

Technical Proposal:
Expansion of the Western Slope Conservation Center
A Local Watershed Group in Paonia, Colorado
Task B

Submitted By:



Western Slope Conservation Center
Sarah Sauter, Executive Director
PO Box 1612 (Address for U.S. Mail)
204 Poplar Avenue (Delivery address for UPS and FedEx)
Paonia, CO 81428
Phone and Fax 970 527-5307

Submitted To:

WaterSMART: Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP) for FY 2013
Funding Opportunity Number: R13AS80015
CFDA Number: 15.517

Bureau of Reclamation
Attn: Michelle Maher, Mail Code: 84-27810
PO Box 250007
Denver Federal Center
6th Avenue and Kipling Street
Denver CO 80225

June 11, 2013

Table of Contents

1.0	Executive Summary	4
2.0	Background Data	4
3.0	Project Description	7
3.1	Description of Applicant.....	7
3.2	Eligibility	8
3.3	Goals	8
3.4	Approach.....	9
3.4.1	Information Gathering: Watershed Assessment	9
3.4.2	Mission Statement, Articles of Incorporation, and Coordinator.....	9
3.4.3	Outreach.....	10
3.4.4	Identifying Problems & Needs: Development of Watershed Management Project Concepts	11
3.4.5	Development of the Watershed Restoration Plan	12
3.4.6	Action Plan for Implementation.....	13
3.4.7	Final Report	13
3.5	Proposed Timeline	14
4.0	Evaluation Criteria	14
4.1	Criteria A: Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope.....	14
4.1.1	A1: Watershed Group Diversity	14
4.1.2	A2: Geographic Scope	15
4.2	Criteria B: Addressing Critical Watershed Needs	16
4.2.1	B1: Critical Watershed Needs or Issues.....	16
4.2.2	B2: Watershed Group Contributions that Address Watershed Needs or Issues.....	19
4.3	Evaluation Criteria C: Implementation and Results	21
4.3.1	C1: Project Planning	21
4.3.2	C2: Readiness to Proceed.....	22
4.4	Criteria D: Watershed Group/Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) Nexus	22
5.0	LETTERS OF SUPPORT	24
6.0	BOARD RESOLUTION	26
7.0	REQUIRED PERMITS OR APPLICATIONS	26
8.0	FUNDING PLAN	26
9.0	BUDGET PROPOSAL	27
9.1	Salaries and Wages	28
9.2	Fringe Benefits.....	28
9.3	Travel	28
9.4	Equipment.....	28
9.5	Materials and Supplies.....	28

9.6	Contractual.....	28
9.7	Reporting.....	29
9.8	Other	29
9.9	Indirect Costs	29
9.10	Total Costs	29

1.0 Executive Summary

June 11, 2013

Western Slope Conservation Center
Paonia, Delta County, Colorado

The Western Slope Conservation Center (WSSC) is a well-established citizen-directed local watershed organization serving the North Fork and portions of the Lower Gunnison watersheds in west-central Colorado. The Conservation Center is requesting \$100,000 over a two year period from the WaterSMART: Cooperative Watershed Management Program to hire staff and/or consultants to expand the organization's activities and develop watershed management project concepts. The organization currently has a mission statement and a watershed plan. The completion of the project outlined in this proposal will meet all four requirements for Phase I of the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

2.0 Background Data

The Conservation Center has traditionally focused its efforts in the North Fork of the Gunnison watershed (HUC 14020004). The North Fork of the Gunnison River watershed is located in western Colorado's Gunnison and Delta counties (Figure 1). The river begins at the confluence of Anthracite Creek and Muddy Creek in the Gunnison National Forest. The North Fork flows 33 miles in a southwesterly direction through the Towns of Paonia and Hotchkiss, confined by a valley of multiple river terraces that run parallel to the river. The valley is flanked by Grand Mesa on the north and west and the West Elk Wilderness area on the east and south. The North Fork watershed drains approximately 969 square miles.

There are many uses of water in the North Fork watershed, all of which require adequate water quantity. Irrigation is the dominate water use in the Lower Gunnison Watershed, accounting for approximately 98% of the water withdrawals in Delta County¹ (See Table 1). Delta County municipal and industrial demands are expected to increase by 40% from 2000 to 2030². Conversely, overall estimated agricultural demands in the Gunnison Basin are expected to decrease by as much as 65,000 acre-feet/year over the next 20 years³.

¹ Kenny, J.F., Barber, N.L., Hutson, S.S., Linsey, K.S., Lovelace, J.K., and Maupin, M.A., 2009, Estimated use of water in the United States in 2005: U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1344, 52 p.

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/1344/>

² CDM. 2004. Statewide Water Supply Initiative report. Chapter 1: Introduction. Prepared for Colorado Water Conservation Board. <http://cwcb.state.co.us/IWMD/PhaseIReport.htm>.

³ CDM. 2004c. Statewide Water Supply Initiative report. Chapter 5: Projected Water Use. Prepared for Colorado Water Conservation Board. <http://cwcb.state.co.us/IWMD/PhaseIReport.htm>.

The decline in anticipated agricultural demand is expected to come from urbanization and agricultural transfers.

There are over 800 irrigation diversions in the North Fork watershed. The Fire Mountain Canal is the largest diversion on the North Fork with a decree of 238 cfs. The ten largest water users in the North Fork are listed below in Table 2. The largest reservoir in the watershed is Paonia Reservoir, which was completed in 1962 as part of the Bureau of Reclamation's Paonia Project. The project provides full and supplemental irrigation water supplies for 15,300 acres of land in the vicinity of Paonia and Hotchkiss.

Non-consumptive water uses include environment, recreation and hydropower generation. There are no major hydroelectric facilities in the watershed, but there is a growing interest in the use of micro-hydro in irrigation canals. There are twenty six instream flow rights and ten natural lake level filings in the North Fork watershed, all of which are held by the Colorado Water Conservation Board. There is no active monitoring of instream flows in the North Fork watershed. Significant flow-dependent environmental and recreational flow values in watershed include⁴ 1) aquatic-dependent species (Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Roundtail Chub, Flannelmouth Sucker, Boreal Toad, Northern Leopard Frog, and Bald Eagle; 2) Rare aquatic dependent plants and wetland communities; 3) Special waters (i.e. Outstanding Waters designations); 4) Whitewater boating; 5) Riparian/wetland wildlife viewing and hunting; and 6) Significant fishing.

In 2010 the North Fork River Improvement Association completed a watershed plan update for the North Fork of the Gunnison Watershed. The plan identified nine major watershed problems:

1. Four segments of the North Fork are listed on Colorado's 2010 303(d) impaired water list as high priority for selenium impairment.
2. Tributaries to the North Fork are on the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) list for total recoverable iron
3. The North Fork is recognized as a major contributor of salt to the Colorado River System.
4. E. coli samples occasionally exceed state water quality standards.
5. There are no baseline data to evaluate potential impacts from natural gas development.
6. The river channel remains structurally unstable in some reaches.

⁴ CDM. 2009. Nonconsumptive Needs Assessment Focus Mapping. Gunnison Basin Mapping Results: Appendix D-3. Prepared for Colorado Water Conservation Board.
<http://cwcb.state.co.us/IWMD/COsWaterSupplyFuture/CosWaterSupplyFuture.htm>

7. In-stream flows, especially from Paonia to Hotchkiss are low to intermittent during the summer.
8. Paonia Reservoir has lost 24% of its storage capacity
9. Public access to the river is limited.

