

**Proposal for Funding Associated with Expansion of the Middle Colorado
Watershed Council**

Applicant:

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Submitted To:

WaterSMART: Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP) for FY 2014
Funding Opportunity Number: R14AS00038
Bureau of Reclamation
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1.0 Executive Summary

Date: 6-4-14

Applicant Name: Middle Colorado Watershed Council

Physical Location: Glenwood Springs, Garfield County, Colorado

The Middle Colorado Watershed Council (Council) is applying for a WaterSMART CWMP grant to support the expansion of the existing watershed group under Task B of the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). The Council's continued development and activities include:

- detailed assessment of impaired sub-watersheds and stream reaches, considering water resource quantity and quality;
- increased stakeholder engagement (e.g., focus group discussions, preparation of outreach materials, development of a Public Outreach and Communications Plan);
- detailed evaluation of high priority projects;
- development of Watershed Restoration Plans; and
- finalization of a long-term Organizational Stability Plan.

The grant funds would largely support the contract of an existing Watershed Coordinator/Scientist, who focuses on the activities of the Council on a daily basis, such as information and outreach, partner relations, detailed assessments and plans, coordination of technical work, and administrative functions. Goals of the Council are consistent with the stated goals of the FOA to improve water quality and ecological resilience, conserve water, and reduce conflicts over water through collaborative conservation efforts in the management of local watersheds.

All work proposed herein will be completed within two years following contract award (assumed to be around October 1, 2014). If FY 2014 appropriations are insufficient, some or all of the award using FY 2015 appropriations is acceptable to the Council.

2.0 Background Data

The Middle Colorado River Watershed (MCRW) is a geographic area approximately 2,000 square miles in size. It includes the mainstem of the Colorado River extending from the top of Glenwood Canyon downstream to the Town of DeBeque, a distance of 84 miles. All tributaries to the Colorado River within this delineation are included in the MCRW with the exception of the Roaring Fork River as this subwatershed is managed by the Roaring Fork Conservancy, a local, nonprofit conservation organization. The MCRW covers portions of two 8 digit United States Geological Survey (USGS) Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs): 14010001 and 14010005. The cumulative length of stream miles within the MCRW is approximately 7,500 miles. The MCRW lies mostly within Garfield County, one of Colorado's most active areas in terms of natural gas production and population growth in recent years. See Figure 1 for a delineation of the MCRW.

