 P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

November 17, 2020

Ms. Morgan,
As the lead coordinator of the White River Partnership (WRP), RiversEdge West (REW) is submitting this letter to certify that the WRP is a grassroots, nonregulatory entity that addresses water availability and quality issues within the White River Watershed, represents a diverse group of stakeholders, and is capable of promoting the sustainable use of water resources in the White River Watershed.

A Letter of Support from the White River Partnership stating that REW is authorized to apply as a fiscal agent on behalf of the watershed group is included as a separate attachment in this application package.

The White River Partnership’s Riparian Restoration Plan is included in this application package as a separate document.

The Mission Statement of the WRP is:

The White River Partnership (WRP) is committed to restoring and maintaining healthy riparian areas along the White River in northwest Colorado and northeast Utah through collaboration among public, private, and non-profit entities.

The Vision Statement of the WRP is:

The White River is a dynamic riverine ecosystem where the threats from Russian olive, tamarisk, and related invasive plant species have been mitigated and native, resilient vegetation communities reflect a healthy river system beneficial to fish and wildlife habitat that supports the ecological, social, and economic sustainability of the multiple land uses found along the White River corridor.

The WRP holds regular partnership meetings. Below is a timeline of past meetings, as well as scheduled future meetings. Meeting agendas, minutes, and presentations are available from the WRP webpage hosted by REW:

<https://www.riversedgewest.org/white-river-partnership-meetings>.

FEIN 27-0007315
www.RiversEdgeWest.org
P.O. Box 1907 | Grand Junction, CO 81502
Advancing the restoration of riparian lands through collaboration, education, and technical assistance.



Upcoming Meetings:

- November 18, 2020 (online)
- Mid-December, 2020 (online)

Previous Meetings:

- September 29, 2020 (online)
- July 28, 2020 (online)
- June 23, 2020 (online)
- June 2, 2020 (online)
- May 19, 2020 (online)
- March 10, 2020 (Rangely, CO)
- November 21, 2019 (Vernal, UT)
- November 19, 2019 (Rangely, CO)

The White River Partnership has a draft Memorandum of Understanding. Therefore, official membership has not been established yet. However, the following entities have regularly attended partnership meetings, been involved in the restoration plan development, and/or actively participate in partnership communications and/or activities:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Northwest Colorado District | Town of Meeker, CO |
| BLM Utah Aquatic Habitat Management Program | Town of Rangely, CO |
| BLM Vernal Field Office | TriCounty Health |
| BLM White River Field Office | Uintah County, UT |
| Canyon Country Youth Corps | United States Bureau of Reclamation |
| Colorado Parks and Wildlife | United States Fish and Wildlife Service |
| Colorado Water Conservation Board | Utah Conservation Corps |
| Natural Resources Conservation Service-Colorado | Utah Department of Environmental Quality |
| Private Industries | Utah Division of Wildlife Resources |
| Private Landowners | Utah State University |
| Rio Blanco County Weed and Pest Department | Ute Indian Tribe |
| RiversEdge West | Western Colorado Conservation Corps |
| State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration | White River Alliance |
| | White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts |

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

John Leary

Restoration Coordinator, RiversEdge West

FEIN 27-0007315

www.RiversEdgeWest.org

P.O. Box 1907 | Grand Junction, CO 81502

Advancing the restoration of riparian lands through collaboration, education, and technical assistance.

Watershed Restoration Plan

Bureau of Reclamation Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
86-69200 P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

November 17, 2020

Ms. Morgan,

Re: White River Partnership Watershed Restoration Plan

RiversEdge West received a Phase I WATERSmart CWMP grant in May 2019 (R18AP00122) to formalize the White River Partnership and develop a riparian restoration plan for woody invasive plants in the White River basin in Utah and Colorado. To date, all Phase I deliverables have been met and future deliverables are on schedule to be met. The completion date for the Phase I grant is March 31, 2021, therefore the restoration plan is in draft form (and on schedule to be completed according to the terms of the agreement).

The completed sections of the draft restoration plan are detailed and developed enough to support the project in this application package. Partnership members have been involved in the development of the plan through partnership meetings, e-mail communications, restoration site visits, and phone calls. Partnership members have reviewed the sections that are included in the draft plan. The restoration plan represents a holistic approach to addressing multiple issues related to water resources in the White River Watershed and has been developed by a diverse group of stakeholders (see list of partner involvement below).