Table 1: 2005 Delta County Water Use (AFY)

Public Supply	Domestic	Irrigation	Power	Total
6,597	2,162	505,254	0	514,013

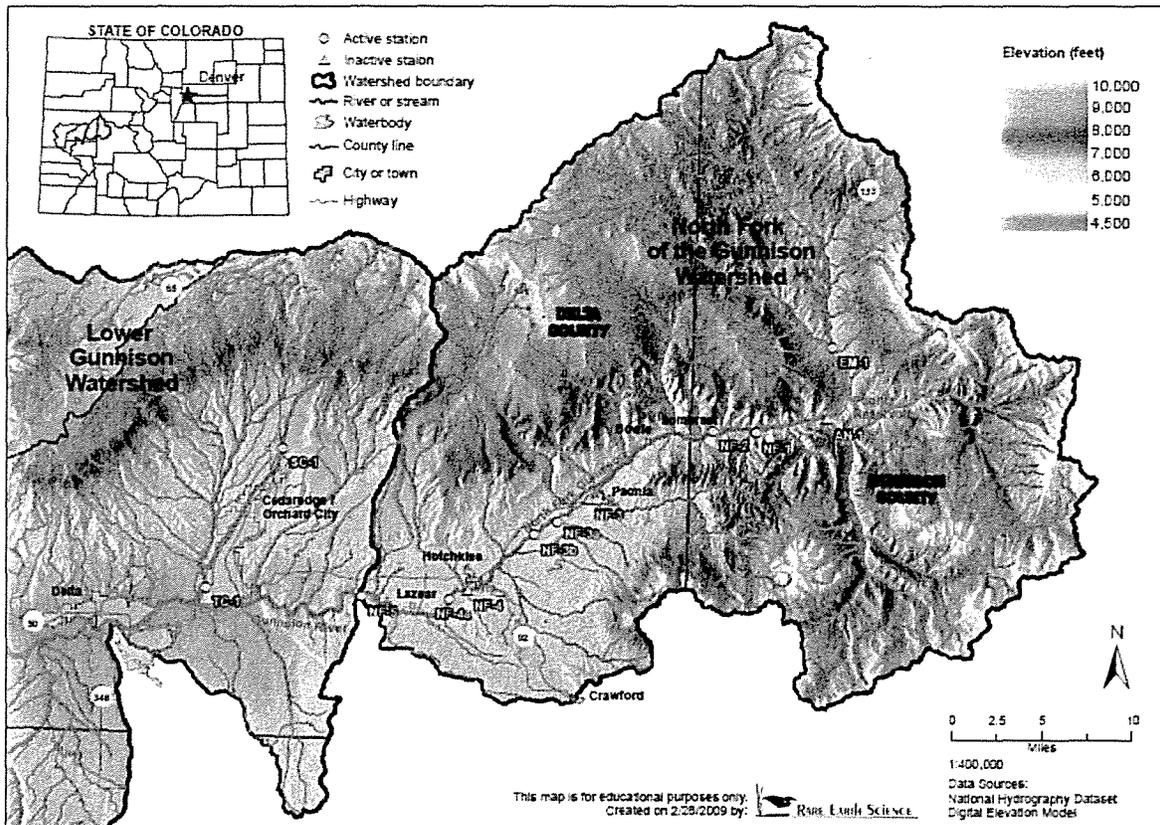
Source: USGS Estimated Water Use in 2005 (Kenny et.al, 2009)

Table 2: Major Water Users in the North Fork Watershed

ID	Name	Use	Decreed Rate Total (cfs)
3416	Paonia Reservoir	Irrigation/ stock	21,000 AF
2347	North Fork River	Min. stream flow	60
1133	Fire Mountain Canal	Irrigation	238
1206	Stewart Ditch	Irrigation	77.9
2681	Stewart Ditch	Stock	5.0
1196	Short Ditch	Irrigation/ stock	43.5
1189	Paonia Ditch	Irrigation	32.29
1185	Farmers Ditch	Irrigation	32.13
1195	Sheppard-Wilmont Ditch	Irrigation/Stock	12.6/3.5
1213	Van Der Ford Ditch	Irrigation	14.5
1197	Smith-McKnight Ditch	Irrigation	10.303
1183	Monitor Ditch	Irrigation/Stock	8.25/2.0

Source: <http://cdss.state.co.us/DNN/ViewData/StructuresDivisions/tabid/75/Default.aspx>

Figure 1: North Fork and Lower Gunnison Watershed Map



3.0 Project Description

3.1 Description of Applicant

The Western Slope Conservation Center is a merger of the Western Slope Environmental Resource Council (WSERC) and North Fork River Improvement Association (NFRIA). Local community members organized WSERC in 1977 to address local environmental impacts of energy development in the North Fork Valley. Landowners along the North Fork of the Gunnison River established NFRIA in 1996 as a means to improve the health of the North Fork of the Gunnison River. The two organizations merged in 2011 to form the Western Slope Conservation Center (the Conservation Center) and create a more holistic watershed organization. The Conservation Center has three program areas: Healthy Rivers, Healthy Lands, and Healthy Lives. The goal of the Healthy Rivers committee is to meet current and future demands for traditional uses of the river while improving stream stability, riparian habitat, and ecosystem function. We work to achieve our goals by soliciting community input from all stakeholders and government agencies involved with the river, building consensus, and developing collaborative solutions to the common problems of this stream system.

The Western Slope Conservation Center is a self-sustaining, cooperative watershed group as defined in Section III.A.1 and III.A.2 of Funding Opportunity Announcement R13AS80015. Our nine member board of directors is comprised of affected community members who live within the Lower Gunnison Watershed. Our board includes ranchers, irrigators, a hydrologist, a professor, teachers, artists, environmental activists, and retired land managers. The volunteer Healthy Rivers committee regularly engages with state, federal and local governments as well as water management agencies and nonprofits to collaborate on locally appropriate watershed solutions.

Throughout our thirty-five year history, we have successfully brought together riverfront landowners, farmers and ranchers, environmentalists, irrigation companies, recreationalists, in-stream gravel mining companies, coal mining companies, hunting and fishing enthusiasts and concerned members of the community. The Conservation Center enthusiastically welcomes the complex social, political, and technical challenges before us and looks forward to developing collaborative efforts between all stakeholders and government agencies to ask better questions, find substantive answers, and ultimately promote positive action.

3.2 Eligibility

The Western Slope Conservation Center qualifies under Task B of Section III.A.2 – Expansion of an Existing Watershed Group. The Conservation Center is located in the State of Colorado. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (EIN 84-0728032). The Conservation Center is the applicant and does not require a resolution. The Conservation Center and its members are significantly affected by the quality and quantity of water in the Lower Gunnison Watershed.

We depend on local springs and wells for our domestic water, surface water for irrigation, and instream flows for recreation on the river. The Lower Gunnison Watershed is a headwater system and there are no trans-basin diversions in our watershed to supplement water supplies. Our thirty-five year history demonstrates our ability to successfully promote sustainable uses of water resources in the Lower Gunnison Watershed.

3.3 Goals

We are seeking funding to perform Task B – Expansion of an Existing Watershed Group. The goals of our project are to: 1) expand the geographic scope of the watershed beyond the North Fork of the Gunnison to include water interests in the Smith Fork and Surface Creek Drainages and 2) build community trust and partnerships necessary to effectively implement projects that enhance the environmental integrity of the watershed.

3.4 Approach

The expansion of the Western Slope Conservation Center's Healthy River's committee will include the following steps:

3.4.1 Information Gathering: Watershed Assessment

The Watershed Coordinator will review the watershed plan and assess the success of past projects. The Coordinator will tour the river and major tributaries to identify problem areas that could result in projects that meet the goals of the watershed plan. The Coordinator will then begin a dialogue with landowners and determine willingness on the landowner's part. If the landowner is willing to proceed the Coordinator will develop a concept and begin research on funding.

Participation with other organizations and agencies will generate other potential projects that need to be assessed for potential success. The leverage of local contacts will assist other regional organizations and State agencies in the creation of effective dialogues to build community trust. A list of the project concepts will be developed as a deliverable of this proposal.

3.4.2 Mission Statement, Articles of Incorporation, and Coordinator

The Conservation Center has an official mission statement: build an aware and active community that protects, preserves and enhances our natural, human and economic resources of the Lower Gunnison Watershed. The mission statement was official revised in February 2013 in order to re-define the geographic boundary from Delta County to the Lower Gunnison Watershed.