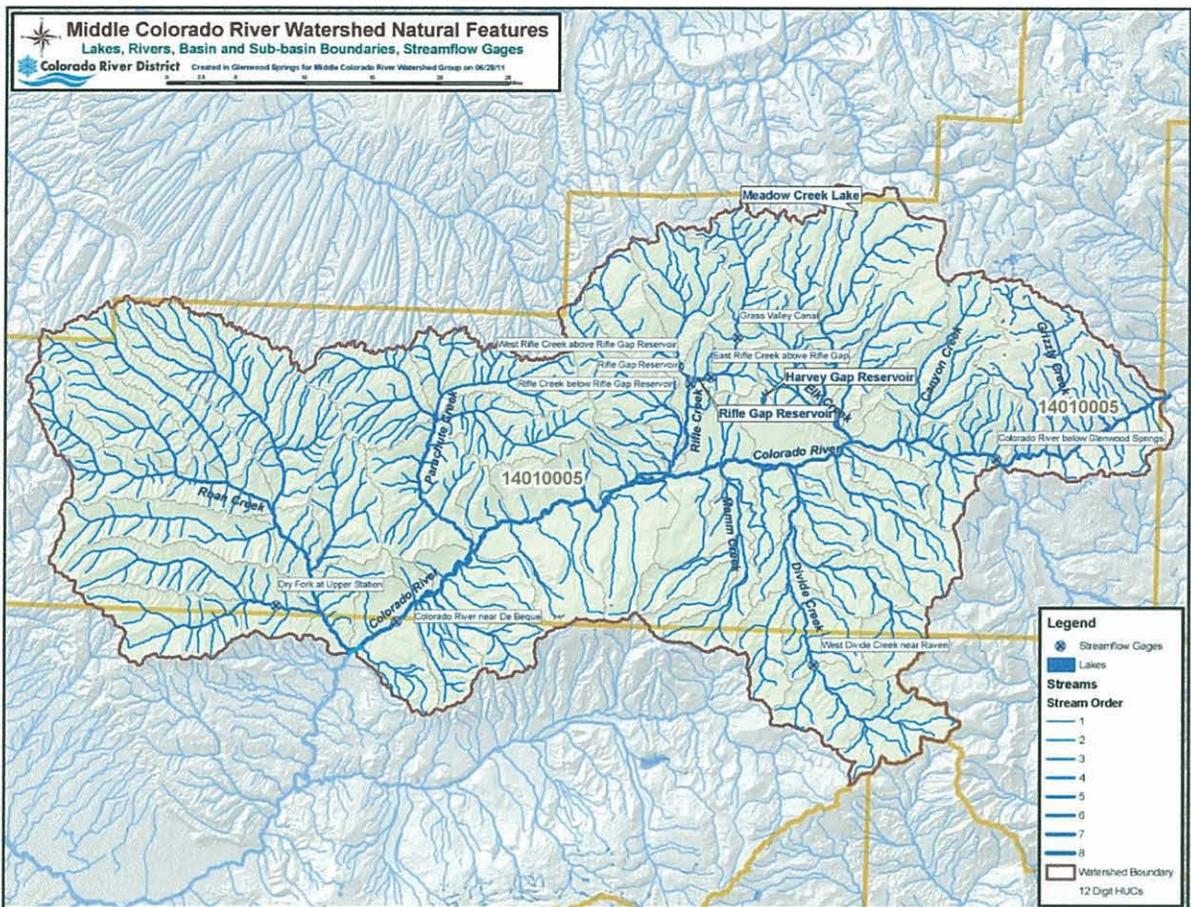


Figure 1. Delineation of the Middle Colorado River Watershed.

The MCRW is of vital importance locally, regionally and throughout the West. Locally, several communities, including Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Silt, Rifle, Parachute, Battlement Mesa, and DeBeque, rely on the Colorado River and its tributaries for drinking water supplies. Outside the region, millions of people in six states and two nations rely on water flowing through the MCRW for a variety of beneficial uses including municipal supplies, irrigation, recreation and aquatic habitat, to name a few.

The region’s natural amenities, including access to world-class recreation as well as rich deposits of oil and especially natural gas, are critically important to the region’s economy. Residential growth, driven by resort and energy industry jobs, as well as retirees and young professionals drawn to the region’s natural amenities, has been strong and is expected to continue. The State projects that Garfield County’s population will reach 118,000 by 2030, which is more than double today’s population of 58,000. How and where that growth occurs may have tremendous influence on the water quality and quantity of the MCRW. Industrial development, mostly linked to extractive industries is also extensive, especially in the western portion of the watershed. Agriculture remains important to the region’s landscape and heritage.

Until recently, the MCRW lacked an organized presence to promote stewardship, coordinate management activities, and educate residents and local officials about the watershed's values. A partnership of entities began meeting in September of 2009 to fill this void and begin building local capacity to develop a vision to protect and enhance the watershed into the future. The partnership was successful in acquiring grant funding in 2012 from the Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program. This funding provided for several activities over the period of two years including: 1) hiring of a part-time coordinator to manage the organization's activities; 2) incorporation of the Council in December of 2013 as a Colorado nonprofit organization; 3) completion of a technical Watershed Assessment document; and 4) compilation of a Watershed Plan.

Known Challenges and Impairments: Several river segments in the watershed are 303(d) listed for impairments due to selenium loading. Many other segments in the MCRW are listed for evaluation and monitoring of sediment, *e. coli*, dissolved oxygen, selenium, copper, iron, lead, and zinc.

