

## Cooperative Watershed Management Program Funded Projects

### Task A – Establishing a Watershed Group

#### **Sierra Stream Institute**

**Total Project Cost: \$99,925**

**Reclamation Funding: \$99,925**

The Sierra Streams Institute located in Nevada City, California, will develop a watershed group for the Bear River in North Central California. The Bear River watershed has historically been one of the most managed watersheds in California, having been severely impacted with events from the California Gold Rush in 1849. Stewardship in the watershed has been historically hampered by the diverse stakeholders and lack of resources. The new watershed group will recruit stakeholders, create a mission statement, generate project concepts, and the initiate a watershed-wide restoration plan. The restoration plan will address land management, mine cleanup and restoration, and improve river flow regime and water quality.

### Task B – Expanding a Watershed Group

#### **Flathead Basin Commission**

**Total Project Cost: \$127,000**

**Reclamation Funding: \$95,000**

The Flathead Basin Commission located in Western Montana will use Federal funding to expand the Commission through the formation of a Flathead Basin Advisory Council. The Commission includes Federal members from Bonneville Power Administration, Reclamation, Environmental Protection Agency, Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park; tribal governments of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes; state agencies, local governments, industry, and private interest groups. The Flathead watershed is integral to Reclamation's Hungry Horse project and Flathead Lake, one of the largest natural freshwater lakes in the Western United States. Water quality in the Flathead watershed is deteriorating due to a variety of reasons. The Council will develop a watershed plan to address these issues and will incorporate a wastewater management plan, drought management plan, and invasive species plan. The watershed plan is part of the Commission's overall strategy to improve water quality and ecological resiliency.

#### **Clark Fork Coalition**

**Total Project Cost: \$140,000**

**Reclamation Funding: \$100,000**

The Clark Fork Coalition (CFC) near Missoula, Montana, will expand its staffing and capacity to address water resource challenges in the Upper Clark Fork watershed. The Upper Clark Fork watershed feeds the Clark Fork system that in turn feeds the Columbia River Basin. The issues affecting the Upper Clark Fork Watershed include chronic dewatering, poor water quality, and contamination from mining

activities. The CFC will use the extra staffing and capacity to reach a greater diversity of stakeholders and enhance partnerships, identify the watershed needs, and reduce inter-stakeholder conflict related to water use. The CFC will reevaluate two existing watershed plans that are in place for effectiveness and to reflect the dynamic nature of the watershed restoration efforts.

**Rio Grande Restoration, Inc.**

**Total Project Cost: \$78,016**

**Reclamation Funding: \$50,000**

Rio Grande Restoration, Inc. will use award funds to expand the existing advisory council to the Rio Chama watershed in Northern New Mexico. The advisory council will prepare a Lower Rio Chama Watershed Restoration Plan to address the restoration strategies developed by New Mexico Environment Department. The restoration plan will tackle livestock range conditions, energy development, drought and climate change, water conservation, wildfire risk, and flood protection. These concerns have been identified as major contributors to water quality and shortage in the Lower Rio Chama watershed.

**Blackfoot Challenge**

**Total Project Cost: \$76,339**

**Reclamation Funding: \$52,488**

The Blackfoot Challenge represents the Blackfoot Watershed in Western Montana, west of the continental divide. The watershed acts as headwaters to the Columbia River system through the Clark Fork. The Blackfoot Challenge has a history of coordinating efforts to conserve and enhance natural resources in the Blackfoot watershed. Federal funding will be used to expand the Blackfoot Challenge's water quantity and water quality programs to address drought and effects from climate change on tribal in-stream flows, total maximum daily loads, and threatened fish species. The Blackfoot Challenge will use the funds to expand coordination, support stakeholder meetings, set priorities, and establish watershed conservation plans to improve natural resource management.

**Middle Colorado Watershed Council**

**Total Project Costs: \$215,624**

**Reclamation Funding: \$98,924**

The Middle Colorado Watershed Council, represents the upper main stem of the Colorado River in Western Colorado. This area has seen an upsurge in natural gas development in the last decade, creating new challenges for water managers. The Council will expand the existing watershed group by adding a coordinator-scientist to oversee outreach, develop restoration plans, and address water quality/quantity issues. Key issues of concern in the watershed are selenium loading, salinity increases, metals pollution, and low dissolved oxygen levels. The position will help the Council with its goal of restoring water quality within the Middle Colorado Basin.