The Western Slope Conservation Center was originally incorporated as a Colorado Nonprofit Corporation in 1977 under the name Western Slope Energy Research Center, Inc. It changed its name the following year to the Western Slope Environmental Resource Council (WSERC). The North Fork River Improvement Association (NFRIA) incorporated as a Colorado Nonprofit Corporation in 1997. In 2010 WSERC and NFRIA merged to form the NFRIA-WSERC Conservation Center. The by-laws and articles of incorporation currently reflect the merged organization's new name. In February of 2013 the organization simplified its name to the Western Slope Conservation Center. The Conservation Center's Articles of Incorporation and by-laws can be found in the Appendix.

The Conservation Center currently has a paid Executive Director and two AmeriCorps/VISTA volunteers. Funding from this grant will be used to hire a Watershed Coordinator to implement the project goals as outlined in this proposal. The needs are great and the current staff is extremely overworked as we continue the program work of both NFRIA and WSERC at less than half of historic staffing levels. The Watershed

Coordinator will build upon NFRIA’s past partnerships and renew local momentum for projects in the Lower Gunnison watershed.

3.4.3 Outreach

The Watershed Coordinator will help the Conservation Center to conduct outreach that will expand our membership and increase the level of community engagement in our Healthy River’s committee. The Conservation Center will inform and engage the broadest possible range of stakeholder interests in the community to build an active and diverse stakeholder base. Table 3 lists the outreach strategies we identified as part of our 2010 Watershed Plan update.

Table 3: Outreach Strategies

Watershed Problem	Specific Target Audience	Key Message	Method of reaching Audience
Deep percolation of seliferous and salt-laden soils	Irrigators Ditch companies Water Providers	Minimize deep percolation by implementing BMPs	Educational forums Direct Mailing Resource Specialists
Natural Gas	Natural Gas Drilling Industry General Public	Safeguard high-quality resources by tracking changes in water chemistry and stream habitat	Review results of water monitoring program with industry representatives
Eroding streambanks	Riverfront homeowners	Implementation of BMPs can minimize excessive erosion Participate in USACOE 206 Plan review	Meet on site with riverfront landowners Direct mail to riverfront landowners
Low flows	Water Users Ditch Companies	Smart Water Use	Educational forums
Loss of storage capacity in Paonia Reservoir	North Fork Water Conservancy District, Fire Mountain Canal and Ditch Company	NFRIA supports their activities	Letters of support
Trespass	Boaters and Riverfront homeowners	Respect private property Use public access points	Public Education Forum
Public Education and Safety	Boaters	The North Fork is a great place to be! Serious safety hazards exist	Signage Flyers at access points

Other outreach efforts will include:

- Informational meetings to promote Conservation Center’s awareness, solicit Conservation Center’s stakeholders, and enhance watershed education

- Identification of stakeholder interests in the following target areas: water quality and quantity, coal mining, agriculture, oil & gas development, riparian restoration (stream bank and habitat), recreation, river education. This will be done when recruiting new members through sign-up sheets and with electronic surveys of established members.
- Forums and focus groups to discuss stakeholder experiences, concerns, and priorities and to develop watershed management project concepts.
- Educational activities for “K through Grey” at local sponsored or co-sponsored events: Earth Day, Cherry Days, Student Conservation Day, River Awareness Float and other watershed stewardship events.
- Presence and informational resources at partners’ community events.
- A K-12 educational needs assessment in Delta County schools to identify curriculum needs and subsequently develop programs with local school teachers, inside or outside the classroom.
- Watershed tours for children and adults (ex. Irrigation diversions, farms, restoration sites, river corridor) to illustrate water uses and promote water conservation.
- Partnerships with watershed groups in the Gunnison Basin.
- Attendance at public meetings: town council, county, state hearings.
- Invited presentations at local, state, and federal agencies.
- Develop professional outreach materials to promote Conservation Center’s awareness: newsletters, press releases, social media, website, brochures, and advertisements.

3.4.4 Identifying Problems & Needs: Development of Watershed Management Project Concepts

The Conservation Center uses its current watershed plan as a guidebook for determining eligibility and priorities for future projects. The objective of this proposal is to hire a Watershed Coordinator to refine and coordinate the project concepts identified in our watershed plan. The project concepts will developed, in part, based in the information gathered in the watershed assessment (Section 3.4.1).

The Coordinator will work with the organization’s membership, industry and agricultural interests and government agency representatives to build collaborations and reduce conflicts.

The Coordinator will use the watershed plan as a roadmap to address large-scale watershed management issues such as:

- Coordinating with federal agencies, the state, the county, municipalities and industry representatives to better understand the impacts and potential impacts from energy extraction on watershed and water use.

- Coordinating with existing water and soil conservation efforts to help promote salt and selenium reduction efforts on local farms, especially small acreage farms.
- Work with landowners and the Counties to discuss ways to promote safe and legal access to our river systems.
- Facilitating a community dialogue to coordinate local efforts by the Colorado Water Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Colorado Trout Unlimited, The Delta Conservation District, and the Colorado Water Conservation Board to identify opportunities for increased ecological flows without injury to local agriculture.
- Work with local farmers and the Bureau of Reclamation to develop a list of potential projects and project areas that can be used as a wetland bank for habitat mitigation from ditch lining projects.

3.4.5 Development of the Watershed Restoration Plan

The Conservation Center has a current watershed restoration plan that was originally established in 2000 under the auspices of the North Fork River Improvement Association. A list of goals and prioritized projects were identified through a community-engaged public planning process that documented and prioritized the needs of the community. The Watershed Restoration Action Strategy of 2000 followed the original EPA model for a watershed plan and documented 3 primary goals:

1. Improve ecosystem function and reduce the amount of valuable land lost to excessive streambank erosion.
2. Improve water quality
3. Increase recreational potential

All the projects completed by NFRIA between 2000 and 2009 were guided by that document. In 2009, NFRIA hosted two public meetings designed to gauge public sentiment about the North Fork. NFRIA wanted to know how community concerns about the river had changed since the last round of stakeholder meetings in 2000. The general stakeholder comments expressed by attendees were documented in the new plan and are as follows:

- Enforcement of private property rights with allowance for public access to river
- Floodplain at Midway seems to be functioning better
- Feasibility of micro-hydro on irrigation ditches
- Natural gas drilling
- Public education
- Chronic low summer flows
- Collaborate with other planning efforts
- Sedimentation/ Loss of storage in Paonia Reservoir
- Selenium

Ten years after the initial development of the North Fork River Watershed Action Plan (NFRWA 2000), NFRWA decided to update the watershed plan. This watershed plan update was funded by the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). The watershed plan's update addresses new water quality data, reports and community concerns, as well as the EPA required nine elements for watershed planning. The revised action plan serves as the Conservation Center's road map and guide book as we continue our river-restoration course in the foreseeable future.

3.4.6 Action Plan for Implementation

This proposal seeks to expand an existing watershed group.

Table 4: Project Tasks

Activity	Start	Completed	Deliverable
Expand Watershed Group*	Q1	Q8	Hire Watershed Coordinator. We will hire the Watershed Coordinator in the first quarter. The coordinator will be responsible for expanding the watershed group.
Develop a mission statement*	n/a	n/a	The Conservation Center has a completed mission statement. We are not seeking funding for this task.
Develop watershed management project concepts*	Q4	Q8	List of implementation projects, partners and funding opportunities
Develop a watershed restoration plan*	n/a	n/a	The Conservation Center has a watershed restoration plan. We are not seeking funding for this task
Morphological Assessment	Q2	Q4	Completed morphological assessment that helps us define success of existing projects and identify problems in new watershed areas.
Build a GIS database	Q2	Q4	Central database of baseline maps and relevant watershed data
Test Models	Q3	Q5	Coordinate with Colorado Trout Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy to develop models for agricultural withdrawals and biological flows.
Community Outreach	Q1	Q8	Website, brochure, media and public meetings to encourage stakeholder presentation and educate the community about local watershed issues
Coordinate Stakeholder Group	Q1	Q8	Recruit new members, coordinate regular meetings, facilitate a watershed "SWAP" to discuss opportunities for collaboration with on-going watershed projects
* Mandatory			

3.4.7 Final Report

The Watershed Coordinator will develop a final report detailing budget expenditures, an inventory of partnerships and outreach activities, a prioritized list of conceptual projects

developed and strategies for their implementation, and an evaluation of what worked well and what didn't.