Several sub-basins within the MCRW are included in the Salinity Control Area as part of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act (CRBSCA). The CRBSCA authorizes the construction, operation, and maintenance of certain works in the Colorado River Basin to control the salinity of water delivered to users in the United States and Mexico. Salinity - and selenium - is mobilized and transported into rivers by both natural percolation and irrigation, and have the potential to impact aquatic life, downstream water supplies and drinking water treatment costs. Levels of salinity vary within the watershed, but often exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) secondary drinking water standard for total dissolved solids (TDS) by 50% to 60% in winter months. Municipal users are making expensive investments in microfiltration processes to mitigate the effects of high TDS in their drinking waters. Water utilities in the MCRW also face the growing challenge of the impacts of dissolved organic carbon (DOC) and related treatment by-products (e.g. chloramines) to water supplies to comply with State and Federal drinking water regulations.

Sources of DOCs include runoff from urban and agricultural lands and can be exacerbated by post-fire runoff. The natural hot springs complex from Dotsero to New Castle enters the mainstem of the Colorado River within the MCRW, contributing significantly to the river's salt load. Although salts, or TDS, are not "contaminants" under the Clean Water Act, their effect on agriculture and drinking water customer satisfaction is well documented. The Federal Salinity Control Program has primary responsibility for managing and mitigating salinity's impacts in the greater Colorado River Basin. Natural sources, however, are not the only contributor of TDS to the river. Certain land use decisions and alternative irrigation practices also may have greater impacts than others on the river's TDS.

Suitable habitat for three federally-listed threatened or endangered species of fish is found within the watershed. The mainstem of the Colorado River in the lower half of the MCRW is designated as critical habitat for the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker. The

flannelmouth sucker, bluehead sucker and roundtail chub, designated as sensitive by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or of concern by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, are transitional species that also utilize the mainstem below Rifle. Populations of the federally threatened greenback cutthroat trout are found in isolated pockets in several of the tributaries. While management of these species is vested with our partnering Federal and State agencies, the Council plans to actively participate at the local level, if appropriate, to assist with the implementation of water quality, quantity, and habitat protections and improvements.

Emerging Concerns and Challenges: The MCRW lies within a “hot spot” for natural gas drilling and production. According to the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, there are over 11,000 well facilities in Garfield County alone. Concerns about the water implications of energy development regularly headline local newspapers and a lack of trust between key stakeholders challenges solution-oriented dialogue.

The MCRW also faces threats common to much of the Upper Colorado River basin: aggressive invasion of tamarisk and other invasive species; loss of habitat; water depletions and reduced instream flows; declines in forest health; changes to precipitation and run-off from climate change; and the potential water impacts of oil shale development, which is a matter of national interest and debate.

In addition, regulated and unregulated stormwater discharges, improper siting and/or failure of onsite wastewater treatment systems; contaminants from municipal wastewater systems (e.g., nitrogen, phosphorous, and emerging contaminants), impacts of land development (loss of natural cover and increased imperviousness) and related impacts to watershed health are increasing as the region grows.

While the watershed faces many known, perceived and potential water quality impacts and stressors, the full nature and extent of these challenges – and potential solutions – is not adequately understood. The Watershed Assessment, with a focus on water quality, has contributed to the knowledge base by synthesizing data as well as highlighting sub-basins and specific reaches where water quality standard exceedances have occurred. The Watershed Plan, currently under development, will function as a roadmap for the organization by identifying potential watershed management strategies to address the various needs and issues. Work proposed for this WaterSMART CWMP grant would build upon the Council’s work to date by increasing organizational capacity, strengthening educational abilities, engaging additional key stakeholders, and developing detailed plans for restoration and improvement activities.

3.0 Project Description

3.1 Description of the Applicant. The Middle Colorado Watershed Council (Council) was incorporated as a Colorado nonprofit in December 2013 with the mission to “evaluate, protect

and enhance the health of the middle Colorado River watershed through the cooperative effort of watershed stakeholders”. The stated goals of the Council are as follows:

1. Support the long-term health of the watershed for the wellbeing of the community and the local economy.
2. Protect and enhance water quality.
3. Promote smart, efficient water use and conservation.
4. Increase knowledge, awareness and stimulate interest in the watershed.
5. Manage the organization and finances effectively and efficiently.
6. Inform planning and decision-making with unbiased, fact-based information.
7. Create partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders.