The draft plan is available at the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KxChMvaxE3bpGo-y0-6HgTzEehlcpy2Q?usp=sharing>

Sincerely,
John Leary
Restoration Coordinator, RiversEdge West

Letters of Support

Letters of Support from partners are listed below. Some partners wrote one letter to serve the purpose of both a Letter of Support for the project and as a Letter of Support for REW to apply for funding on behalf of the White River Partnership. Those letters are listed both in this section and in the section documenting the White River Partnership's support for REW as the applicant for this grant.

Letters are provided by:

- 4m Ranch
- Bureau of Land Management White River Field Office
- Colorado Water Conservation Board
- Utah Conservation Corps
- Utah Partnership for Conservation and Development Watershed Restoration Initiative
- Walton Family Foundation
- Western Colorado Conservation Corps
- White River Alliance
- White River and Douglas Creek Conservation District



November 16, 2020

To the Water Resources and Planning Office of the BOR,

The 4M Ranch strongly supports the White River Partnership project and its recent grant request to the Bureau of Reclamation to remove tamarisk and Russian Olive in the Yellow Creek and White River main stem.

The 4M Ranch supports RiversEdge West applying for this funding on behalf of the White River Partnership.

These invasive plants are spreading quickly and as the world's number one elk habitat it is important to us as ranchers and habitat managers to ensure that the native habitat has the opportunity to thrive and be a healthy riparian for native wildlife.

With best regards,

Deirdre Macnab
Owner, 4M Ranch
Meeker, CO

Cc: John Leary, RiversEdge

37669 State Highway 64
Meeker, Colorado 81648



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
White River Field Office
220 East Market Street
Meeker, CO 81641

In Reply Refer To:
L1160 (LLCON05000)

November 12, 2020

Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail code: 86-69200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

RE: RiversEdge West's application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program

Dear Ms. Morgan,

I am writing in support of RiversEdge West's (REW) application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase II Grant Application for initial treatments and/or secondary treatments and active restoration along the White River and Yellow Creek in northwest Colorado. The terrestrial and aquatic habitats of the White River watershed are threatened by infestations of tamarisk and Russian olive.

REW's proposal to remove tamarisk and Russian olive will support the goals of the White River Field Office by improving habitat for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife through the reestablishment of natural river geomorphology and native riparian vegetation communities. This project will also benefit public land users by reducing the risk of wildfire in the riparian corridor and by improving the White River's aesthetics for the growing number of recreationists who utilize the river.

In support of REW's proposal, the White River Field Office is committing to provide access to BLM treatment parcels and ensure that analysis and documentation is/will be complete so treatments can proceed.

Please contact me at 970-878-3800 or one of the White River Field Office Riparian Coordinators (Jessica Sanow at 970-878-3836 or Mary Taylor at 970-878-3807) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

KENT WALTER Digitally signed by KENT WALTER
Date: 2020.11.12 14:25:58 -0700

Kent E. Walter
Field Manager

INTERIOR REGION 7 • UPPER COLORADO BASIN
COLORADO, NEW MEXICO, UTAH, WYOMING



COLORADO

Colorado Water
Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources
1313 Sherman Street, Room 718
Denver, CO 80203

11/17/2020

Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail Code: 86-69200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Morgan,

The Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) is pleased to submit this letter in support of RiversEdge West's (REW) application on behalf of the White River Partnership (WRP) to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase II.

CWCB has a long history of successful collaboration with REW-led riparian restoration partnerships on the Dolores and Colorado rivers and looks forward to the implementation of the WRP's recent restoration planning efforts. The WRP and its planning efforts reflect broad-based support for riparian restoration in northwest Colorado and northeast Utah. CWCB staff have been involved in the plan discussions. These efforts will effect long term, landscape-scale improvements to the White River basin and its communities, including but not limited to enhanced habitat for endangered and conservation priority fishes, improved water quality, and increased recreational use of the river.

If received, this funding will support CWCB's mission to conserve, develop, protect and manage Colorado's water for present and future generations. This proposal will also support the Colorado Water Plan and the Yampa/White/Green Basin Implementation Plan, which both cite healthy rivers and riparian corridors as major themes.