3.5 Proposed Timeline

The proposed activities will be completed within two years (see Section 3.4.6).

4.0 Evaluation Criteria

4.1 Criteria A: Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope

4.1.1 A1: Watershed Group Diversity

The Conservation Center is a grassroots, non-regulatory membership organization comprised of over 400 riverfront landowners, farmers and ranchers, environmentalists, irrigation companies, recreationalists, in-stream gravel mining companies, coal mining companies, hunting and fishing enthusiasts and concerned members of the community. We represent the wide range of needs represented by all our affected members. Our members are encouraged to become actively involved in our program committees.

The Conservation Center has a 35-year history of collaborative efforts aimed at balancing the needs of industry and the environment. A complete list of partnering organizations, businesses and agencies is probably not possible but the following is a representative list of past collaborating entities:

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- Army Corps of Engineers
- National Park Service
- Elected Federal Legislators
- Colorado Water Conservation Board
- Colorado Soil Conservation Board
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- State Engineers Office
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Public Health and Environment
- Division of Parks and Wildlife
- Division of Reclamation, Mining & Safety
- Colorado River Water Conservation District
- Our Elected State Legislators
- University of Colorado
- Colorado State University
- Colorado Mesa University
- Colorado Environmental Coalition (now Conservation Colorado)
- Colorado River Watch
- Western Colorado Congress
- Gunnison Basin Roundtable
- Delta and Gunnison County Commissioners

- North Fork Water Conservancy District
- Delta Conservation District
- Towns of Paonia, Hotchkiss and Crawford
- 11 Local Ditch Companies
- 3 Local Coal Mining Companies
- 3 Local Gravel Mining Companies
- Dozens of Individual Landowners
- Delta School District
- Colorado Open Lands
- Black Canyon Land Trust
- Selenium Task Force
- US Geological Survey

The Conservation Center does not always agree with all the policies of partnering organizations, but we have set many precedents as to our willingness and ability to negotiate in good faith. We represent our diverse membership in the spirit of cooperation for the benefit of all the stakeholders in the watershed.

Delta County has undergone significant changes in the past decade. Most notably, Delta County and the North Fork Valley have become a popular organic food and wine destination. The growing notoriety our local agriculture has been accompanied by a fifteen percent population growth in the last decade. Many of our new community members have never lived in the arid environment of the west and they are unfamiliar with the complexity of western water issues. We will increase the diversity of our watershed group by recruiting new community members. Recruitment will occur through the wide range of outreach activities listed in the project description.

The Conservation Center is well-positioned to engage our ever-changing community in a discussion about the most pressing current issues facing our watershed including oil and gas development, salt and selenium reduction, safe and legal river access, and seasonal low flows in the North Fork of the Gunnison River. We will increase the watershed group diversity by reaching out to collaborate with new stakeholders who have not historically been affected by watershed issues or included in our watershed efforts. Examples of new stakeholders include oil and gas companies, Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative, the Town of Cedaredge, Colorado Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and the Colorado Water Trust.

4.1.2 A2: Geographic Scope

The Conservation Center currently engages stakeholders across the entire North Fork of the Gunnison River. This project will enable us to expand our watershed group's influence to include the two adjacent drainages immediately above and below the North Fork of the Gunnison watershed (the Smith Fork and Surface Creek) in order to better address watershed concerns in the Lower Gunnison Watershed. The Smith Fork watershed includes the Town of Crawford and Gunnison Gorge National Conservation Area. The Surface Creek watershed includes the Towns of Cedaredge, Eckert and Orchard City. The two watersheds are within Delta County. Land use is similar to the

North Fork Watershed, but the climate is slightly more arid. These new areas are not represented by any citizen watershed group and it makes good sense to broaden our geographic representation to this area.

The Conservation Center will have regional impacts through participation in the Gunnison Basin Roundtable, Colorado Watershed Assembly, Colorado River District, and the Southern Rockies LCC. The Conservation Center will undertake various outreach activities to increase the diversity of the watershed group. Outreach approaches are described in detail in Section 3.4.3 of the Technical Proposal. Outreach is aimed at engaging different organizations and age groups and will include various outreach materials, general and focused stakeholder meetings, presentations, educational activities, watershed tours and field projects, participation in local events, regular press releases and reports. Additionally, the Conservation Center will attend public meetings (town council, county, basin roundtable, state hearings) to stay informed on current issues and identify concerned stakeholders.

4.2 Criteria B: Addressing Critical Watershed Needs

4.2.1 B1: Critical Watershed Needs or Issues

NFRIA identified the critical watershed issues as part of the 2010 North Fork Watershed Plan update. The watershed plan did not focus on critical watershed issues in the Smith Fork and Surface Creek drainages. The expansion of our watershed group will enable the Conservation Center to expand our existing planning efforts into these new watersheds.

1. Four segments of the North Fork are listed as high priority for selenium impairment. Selenium is toxic to fish and waterfowl and can bioaccumulate. The Colorado Water Quality Control Division developed a TMDL for dissolved selenium in 2010.

Causes	Critical Areas
Deep percolation of groundwater into Mancos Shale Inefficient irrigation practices Unlined irrigation ditches and ponds Discharge from gravel mines	North Fork mainstem and tributaries from Black Bridge to river mouth Irrigated lands on seleniferous soils

2. The North Fork is recognized as a major contributor of salt to the Colorado River. Excessive amounts levels of salt endanger Colorado River basin fish and impair agriculture in the lower basin states.

Causes	Critical Areas
---------------	-----------------------

Irrigation runoff Inefficient irrigation practices Unlined irrigation ditches and ponds	Irrigated lands on seleniferous and salt-laden soils
---	--

3. E. coli samples occasionally exceed state water quality standards. Bacteria are a public health hazard and reduce recreation potential of the River.

Causes	Critical Areas
Poor waste management Leaking septic systems Livestock grazing in or near the river Runoff from storm events WWTP discharge violations	Entire North Fork and Lower Gunnison River

4. There is limited background data to evaluate potential impacts from natural gas development. Potential negative impacts could include sediment from roads and construction areas, toxic effects from fracking fluids, impaired air quality from ozone and diesel emissions, oil and grease and metals from equipment spills, and water withdrawals.

Causes	Critical Areas
Inadequate baseline monitoring data Lack of non-industry analysis of monitoring data	Muddy Creek Region/Bull Mountain Unit Entire North Fork Valley Surface Creek

5. The river channel remains structurally unstable in some reaches. River instability can result in increased erosion of agricultural lands and riverside property, increased sediment loads, loss of riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat, entrenchment of the river channel, loss of connectivity to floodplain, and lowered groundwater table near the river.

Causes	Critical Areas
Historic channelization Irrigation diversions Historic in-stream gravel mining	Stewart Ditch Diversion Paonia River Park Midway Below Hotchkiss

6. In-stream flows, especially between Paonia and Hotchkiss, are low to intermittent during the summer. Watershed impacts include loss of aquatic habitat, increased water

temperature, disruption of natural sediment dynamics, and limited dilution of other pollutants.

Causes	Critical Areas
River is fully appropriated Inefficient irrigation practices Inefficient irrigation diversions	Paonia to Hotchkiss

7. Paonia Reservoir has lost 24% of its storage capacity. The loss of storage will result in reduced irrigation water storage, limited ability to operate the outlet structure, impaired recreation potential of the reservoir, and reduced supplemental environmental flows.

Causes	Critical Areas
Natural sediment influx from the upper basin	Muddy Creek Drainage Paonia Reservoir Outlet Structure

8. Public access to the river is limited. Inadequate education and access can lead to trespass issues on private lands, decreased river awareness, limited recreation potential, and decreased public concern about the river.