The Council is governed by a Board of nine directors that represent the watershed from a broad geographic and sector perspective. The organization maintains a list of nearly 300 stakeholders that have indicated interest in the Council’s activities either through direct participation in a meeting or event, or by subscribing through the organization’s website. Included in the stakeholder group are members of the general public as well as those representing interests such as irrigated agriculture, livestock producers, Federal and State land and resource management agencies, private land development, recreation, Municipal and County government, water conservation and conservancy districts, adjoining watershed groups, local universities, extractive industry, and local conservation-oriented organizations. The Board solicits feedback from the stakeholders on a regular basis as part of its short- and long-term planning efforts. In addition, the Council has a diverse Technical Advisory Committee that guides the watershed assessment and planning processes, and has Committees of the Board (e.g., Communications, Finance).

3.2 Eligibility of the Applicant. The Council meets all of the eligibility requirements as described in Section III. A.1 and A.2 of the FOA. The organization is an existing “watershed group” incorporated as a Colorado nonprofit and is currently seeking tax exempt 501(c)3 status from the Internal Revenue Service. Its mission, values and goals statement are fully consistent with the FOA’s requirements that the applicant be able to significantly affect the quantity or quality of water within the watershed while promoting the sustainable use of water resources.

3.3 Goals. The organization’s goals were established by the Board in early 2014 and are listed above under the section “Description of the Applicant”. This request seeks funding for Task B – Expansion of an Existing Watershed Group.

3.4 Approach. The Council is requesting monies under Task 2 of the CWMP to expand an existing watershed group according to the approach described below.

3.4.1 Information Gathering. A robust amount of technical information and data has been assembled by the Council to date. Relevant literature related to the physical, chemical, biological, and socio-economic attributes of the watershed has been compiled in an electronic database that includes an annotated bibliography. The USGS, along with a set of public and private industry partners, published a report entitled the “Characterization and Data-Gap

Analysis of Surface-Water Quality in the Piceance Study Area, Western Colorado, 1959–2009 (2013)” that covered a significant portion of the MCRW area. As part of the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Control grant funding, the Council is developing a draft Watershed Assessment (2013). This work built off of the USGS Piceance Basin Study by updating the surface water quality database, synthesizing the data in more detail, comparing results to numeric water quality criteria, and identifying additional data gaps. Results of the assessment identify specific subwatersheds and stream reaches where water quality exceedances have occurred. More work is required in each of these specific locations to determine the sources, scope and magnitude of the impairments so that appropriate strategies for management and control can be identified, designed and implemented (see an expanded scope of this in Section 3.4.5).

3.4.2 Organizational Stability. The Council was incorporated in December of 2013 and created its first Board, which now consists of nine members. A professional facilitator assisted the Board in developing a Strategic Framework that includes a mission statement, a set of operating values, a list of the types of work the Council engages in, and a broad list of organizational goals, all of which were crafted using extensive feedback garnered from stakeholders over a series of public meetings from 2009 through 2012.

A part-time coordinator was hired in 2012 for a two-year period using Section 319 funding. The Council intends to continue with the current contractor, or hire a new one if necessary, to continue the work under this funding request. Coordinator functions include administrative work, organizing and executing information and outreach activities (see more on this in Section 3.4.3), maintaining and building partner relations (see Section 3.4.3), seeking and managing other grant sources, and managing the development of more detailed management and restoration plans (see Section 3.4.5).

The Finance Committee is currently working on development of a long-term organizational stability plan, the continuation of which will occur as part of this contract. The stability plan will address how the organization will grow with time while achieving financial stability through funding from a variety of diverse sources.

3.4.3 Outreach. The Council is proposing to develop a Public Outreach and Communications Plan as part of this funding request. Objectives of the plan will be to: 1) expand, broaden and invigorate the membership of the organization; 2) target outreach efforts to potential partners that are key to successful implementation of projects outlined in the watershed plan; and 3) promote stewardship of the watershed through community education and engagement.

While the Council’s stakeholder list is large and diverse (approximately 300), participation in meetings and events has been minimal. It is clear that communication efforts must involve external outreach and education through visiting directly with entities that rely on water resources in the watershed. Targeted sectors will include agriculture (including conservation and conservancy districts), municipal water users, the oil and gas industry, and others identified by the Plan. With completion of the Watershed Assessment, the Council has specific results it intends to present to these entities as part of the education outreach, while soliciting their specific interests and involvement in project-specific restoration efforts.