Regards,

Chris Sturm
Watershed Program Director





7205 Old Main Hill
Logan, Utah 84322-7205
Phone (435) 797 0694
Fax (435) 797 8138



Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail Code: 86-69200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

November 12, 2020

Dear Ms. Morgan:

On behalf of the Utah Conservation Corps (UCC), I would like to submit a letter of commitment in support of the White River Partnership.

The UCC is an AmeriCorps program dedicated to developing the conservation leaders of tomorrow. The UCC seeks to improve the quality of public lands and the communities surrounding them through field crew projects.

This White River Partnership project would positively impact this watershed that UCC crews have been working on for over the past decade. This partnership allows for UCC crews to build conservation experience while completing critically-needed habitat restoration.

UCC field crews are sawyer (chain saw operation) certified, herbicide/pesticide applicator certified, and highly skilled for implementing the woody invasive control strategies necessary for the successful restoration of the identified riparian and uplands habitat. The UCC also has a fleet of rafts and can access remote locations where this riparian work takes place. This project is especially vital during the COVID-19 pandemic where public lands have seen more use and more young people are seeking meaningful employment experience.

UCC looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to the White River Partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sean Damitz".

Sean Damitz
Director, Utah Conservation Corps



Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail Code: 86-69200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

11/3/2020

I am writing this letter of support and commitment of the Western Colorado Conservation Corps for RiversEdge West's application for the Bureau of Reclamation grant. This funding would allow us to help remove invasive species on the White River and to help fortify efforts of the White River Restoration Partnership.

The Western Colorado Conservation Corps of Partners (WCCC) has been a part of both the Desert Rivers Collaborative as well as the Dolores River Restoration Partnership for several years and is eager to help the new partnership. We at the WCCC enjoy working with other groups in a collaborative effort. We have had the opportunity to work with RiversEdge West on multiple projects and are eager to start conservation and riparian restoration projects on the main stem of the White River and one of its major tributaries, Yellow Creek. The WCCC has done an enormous amount of work on the Colorado, Dolores and Gunnison rivers. We cannot think of a better opportunity to keep the momentum going on these projects.

The Western Colorado Conservation Corps is a program of Mesa County Partners, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit that provides youth and young adults with an environmentally focused educational and employment experience. The WCCC works closely with government agencies and other nonprofits to provide opportunities for young people in western Colorado. Corps members have the opportunity to learn life skills and provide service to their community, as well as take on civic and environmental responsibilities designed to enrich their lives and their surroundings. The WCCC's purpose is to serve youth in western Colorado through service by improving their community and gaining valuable life experience for their success in the future.

This project would allow traditional youth and young adult crews the ability to work on riparian restoration in western Colorado. This application is clearly in line with the mission of the Western Colorado Conservation Corps. We also commit to supplying this project with \$1,700 in in-kind support for this project.

The Western Colorado Conservation Corps is committed to assisting RiversEdge West as well as the White River Restoration Partnership in improving and enhancing the river corridors here in western Colorado.

Sincerely,

Matt Jennings, Associate Director
Western Colorado Conservation Corps
2838 S North Ave.
Grand Junction Co. 81501
970-241-1027

November 12, 2020

Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail Code: 86-69200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Morgan,

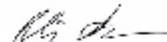
The Walton Family Foundation (WFF) is pleased to submit this letter in support of RiversEdge West's (REW) application on behalf of the White River Partnership (WRP) to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase II. The WFF supports the financial commitment of \$4,169 in matching funding to REW's proposal.

WFF has a long history of successful collaboration with REW-led riparian restoration partnerships on the Dolores river and others across the Southwest and looks forward to the implementation of the WRP's recent restoration and planning efforts. The WRP and its planning efforts reflect broad-based support for riparian restoration in northwest Colorado and northeast Utah. These efforts will affect long term, landscape-scale improvements to the White River basin and its communities, including but not limited to enhanced habitat for endangered and conservation priority fishes, increased water quality, and improved recreational use of the river.

If received, this funding will support WFF's mission to protect rivers and the communities they support. This proposal will also support the Colorado Water Plan and the Yampa/White/Green Basin Implementation Plan, which both cite healthy rivers and riparian corridors as major themes.