Causes	Critical Areas
Only four public access points 95% of the land bordering the river is privately owned Non-navigable/ unsafe diversions	Private land Existing public access points Diversion Structures

The watershed's long term environmental and economic health depends on the availability of clean and adequate water supplies. It is essential to approach water issues in ways that are forward thinking and relevant. Stakeholders grappling with the diversity of water interests are fueling increased competition for dwindling supplies.

In 2005 the Colorado Water Conservation Board attempted to appropriate in-stream flow rights on several first and second order tributaries to the North Fork of the Gunnison. Local anger by water rights holders forced the State to abandon those efforts. Since that time new private conditional water rights have been filed and the over-appropriation of the North Fork has only gotten worse.

The North Fork watershed has been and still is predominantly an agricultural valley. Maintaining the agricultural heritage is the primary objective of residents whether they are a part of the farming and ranching industry or not. The residents of this community live here for the open space and tranquility that the agricultural sector provides but values are diversifying. The community is no longer supportive of bulldozing the river channel

and using it as an open storm sewer. Nonpoint source pollution from eroding riverbanks; agricultural and municipal runoff; increased selenium loading and potential oil and gas discharges are becoming major concerns. Recreation and aesthetic values are also adding to the competition for water resources. Hunting, fishing, boating, tourism and scenic enjoyment are important to the quality of life for those living on or near the river, as well as those visiting.

Although stakeholders have some interests in common, disagreements exist about the definition and relative importance of these interests. So while stakeholders may be united in the desire to pursue common interests, they are often divided when it comes to understanding them. Adapting to meet the community's 21st century interest in healthy rivers will require public education and continued expanding partnerships.

4.2.2 B2: Watershed Group Contributions that Address Watershed Needs or Issues

The Conservation Center will build upon our history of successful and collaborative watershed projects that address water conservation, improving water quality and ecological resiliency, reduce the potential for water conflicts, improve recreation potential on the River.

Since 1996 we have constructed seven efficient, low-maintenance permanent concrete and steel headgates and permanent low-head rock diversion structures along the river, while restoring the adjacent river segments, significantly improving the sustainable management of water rights in the river, removing fish and recreational boating barriers and simultaneously enhancing aquatic habitat and recreational potential. The benefits of these projects became apparent during the 2002 drought when consolidated flows in the new single thread channel provided small amounts on in-stream flows in previously braided stream reaches that have historically been dry during better flow years. The drought of 2002 was the worst drought in Colorado recorded history. NFRIA received recognition of that project from Trout Unlimited the following year.

We have also worked collaboratively with two in-stream gravel mines to end that practice and establish new gravel mines outside of the floodplain. In 2006 we negotiated successfully for the donation of 19 acres of river property for the creation of the community's first public river park. We also raised funds and removed an abandoned concrete roller dam left over from the Hotchkiss National Fish Hatchery.

In addition to our multi-faceted restoration projects, NFRIA has also developed a baseline water monitoring program. Since 2001 our team of trained volunteers has collected monthly samples for metals, nutrients, field parameters and bacteria. We have the most comprehensive database of water quality data on the North Fork Watershed. We have since expanded our baseline monitoring program to include sampling in our

tributaries, a detailed selenium characterization study, and baseline data to test for oil and gas contamination. We provide our data to state, local and federal decision-makers. The Coordinator will work with local partners to re-evaluate monitoring priorities and develop monitoring plans that address changing watershed priorities.

The organization has evolved substantially over the last 17 years to successfully address increasing difficult issues. The time has come to address even more critical and controversial issues such as water conservation, ecological flows, targeted water quality monitoring, public river access and aquatic habitat enhancement. The organization will leverage its existing relationship with landowners in the North Fork watershed to re-assess, document and prioritize new projects.

The goals of our project are to: 1) expand the geographic scope of the watershed beyond the North Fork of the Gunnison to include water interests in the Smith Fork and Surface Creek Drainages and 2) build community trust and partnerships necessary to effectively implement projects that enhance the environmental integrity of the watershed. We will achieve the goals by implementing the following tasks:

1. *Completing a Morphological Assessment of the River* (Q2-Q4)

In 1997 the organization published The Morphological Characteristics of the North Fork of the Gunnison River (Crane 1997) that resulted in specific conclusions and recommendations for natural streambank stabilization that enhanced the ecological function and integrity of aquatic habitat and the riverine environment. Since then, NFRIA has constructed multiple restoration projects. The Watershed Coordinator will complete an updated morphological assessment that will allow for the Conservation Center to evaluate the effectiveness of our existing projects and ultimately help us define what successful restoration looks like for our watershed. This project can serve as a model for other watershed groups.

2. *Build a GIS database* (Q2-Q4)

The Conservation Center will purchase an ESRI GIS nonprofit license and hire a GIS expert to develop a local comprehensive geodatabase of local watershed data. Parts of our database will be compatible with GoogleEarth so that we can post interactive watershed maps on our website for stakeholders and the community.

3. *Test Models* (Q3-Q5)

The Conservation Center will coordinate with Colorado Trout Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy to develop models for agricultural withdrawals and biological flows. We will help collect data needed to run and calibrate the models. Our local contacts will be leveraged to develop local dialogues. Model findings will be presented to the stakeholder group.

4. *Community Outreach* (Q1-Q8)

We will implement the outreach activities listed in Section 3.4.3. We will update our website, create a watershed map and brochure, develop a social media presence on Facebook, and organize a public education series on local watershed issues (recreation, agriculture, extraction, municipal and domestic water, and wildlife). We will also work to expand our local Youth River Awareness Program.

5. *Coordinate Stakeholder Group* (Q1-Q8)

We will recruit new members to join our Healthy Rivers committee, coordinate regular meetings, and facilitate a watershed “SWAP” to discuss opportunities for collaboration with on-going watershed projects.

6. *Develop watershed management project concepts* (Q4-Q8)

The Watershed Coordinator will develop a list of projects and funding opportunities following the assessment of the watershed. Projects may include:

- An annual channel maintenance to prevent large tree snags from impacting bank erosion and recreational safety
- Participation in the BLM’s Resource Management Plan for oil & gas development. This participation will likely lead to new projects on the ground
- Participation with regional organizations and State agencies to promote community dialogues on water conservation and ecological flows.
- Identify wetland mitigation projects for local ditch piping projects

The coordinator will also participate in the Gunnison Basin Roundtable, Colorado Water Congress, the Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative and other water policy organizations to promote water conservation.

4.3 *Evaluation Criteria C: Implementation and Results*

4.3.1 C1: Project Planning

The Conservation Center and its proposed activities conform to the goals of state and regional watershed plans. We have completed a watershed plan that meets the State and EPA's criteria for Watershed-Based Plans. It is a living document and will be updated based on continued review by stakeholders and future projects as identified through development of watershed management project concepts and restoration plans related to the mandatory activities of this WaterSMART grant.

4.3.2 C2: Readiness to Proceed

The implementation plan for the proposed project is included in Section 1.3.8 Timing of Mandatory Activities and summarized in Section 1.4 Proposed Timeline of Technical Proposal. Costs for project implementation are included in Section 8.0 Budget Proposal.

The Conservation Center is a leader in local citizen watershed group activities. We have completed many collaborative studies and projects which demonstrate the group's readiness to proceed with expansion of the watershed group. The Conservation Center has organized and participated in several educational activities (Earth Day, Cherry Days, local radio shows), organized 13 annual river tours, organized local watershed tours and hikes, formed a River Park Committee, organized volunteer invasive weed control projects, is collaborating with ditch companies on wetland mitigation projects, has been recruiting local stakeholders and hosting stakeholder meetings. Additionally, the group has completed a watershed plan and water quality report. The preparation of the watershed plan was a highly collaborative process and will be used to guide this project.

4.4 Criteria D: Watershed Group/Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) Nexus

The Conservation Center area of concentration is the North Fork of the Gunnison Watershed (Fig. 1) in the Gunnison Basin, CO. This watershed is in the relatively young Southern Rockies LCC (SRLCC, Fig. 2). The Interim Steering Committee for this LCC was formed in Apr. 2010. The LCC identified FY2013 priority science needs and associated project types. The WSCC has not directly participated in SRLCC activities but has been working with or anticipates partnering with several organizations that are part of the Southern Rockies LCC: Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Colorado State Natural Heritage Program, National Park Service, Trout Unlimited, US Forest Service – Rocky Mountain Region, The Nature Conservancy.