Garnering input and involvement will be critical as the Council moves forward with on-the-ground implementation work.

Development of the Public Outreach and Communications Plan will be undertaken by the Communications Committee and occur through a facilitated process, resulting in a written document serving as a roadmap for immediate execution. The Plan will be structured to answer several questions:

- what information is being conveyed and why;
- what audiences are being targeted by the Council;
- what message(s) works best for each specific audience; and
- how the message(s) is best delivered.

Outreach efforts will likely include: 1) preparation of print material for distribution, 2) development of public presentations, 3) enhanced website materials, 4) continued publication of e-newsletters, 5) issuance of regular press releases, 6) increased social media, 7) annual river clean-up events and other stewardship opportunities, and 8) attendance for presentation purposes at a wide variety of public forums, Board meetings, trade association meetings, and other venues that provide exposure to the targeted audiences. The Plan will be implemented by the Watershed Coordinator with assistance from the Board, Technical Advisory Committee, Communication Committee and stakeholder members.

3.4.4 Watershed Needs Assessment. A Watershed Plan document is currently being assembled using Section 319 funding with an expected completion date of early 2015. This Plan characterizes what is known about the physical, chemical, biological, and socio-economic condition of the watershed as it exists today. Central to the document will be a discussion of watershed needs and impairments, many of which have been identified already through extensive stakeholder feedback as well as Watershed Assessment results (see Section 2.0). Those needs and impairments will be fashioned into a list of potential projects – both management strategies and restoration projects. The list of projects will further be prioritized based on what is known at the time regarding availability of funding, willingness/readiness of key partners, and other logistical factors as well as stakeholder preference. Altogether, this information will be presented in the Watershed Plan as a basic roadmap for the Council to follow, update, and modify over time as projects are implemented and evaluated and new information and opportunities become available.

Projects identified in the initial Watershed Plan will be presented as concepts along with an explanation of the basic elements, approach for implementation, additional data or information needs, key partners, and estimated cost ranges for each. As such, it is expected that more detail will be required prior to implementation. The Council is proposing to use funding under this program to develop that additional detail for the highest priority projects outlined in the Plan (see Section 3.4.5).

3.4.5 Development of a Watershed Restoration Plan. Work specific to this proposed task will expand upon two or three high priority watershed management and/or restoration project concepts introduced in the Watershed Plan as described in Section 3.4.4. These concepts will be developed into complete plans to the extent necessary for project funding and implementation purposes. This may include:

- initial feasibility assessments, including the collection of baseline data, data synthesis, GIS mapping, modeling, etc.;
- additional outreach and collaboration to acquire the support of project partners;
- development of project goals and measureable benchmarks;
- development and detailing of methods;
- preparation of a timeline defining activities and responsibilities;
- identification of project costs and funding sources; and
- development of a monitoring plan to measure change and evaluate project objectives.

The resulting written plans will be of sufficient detail to seek implementation funding, including Section 319 funding through the Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program, among others. Several possible projects have already been identified by stakeholders. A few examples that will be explored further in the Watershed Plan include:

- Developing plans for selenium control on one or more of the subwatersheds identified as impaired on the State's 303(d) list, while incorporating water conservation and irrigation efficiency features if appropriate;
- Creating a watershed-wide riparian management and restoration plan, including inventory and control of non-native invasives (i.e., tamarisk and Russian olives);
- Planning for the modification of irrigation diversion structures to improve irrigation efficiency, allow for fish movement (or continued isolation of genetically pure populations), and reduce excessive sedimentation; and
- Planning to continue the work of the Piceance Basin Stakeholder Group by scoping Phase II, which would seek to develop a watershed-wide water quantity/quality sampling strategy to improve sampling efficiencies and effectiveness, and fill data gaps.

3.4.6 Timing of Activities. A plan of action that details the work to be completed under this grant funding, along with specific milestones identified, will be completed within the first 30 days following contract execution. A proposed timeline for deliverables is offered in Section 3.5 as the best estimate available as of now. This will be further detailed and updated based upon current conditions after the contract is in place.