Please contact me with any further questions.

Sincerely,



Peter Skidmore

Program Officer, The Walton Family Foundation

WHITE RIVER ALLIANCE

November 16, 2020

To the Water Resources and Planning Office of the BOR,

The White River Alliance is a non-profit organization of stakeholders who are committed to the protection and preservation of the White River.

As president, I am writing on behalf of our members to strongly support the White River Partnership project and its recent grant request to the Bureau of Reclamation to remove tamarisk and Russian Olive in the Yellow Creek and White River main stem.

The White River Alliance supports RiversEdge West application for this funding on behalf of the White River Partnership.

These invasive plants are spreading quickly and this grant will be an important step in the right direction. This initiative will be an important program to help protect the native riparian habitat along the White River.

With best regards,

Shawn Welder, president
White River Alliance



Promoting the wise use of all natural resources

November 17, 2020

Bureau of Reclamation Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
86-69200 P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Ms. Morgan,

The White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts (Districts) provide this letter of support for Rivers Edge West's (REW) Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Grant application to remove tamarisk on the White River and tributaries.

The function of a conservation district is to make available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resource.

REW is participating on a Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) with the Districts where the Yellow Creek drainage is a high priority for tamarisk removal due to it is one of the up-most locations of tamarisk in the White River basin. The Districts are prepared to commit \$2,970 of staff time for in-kind match on the Yellow Creek site.

Thank you for your consideration of this grant and please feel free to contact our office with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Callie Hendrickson".

Callie Hendrickson
Executive Director

P.O. Box 837 – 351 7th Street – Meeker, CO 81641 – Phone (970) 878-9838



Tyler W. Thompson
Program Director

1594 W. North Temple Ste 3310
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116-5610
Phone: 801-538-4874
tylerthompson@utah.gov

November 16, 2020

Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail Code: 86-69200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Avra Morgan:

The Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative (UWRI) has supported several phases of the White River Enhancement Project (Phase 6) to restore the White River ecosystem to a proper functioning condition. This opportunity to connect the restoration effort in both Colorado and Utah would positively help us and our partners work towards the goal of a landscape-scale restoration project across CO and UT. This year UWRI will be contributing \$127,500 (\$19,049 state and \$108,451 federal) towards this effort on the Utah side. Thank you for your consideration on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Thompson", is written over a horizontal line.

Tyler Thompson
Watershed Restoration Initiative Director

TT/mb

Official Resolution



Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail Code: 86-89200
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

11/16/2020

Dear Ms. Morgan,

I am writing you regarding section *D.2.2.10 Official Resolution* in the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program – Phase II application, specifically RiversEdge West's (REW) application on behalf of the White River Partnership (WRP).

REW's board of director held a special meeting on November 16, 2020 and voted on the two following resolutions.

1. **RESOLVED:** to allow REW to receive funding from the federal government, including without limitation a Phase II grant from the Bureau of Reclamation to support implementation, partnership development and planning for the White River Partnership in Colorado and Utah, and other purposes incident thereto as may be permitted by the grant.
2. **FURTHER RESOLVED:** to allow Rusty Lloyd or his appropriate REW designee to enter into an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation, other applicable federal agency, or its appropriate federal designee to finalize the terms of the grant application(s) and award(s) and to take all other steps necessary or appurtenant thereto.

The board passed both resolutions unanimously, 11-0. Below are the REW board of directors and their vote on the resolutions.

Jay Wilcox – Board President, Yea
Kelianne Chamberlain – Board Vice President, Yea
Isabel Borman – Board Secretary, Yea
Robb Parsons – Board Treasurer, Yea
Tom Ryan, Yea
Barb Chamberlin, Yea
Tom Oliver, Yea
Patty Gelatt, Yea
Robert Atchison, Yea
Yasmee Najmi, Yea
Don Schuster, Yea

Please feel free to contact me with any questions about this resolution at 970-256-7400 or at rlloyd@riversedgewest.org

Regards,

Rusty Lloyd, Executive Director

FEIN 27-0007315

www.RiversEdgeWest.org

P.O. Box 1907 | Grand Junction, CO 81502

Advancing the restoration of riparian lands through collaboration, education, and technical assistance.