The science needs identified by the Southern Rockies LCC steering committee must be able to be used by resource managers to address natural and cultural resource issues that have a connection to water resource management in a changing climate. There are 7 science needs identified by the steering committee for FY 2013. Science Needs 1, 3 and 5 have a direct relationship to project concepts proposed by the Conservation Center in this proposal.

Science Need 1: Development of models to inform management decisions related to habitat protection/preservation for desired population numbers of riparian obligate and wetland species. Colorado Trout Unlimited (CTU) is developing an agricultural water conservation model for local ditches. The Watershed Coordinator for the Conservation

Center will participate in CTU's program at the local level to identify ditch companies willing to allow an assessment of their water management activities.

Science Need 3: Assessment of species or population vulnerability through identification of migration and connectivity corridors, and identification of adaptation strategies that mitigate vulnerability. The Watershed Coordinator will identify aquatic impediments to fish migration in the North Fork and tributaries and design adaptation strategies to alleviate the impediments without injury to water users.

Science Need 5: Incorporation of climate change projections and ecological flow needs into hydrological models in order to develop water supply scenarios that would inform decisions about water allocation to meet human and ecological needs. The Nature Conservancy is developing models for the identification of minimum ecological flows. The Watershed Coordinator will work with TNC to identify those needs in specific reaches of the North Fork and work to convene a dialogue with local water users to develop a plan to provide ecological flows without injury to senior water rights.

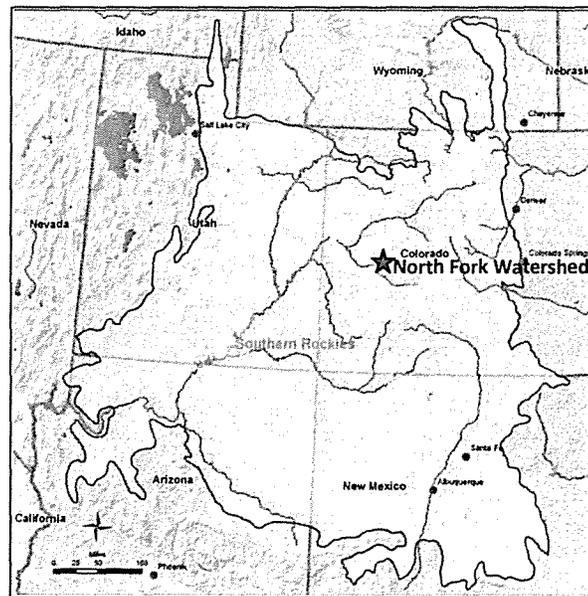


Figure 2. Conservation Center's activities will be focused in the Southern Rockies LCC. Location of the North Fork Watershed is denoted by red star.

5.0 LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Email Communication from Kevin Johnson, SRLCC

June 6, 2013

Jeff,

The Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative (SRLCC) is supportive of the West Slope Conservation Center's efforts to begin dialogue around ecological flows in the North Fork of the Gunnison. The SRLCC recognizes the importance of developing and incorporating ecological flow needs into water planning/management to achieve a balanced and sustainable river system. We are currently working with the scientific community to incorporate ecological flow needs into hydrological models in order to develop water supply scenarios that would inform decisions about water allocation to meet human and ecological needs. Specifically our efforts are focusing on improving the Colorado River Simulation System as the central analytical tool for basin-wide water supply planning.

Your efforts dovetail nicely with the SRLCC efforts in that the science we are generating can ultimately be used for your decision support and watershed planning. Bringing the right community of folks together to address the subject of ecological flows, as you propose is a paramount step to connecting the science around ecological flows with management decisions for a sustainable riverine system. A successful grant under the Cooperative Watershed Program would provide the West Slope Conservation Center with valuable capacity towards that end.

Sincerely,
Kevin Johnson

Kevin Johnson, Coordinator
Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative
MS 60170
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO 80228
303-236-4404
kevin_m_johnson@fws.gov
www.southernrockieslcc.org



Delta Conservation District, 690 Industrial Blvd, Delta, CO 81416 970-874-5735 x 121

June 10, 2013

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27850
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Ms. Maher:

This letter is written in support of the proposal submitted by the Western Slope Conservation Center (WSCC) to the Bureau for a grant to hire a program coordinator under Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

The WSCC has a long history working collaboratively with multiple organizations to benefit the environment and specifically the watershed in the Lower Gunnison River Basin. In the past two years the WSCC has worked with the Delta Conservation District (DCD) on extensive invasive weed removal projects along the North Fork of the Gunnison River corridor to help improve the health of the river and the riparian lands. The DCD has also worked with the WSCC to improve a public park area in the Paonia River Park, assisting in locating habitat mitigation funds that were applied to a project stabilizing the river channel in the 19 acres of river park land that was cut off from the public due to seasonal flooding and to stop river bank erosion and undercutting. The result of the project is a stable river channel with new wetlands and educational areas for school groups to learn about the riparian corridor and importance of river lands. As the WSCC has demonstrated over its long history, it places a premium upon working collaboratively with citizen organizations and governmental agencies to arrive at real world workable and effective solutions to numerous issues to benefit the environment. It has repeatedly demonstrated the ability to effectively and efficiently manage large projects, whether involving river restoration, park development, waste recycling, or organizing community support for significant local issues.

The DCD has entered into a multi-year river corridor project for the North Fork of the Gunnison River and would welcome the opportunity to continue to work with the WSCC and a program coordinator to continue to improve the health of the North Fork of the Gunnison River and all of the riparian lands within its district and the Lower Gunnison Watershed. The WSCC has a demonstrated history of successfully working with diverse citizen watershed groups and as a result, the DCD is pleased to be able to offer its strong support for the WSCC's application for funding of a program coordinator position to work to improve the local watershed.

Ralph D'Alessandro
President, Board of Supervisors

6.0 BOARD RESOLUTION



6-10-2013

Western Slope Conservation Center Board Resolution

The Board of Directors of the Western Slope Conservation Center strongly supports the application to the WaterSMART: Cooperative Watershed Management Program for FY 2013, Funding Opportunity Number: R13AS80015, for the expansion of our existing watershed group and the development of watershed management project concepts.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Moore, President

7.0 REQUIRED PERMITS OR APPLICATIONS

No permits or approvals are required for work associated with Phase I of the CWMP grant.

8.0 FUNDING PLAN

This proposal does not include any non-federal cost share.

Table 5. Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources

Funding Sources	Funding Amount		
	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Non-Federal Entities			
<i>Non-Federal Subtotal:</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>
Other Federal Entities			
<i>Other Federal Subtotal:</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>\$0</i>
<i>Requested Reclamation Funding:</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>
<i>Total Project Funding:</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>\$100,000</i>

9.0 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Table 6. Budget Proposal