3.4.7 Final Report. The final report will consist of three deliverables: 1) an Organizational Stability Plan; 2) a Public Outreach and Communications Plan; and 3) a Watershed Restoration Plan that contains details for the implementation of two or three high-priority watershed management and/or restoration plans. The report will also contain administrative details related to execution of the Council's contract with the Bureau of Reclamation, as requested.

3.5 Proposed Timeline. Assuming a 24-month project timeline beginning October 1, 2014, and ending September 30, 2016, the project timeline is projected as follows:

- Information Gathering – Basic information gathering is complete. More detailed information gathering will occur in conjunction with the Restoration Plan work (see item below).
- Organizational Stability – Basic stability tasks are complete. Development of the long-term Organization Stability Plan has begun, and will continue through February of 2016 when the Plan will be finalized.
- Outreach – Creation of the Public Outreach and Communication Plan will extend from October 2014 through May 2015, when a final Plan will be available. However, the Council intends to begin executing initially identified elements of the draft Plan as soon as November 2014 and extending through the term of the contract, September 2016.
- Watershed Needs Assessment - Conceptual needs are being identified and prioritized in the Watershed Plan scheduled for completion in early 2015 (under a separate contract with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)).
- Restoration Plan - Detailed management/restoration plans will be initiated in May 2015, following completion of the Watershed Plan. Final plans will be available no later than August 2016.
- Final Report - September 2016.

4.0 Evaluation Criteria

4.1 Evaluation Criteria A: Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope

4.1.1 Subcriterion No. A1. Watershed Group Diversity. The Council’s existing stakeholder group represents a broad and diverse mix of entities extending across the geographic scope of the watershed, including members of the general public as well as those representing interests such as irrigated agriculture, livestock producers, Federal and State land and resource management agencies, private land development, recreation, Municipal and County government, water conservation and conservancy districts, extractive industry, and local conservation-oriented organizations. Members who are active in terms of providing past or current financial support or who serve on the Board or one of the Board committee’s represent the following: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Garfield County, Bureau of Land Management, City of Glenwood, City of Rifle, Battlement Mesa Metro District, Town of DeBeque, Colorado River Water Conservation District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado State University Extension Service, Colorado Mountain College, Sonoran Institute, West Divide Water Conservancy District, Silt Water Conservancy District, Eagle River Watershed Council, Williams Company, Inc., Schmueser Gordon Meyer, Inc., and Alpine Bank.

One of the funding objectives proposed in this application is to increase and invigorate the involvement of stakeholders in carrying out the organization’s mission. Particular emphasis will be made on increasing involvement within the agricultural, industrial and municipal water supply sectors, as these entities have the ability to significantly affect or be affected by the quality and quantity of water in the river.

Past experience suggests that trust needs to be built with the agricultural community. This will be accomplished in steps: first, by bringing our message directly to them (presentations and printed material) in ag-related forums and through the conservation and conservancy districts and, second, by implementing voluntary-based water conservation/quality-control projects on the ground to demonstrate the power of collaboration. Similarly, trust needs to be built with the oil and gas industry, and the Council believes that can be accomplished through the open exchange of information (i.e., sharing results of the Watershed Assessment) as well as collaboration on projects that provide a net environmental benefit. The Council had previous positive experience working with two oil and gas operators in the watershed on a tamarisk removal project that utilized environmental fine monies. We intend to explore these sources of monies and partnerships further.

Local municipalities are generally supportive of the Council, although there is an identified need to connect directly with the drinking water and wastewater managers as well as the land-use planners on results of the Watershed Assessment. Relationships can be strengthened through understanding common concerns and perceived issues, promoting strategic water quality monitoring studies, and working together on restoration projects that mitigate or offset known impairments.

4.1.2 Subcriterion No. A2. Geographic Scope. The MCRW covers portions of two HUC-8 watersheds. Within its area, 43% is private land, 31% is managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and 25% is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Public lands dominate in the eastern half of the watershed as well as on the north and south margins of higher elevation areas. Within the private land category, commercial, municipal and industrial uses are largely confined to incorporated areas along the east-west Interstate-70 corridor, leaving oil and gas and agriculture as the two major private land uses. Irrigated agriculture, mostly for grass and hay production, is typically concentrated in the Colorado River floodplain as well as narrow areas adjacent to streams where water is most readily diverted and delivered. Ranching operations in the form of livestock grazing also occurs in non-irrigated areas and are scattered throughout but mostly occur in the western half of the basin. Oil and gas operations occur throughout the watershed on both public and private lands.