Budget Item Description	YEAR ONE				YEAR TWO				TOTAL COST
	Computation		Quantity Type (hours/days)	TOTAL COST	Computation		Quantity Type (hours/days)	TOTAL COST	
	\$/Unit	Quantity			\$/Unit	Quantity			
Salaries and Wages									
Executive Director (10%)	\$313	12	month	\$3,756	\$313	12	month	\$3,756	\$7,512
Fringe Benefits									
Health Insurance (10%)	\$25	12	month	\$300	\$25	12	month	\$300	\$600
Payroll Taxes (10%)	\$48	12	month	\$576	\$48	12	month	\$576	\$1,152
Travel									
Travel to Denver for Water Congress	\$500	1	trip	\$500	\$500	1	trip	\$500	\$1,000
Sustaining Colorado Watersheds Conference	\$500	2	conference	\$1,000	\$500	2	conference	\$1,000	\$2,000
Local travel	\$0.50	2000	mile	\$1,000	\$0.50	2000	mile	\$1,000	\$2,000
Equipment									
cross sections	\$10	50	cross section	\$500					\$500
Supplies/Materials									
ArcGIS (nonprofit license)	\$100	1	license	\$100	\$100	1	license	\$100	\$200
Laptop Computer	\$800	1	computer	\$800				\$0	\$800
MS Office	\$350	1	license	\$350				\$0	\$350
Brochures	\$0.50	150	printed copy	\$75				\$0	\$75
Office Supplies (Misc.)	\$400	1	misc. items	\$400	\$500	1	misc. items	\$500	\$900
Contractual/Construction									
Watershed Coordinator	\$30	1000	hour	\$30,000	\$30	1040	hour	\$31,200	\$61,200
GIS Technician	\$100	50	hour	\$5,000	\$100	30	hour	\$3,000	\$8,000
Google Earth Consultant					\$80	30	hour	\$2,400	\$2,400
Reporting	\$40	28	hour	\$1,120	\$40	28	hour	\$1,120	\$2,240
Total Direct Costs				\$45,477				\$45,452	\$90,953
<i>Indirect Costs (10%)</i>				<i>\$4,523</i>				<i>\$4,548</i>	<i>\$9,071</i>
Total Project Costs				\$50,000				\$50,000	\$100,000

9.1 Salaries and Wages

The Conservation Center's Executive Director Sarah Sauter will be an active participant in the expanded watershed group, including all mandatory activities. The Executive Director earns a yearly salary of \$38,000/year. This project budget will support 10% of the Executive Director's time, starting October 2013.

9.2 Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits include health care insurance (\$250/month) and payroll taxes at fixed state and federal rates.

9.3 Travel

Travel includes conference attendance by the coordinator and one OSM/VISTA member. The annual Sustaining Colorado Watersheds Conference is in Avon, CO (3 days). The conference costs include registration fees, mileage, and lodging. Local travel within southwestern Colorado and occasional trips to the Denver-Metro area is estimated for each year at 2000 miles at a rate of \$0.50/mile. Local travel includes site visits, local stakeholder meetings and regional meetings with collaborators. Travel to Denver for the Colorado water Congress includes two night lodging at a rate of \$100/night and round trip mileage of 400 miles at a rate of \$0.50/mile.

9.4 Equipment

Equipment includes the cost of fifty permanent cross sections at \$10/cross section. The estimated costs are as follows: \$100 (3' wooden lathe), \$100 (5/8" rebar 24" long), 100 metal 'T' posts, 100 aluminum survey caps, steel stamping for the caps, a 300' measuring tape, and a 25' survey rod.

9.5 Materials and Supplies

Requested materials and supplies are for office use. The Conservation Center requests Reclamation funds for ArcGIS software licensing at a non-profit rate of \$100/yr for 2 years. The Conservation Center also requests funds for a laptop computer and Microsoft Office software. Other office supplies will be cost-shared by UWP while outreach materials (brochures, press releases, food & beverage supplies for stakeholder meetings and events) are cost-shared or in-kind donations from partner organizations.

9.6 Contractual

We will contract a watershed coordinator for two years at a rate of \$30/hour for 1000 hours. The watershed coordinator will serve as project manager and oversee the successful implementation of all the project tasks. We will contract technical services

from a GIS technician at a rate of \$100/hour for 50 hours in year one and 30 hours in year two. In year two we will contract services of a Google Earth Consultant at a rate of \$80/hr at 30 hours.

9.7 Reporting

The watershed coordinator will be responsible for preparation of the year one progress report, for the year two final report, and all quarterly reports. The reporting rate is \$40/hour for 28 hours each year.

9.8 Other

We have no other anticipated costs.

9.9 Indirect Costs

The Conservation Center applies a 10% administrative fee to all funding sources. Administration includes proportional costs of a bookkeeper, mortgage, insurance, utilities, phone and internet.

9.10 Total Costs

Total costs for the 2-year funding cycle are \$100,000 and are included in Tables 5 and 6.

Bylaws of NFRIA-WSERC Conservation Center, Inc.

As amended March 27, 2011

Article I:

Name and purpose

Section 1. Name:

This Corporation shall be known as the NFRIA-WSERC Conservation Center, Inc. hereinafter called NWCC.

Section 2. Statement of purpose:

NWCC works to build an aware and active community that protects, preserves and enhances our natural, human and economic resources.

Article II

Basic policies

The basic policies of NWCC shall be as follows:

1. NWCC shall be a non-profit, non-sectarian corporation.
2. The basic purpose shall be carried out so as to advocate for prudent environmental policies and to provide well documented, factual information on environmental and related topics selected by the membership or by the Board of Directors. This information shall be presented to the public by multi-media so that all citizens may broaden their awareness of environment related issues involving the quality of their everyday lives.
3. The name of NWCC or the names of any members in their official capacities shall not be used for any purpose not appropriately related to promotion of the purpose of NWCC.
4. NWCC shall cooperate with governing bodies and citizen groups whenever possible to evaluate issues under study by NWCC that effect the quality of life within the communities concerned.

Article III

Membership

Section 1. Membership is open to any individual, family or business that subscribes to the purposes and basic policies of NWCC, subject only to compliance with the provisions of the Bylaws. Membership shall be available without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex or sexual orientation.

Section 2. Only members who are covered by memberships that have been in good standing for more than three months shall be eligible to participate and vote in NWCC business meetings, or to serve in any of its elected or appointed positions. For the purposes of voting: When a household with a membership in good standing consists of one member, that one member is entitled to one vote; When a household with a membership in good standing consists of two or more people, up to two of those people are entitled to vote; When a business has a membership in good standing, up to two

owners or employees of that business are entitled to vote. Such members must be present to vote; no proxy votes shall be allowed.

Section 3. If a membership expires without being renewed, the member or members covered by that membership are no longer in good standing. However, if within four months after the date at which the membership expires the membership dues are paid retroactive to the expiration date, by so doing said member or members are restored to good standing for the purposes of participating, voting, and serving on elected or appointed positions. If a membership is not renewed within 4 months after membership expiration, the membership terminates. If the member or members who were covered by a membership that has terminated subsequently pay for a new membership, the member or members are only eligible to participate and vote, or serve on elected or appointed positions after 3 months from the commencement of the new membership.

Section 4. A majority vote of the members present at a general membership meeting or a majority vote of the board may terminate the membership of any member, or may deny membership to any applicant for membership, if a) said person is found to have taken any action which undermines the stated purpose or objectives of NWCC, and b) said person is given notice and opportunity for hearing as per Section 7-126-302(2)(a), C.R.S. Any such member or applicant for membership may appeal such board action to the membership at any general membership meeting, provided that written notice is given to the NWCC Board of Directors 30 days prior to the date of the membership meeting, and the membership may overturn or affirm the action of the board upon majority vote of the members present.

Article IV Dues

Section 1. Dues shall be determined by the NWCC Board of Directors. Consideration shall be given to the needs of low-income individuals and families.

Section 2. Good standing for purposes of membership and voting rights in NWCC is contingent upon current payment of dues. Dues shall be payable on the anniversary of the original enrollment by any individual, family or business.

Article V Fiscal year

The fiscal year of NWCC shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December of each year.

Article VI Directors

Section 1. Number. The general management of the affairs of NWCC shall be vested in the Board of Directors, subject to the will of the general membership. The Board shall number between nine and thirteen elected members, fourteen of whom shall serve staggered three-year terms. The Chairperson and Past-Chairperson shall serve as voting members of the Board of Directors by reason of their office. Only members in good standing can serve on the Board.

Section 2. Elections and terms. At the annual meeting, the general membership will elect the number of members of the Board of Directors needed to fill vacant seats. In filling a seat that has been vacated mid-term, the members will elect a Director to serve the remainder of that term. Members must be present to vote; no proxy votes shall be allowed. There is no limit to the number of terms a Board member may serve.