The Watershed Assessment covers the full geographic area and, as such, pinpoints needs across the entire geographic distribution. The Watershed Plan and its list of projects and priorities will also address the full geographic area.

4.2 Evaluation Criteria B: Critical Watershed Needs

4.2.1 Subcriterion No. B1 - Critical Watershed Needs or Issues. The critical issues and needs that have been identified by the Council fall within six categories as follows:

- *Pollution and Water Quality Degradation*
 - Three stream segments are 303(d) listed as impaired due to selenium loading, several other stream segments have selenium exceedances that require further investigation. One reservoir is impaired due to mercury.

- Seven stream segments are on the Monitoring and Evaluation List for impairments related to iron, lead, dissolved oxygen, copper, selenium, *E. coli*, zinc, and sediment.
- Sufficient flow data are lacking for calculating the total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) of impaired waterbodies.
- Concentrations of salinity exceed EPA's secondary drinking water standard TDS by 50% to 60% in winter months.
- Several subwatersheds have little or no associated water quality data and have active oil and gas production, agricultural use, and federally threatened trout and highly unique water-dependent plant communities.
- A comprehensive assessment of impacts from oil and gas activities, particularly nonpoint, not conducted due to insufficient data.
- The effects of existing water quality/quantity on aquatic life in the local MCRW are unknown, particularly for the three endangered fish and the three native fish species of concern in the Colorado mainstem.
- The effects of increased wastewater discharges that are concentrated by lower flows in the Colorado mainstem are unknown, particularly with regards to emerging contaminants and nutrients (i.e., nitrogen and phosphorus), for which new nutrient control regulatory requirements are established.
- *Limited Water Supply and Availability*
 - Both the current and future physical supply is limited for consumptive and non-consumptive uses.
 - Tributaries commonly dry up on an annual basis due to diversions, which can limit fish movement, reproduction, and available habitat.
 - The timing and sustainability of flows impacts consumptive supply, biota, and natural regeneration of riparian areas.
- *Threats to Riparian and Aquatic Habitat*
 - The western half of the watershed has experienced an extensive invasion of tamarisk and Russian olive while the regeneration of natural cottonwood has concurrently decreased.
 - Both in the mainstem and tributaries, non-native fish species are competing with native threatened and endangered species and three fish species of concern.
 - The infestation of pine beetles coupled with historic forest management has increased the risk and severity of wildfires, and, consequently, has increased the vulnerability of watersheds to post-fire effects, including increased runoff, peak discharge, soil erosion, sedimentation, and loss of soil nutrients.
- *Land Use and County Development Pressures*
 - The Council and its partners are anticipating the effects of future growth and planning future growth to protect water resources.
 - The Council and its partners are fostering the protection of areas with high existing resource quality, particularly those areas in the upper reaches of the watershed as well as headwater tributaries.
 - The Council and its partners plan on assessing the effects of regulated and non-regulated stormwater runoff.

- The Council and its partners plan on assessing the effects of onsite wastewater disposal systems.
- *Lack of Shared Information*
 - The Council will publish its Watershed Assessment in 2014 and will coordinate discussions with targeted audiences, as well as the general public.
 - The Council is proposing to develop a Public Outreach and Communications Plan.
 - Outreach efforts will likely include: 1) preparation of print material for distribution, 2) development of public presentations, 3) enhanced website materials, 4) continued publication of e-newsletters, 5) issuance of regular press releases, 6) increased social media, , 7) annual clean-up events and other stewardship opportunities, and 8) attendance for presentation purposes at a wide variety of public forums, Board meetings, trade association meetings, and other venues that provide exposure to the targeted audiences.
- *Lack of Community Engagement*
 - While the Council's stakeholder list is large and diverse (approximately 300), participation in meetings and events is currently minimal.
 - Communication efforts must involve external outreach and education through visiting directly with entities that can significantly affect or be affected by the quantity and quality of water in the watershed, such as agriculture, municipal water users, and the oil and gas industry.
 - The Council is proposing to develop a Public Outreach and Communications Plan.
 - Outreach efforts will likely include: 1) preparation of print material for distribution, 2) development of public presentations, 3) enhanced website materials, 4) continued publication of e-newsletters, 5) issuance of regular press releases, 6) increased social media, 7) annual clean-up events and other stewardship opportunities, and 8) attendance for presentation purposes at a wide variety of public forums, Board meetings, trade association meetings, and other venues that provide exposure to the targeted audiences.