Section 3. Duties. The Board of Directors shall have the following duties:

- a) hold meetings at such times and places as it deems proper;
- b) appoint additional board members as necessary to fill vacant seats;
- c) audit bills and disburse funds;
- d) oversee the work of all committees;
- e) approve fund-raising activities;
- f) approve all official public presentations;
- g) appoint a nominating committee to select a slate to present to the membership to replace the outgoing directors and officers;
- h) perform such other duties as may be deemed necessary to promote the purposes of NWCC.

Section 4. Quorum. A simple majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 5. Removal of a director. Any one or more of the directors may be removed at any time by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any special meeting called for that purpose and attended by a quorum of the members.

Members may call a special meeting to remove a director by submitting to the chair of the Board of Directors a petition calling for such meeting provided that said petition contains valid signatures of a quorum of members. All signatures shall be dated and all signatures must be collected within 30 days of the date of the first signature on the petition. Upon receipt of such petition, the chair shall verify the validity of signatures within ten days. If valid signatures total a quorum of members, the chair must convene a special meeting within 30 days from the date of verification.

In accordance with Section 7-128-106, C.R.S, any one or more directors may be deemed to have resigned if a) they are absent and unexcused from three consecutive regularly scheduled board meetings, b) they fail to abide by the bylaws or the policies and procedures established by the board, c) they act in a way which undermines the stated purpose or objectives of NWCC, or d) they fail to fulfill the duties and roles prescribed in the NWCC Policies and Procedures and/or the Board Handbook. If such failure to attend or meet obligations is confirmed by an affirmative vote of the board of directors, then such failure to attend or meet obligations shall be effective as a resignation at the time of such vote of the board.

Section 6. Vacancies on the board. The Board of Directors shall appoint a member to fill any vacancy created on the board for any reason. This appointment shall be made within 90 days of creation of the vacancy and this appointment shall serve until the next election at the annual meeting of the general membership.

Section 7. Under appropriate circumstances as determined by the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors may vote by mail, email or other electronic means that provides a

written record as described in Section 7-128-202, C.S.R., provided that a quorum of the board participates and provides written record of such participation as provided in Section 7-128-202, C.S.R.

Article VII Officers

Section 1. Number. The officers of NWCC shall be a Chairperson-elect (hereinafter "Chair-elect), a Chairperson (hereinafter "Chair"), a Past-chairperson (hereinafter "Past-chair"), a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall also serve as members of the board of directors. Collectively these officers shall make up the Executive Committee of the board.

Section 2. Election. The membership shall elect the Chair-elect, Treasurer, and Secretary for a term of one year. The election will take place at the annual meeting. As soon as the new Chair-elect is elected, the previous year's Chair-elect advances to fill the position of Chair, and the previous year's Chair advances to fill the position of Past-chair, subject to endorsement by the membership. As a person advances into the Chair or Chair-elect position, and if his/her board term expires at the time of advancement, the term shall be automatically extended to last until such time as the person completes his/her duty as Past-chair.

If the position of Chair or Past-chair is not filled by advancement then the membership shall elect the Chair or Past-chair at the annual meeting.

If at the time of the election the position of Chair-elect is held by someone who had been appointed to fill a vacancy by the board of directors, then the membership shall elect the Chair rather than having the Chair-elect automatically advance into the Chair position. Likewise if at the time of the election the position of Chair is held by someone who was appointed by the board of directors, then the membership shall elect the Past-chair rather than having the Chair automatically advance into the Past-chair position.

Section 3. Duties.

a) Chair: Shall preside at the meetings of the membership and of the Board of Directors; shall coordinate the work of officers, directors, and committees; shall mentor the chair-elect, and shall perform any other duties as are necessary to further the purpose of NWCC.

b) Chair-elect: In anticipation of serving as Chair, shall become familiar with the organization's finances, policies and procedures, and programs. May serve as chair of meetings of the membership and of the Board of Directors as an alternate to the Chair. Shall perform any other duties as are necessary to further the purpose of NWCC.

c) Past-chair: Shall work with the chair in coordinating the work of officers and committees; shall advise the Chair and mentor the Chair-elect. May serve as chair of meetings of the membership and of the Board of Directors as an alternate to the Chair; and shall perform any other duties as are necessary to further the purpose of NWCC.

d) Secretary shall ensure that legally-required minutes are taken of all meetings of the Board of Directors; shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee; and shall perform such other duties as may be necessary for the transaction of business.

e) Treasurer: Shall oversee sound financial management of the organization; shall ensure secure custody of all funds; shall ensure that all funds shall be deposited in a bank approved by the board; shall ensure that an accurate account is kept of all monies received and expended; shall give or cause to be given an itemized statement at board meetings; shall, with agreement in each instance of either the Chair, Chair-elect, or Executive Director, have sole power to withdraw funds; shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee; and shall perform such other duties as may be necessary to ensure the financial health and accountability of the organization.

Section 4. Vacant Offices. The board shall appoint a director to fill any vacancy created among the officers for any reason. This appointment shall serve for the remainder of the term.

Article VIII **Committees**

Section 1. Appointment: The board may appoint, by appropriate resolution, such committees as are deemed by the board to be required to carry out the business of NWCC. Any committees established by the board may be delegated, in writing, limited authority of the board, with the exception of those powers reserved by state statute to the board.

Section 2. Standing Committees:

a. Appointment: At its first meeting after the annual meeting and election, the board may establish two standing committees, an “executive committee” and an “audit and finance committee”.

b. Executive Committee: If established, the executive committee shall consist of the five officers of the corporation. It shall have the full powers of the board to act between meetings of the full board, except for those powers reserved to the corporation (e.g. dissolution of the corporation) and those powers reserved, from time to time, by appropriate resolution of the full board. The chair, past-chair or chair-elect may be chair of any meeting of the executive committee. A quorum of the executive committee shall be four of the officers.

c. Audit and Finance Committee: If established, the audit and finance committee shall consist of the Treasurer, at least one other member of the board, and up to two of the membership at large. The committee shall have only such powers as required to oversee the finances of NWCC and report or recommend to the board. The audit and finance committee shall review the results of any audit of the corporation before presentation of that report to the board and/or the membership.

Article IX
WCC Senator

So long as NWCC maintains a seat on the WCC board, NWCC shall elect a representative according to the following sections:

Section 1. Election and Term of Office. At the annual meeting the membership shall elect two members in good standing, one to serve as NWCC's representative and the other alternate to the WCC Board for a term of two years.

Section 2. Duties. It shall be the duty of the NWCC representative or alternate to represent the interests and purposes of NWCC and to report to the general membership and the Board in a timely fashion.

Section 3. Vacancy. In the event the elected representative or alternate can no longer fulfill his or her duties, the Board may appoint a replacement to fill out the remainder of the term, or until the next annual meeting.

Article X
Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings. Regular meetings of NWCC shall be held quarterly, or at such times as shall be determined necessary by the Board of Directors or the membership.

Section 2. Annual meeting. The annual meeting shall be held during the first quarter of each year, at which time new board members will be elected, the officers shall be elected, the treasurer's annual report will be submitted, the chair will submit an annual report. So long as NWCC maintains a seat on the WCC Board, a WCC representative and alternate also shall be elected.

Section 3. Quorum. One-third of the total number of members in good standing, or 40 members in good standing, whichever is less, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article XI
Amendments

These bylaws may be amended, repealed or altered in whole or in part by a two thirds vote of all members in good standing who are present at any meeting of NWCC that contains a legal quorum. Notification of the proposed change or changes must be given at least 10 days prior to the meeting at which such changes will be voted on. Written notice shall be effective five days after its deposit in the United States mail, as evidenced by the postmark, if mailed correctly addressed and with first class postage affixed, or shall be effective as otherwise provided in section 7-121-402 (5), C.R.S.]

Article XII
Conduct of business

The proceedings of NWCC shall be run in accordance with the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order, newly revised, where they are not in conflict with these bylaws.

Article XIII
Indemnification

In the event of any legal exposure to liability by any board member or staff acting in his/her official capacity, NWCC shall indemnify and hold harmless such board member or staff from any such liabilities, except in cases of malfeasance.



9-21-11

Sarah Sauter, Executive Director

Date