4.2.2 Subcriterion No. B2 - Contributions that Address Watershed Needs or Issues.

As listed in Section 4.2.1, the needs related to improved watershed management are great. The Council intends to continue its work towards improved management in the following four areas as follows:

- 1) Addressing and enhancing water conservation. One of the Council's stated goals is to "Promote smart, efficient water use and conservation" (see goals in Section 3.1). Water conservation is also a goal promoted by the Colorado Basin Roundtable as part of its Basin Implementation Plan (see description in Section 4.3.1). Outreach and educational materials produced by the Council will promote this common goal. Additionally, some of the specific on-the-ground projects related to agricultural uses of water have the opportunity for incorporating water conservation goals through lining/piping canals, replacing outdated structures, and optimizing timing of deliveries. Successful completion of these projects may directly improve water quality.

- 2) Working towards improving water quality and/or ecological resiliency. Another stated goal of the Council is to “Protect and enhance water quality”. The completed Watershed Assessment is a first, significant step in that direction. It establishes the current, baseline condition for water quality in the watershed and will serve as a benchmark for evaluating future project success. Projects conceptualized by the Council seek to eliminate, minimize or mitigate sources of pollution impairments in the watershed. Its projects will also seek to provide for ecological resiliency through the control of non-natives (flora and fauna), riparian and aquatic habitat restoration, promotion of ecological connectivity, and enhanced water availability.
- 3) Reducing the potential for water conflicts. Two of the Council’s goals relate to this topic: a) inform planning and decision-making with unbiased, fact-based information; and b) create partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders. Working together on a voluntary basis using science-based information allows for progress to be made on resolving issues that have traditionally been divisive or pressured under regulatory constraints.
- 4) Advancing other goals associated with water quantity. The Council’s diverse membership represents a variety of water uses and users. It will seek to maintain the existing beneficial uses of water currently in place while identifying any opportunities to potentially optimize water flow in critical areas during critical periods. This will be important for the continued support of native fishes both in the mainstem and tributaries, natural regeneration of cottonwood stands, and dilution of natural background sources of pollutants.

4.3 Evaluation Criteria C: Implementation and Results

4.3.1 Subcriterion No. C1 - Project Planning. The Watershed Plan currently under development will address all of the requirements of the Colorado Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program as well as EPA’s Nine Elements of a Watershed Plan.

At the request of the Governor, Colorado is developing its first, Statewide Water Plan and has charged each of the nine basin Roundtables to develop information for inclusion in the Plan. The Colorado Basin Roundtable, of which the Council is an active member, is preparing a Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) to address current and anticipated gaps in both consumptive and non-consumptive (environmental and recreational) supply. The Roundtable has looked to the Council to help identify projects for satisfying non-consumptive needs; in turn, the Council is using information from the draft BIP to identify and prioritize appropriate projects in the Watershed Plan. The current version of the BIP identifies the Council as one of the implementing agencies for the projects and processes it is putting forth.

4.3.2 Subcriterion No. C2 - Readiness to Proceed. The Council will be ready to proceed with the work proposed herein upon execution of contract documents. Section 3.5 enumerates each of the proposed tasks and provides timelines for execution as well as milestone dates for activities and deliverables. Sections 6.0 and 7.0 present costs associated with execution of the work. All cash contributions are in the bank with the exception of the

BLM share. A letter of commitment has been received from the BLM and cash is expected to be conveyed in the next month or two.

The Council does not anticipate encountering any problems or having difficulties with performing the work as proposed. It is well positioned to implement this particular scope of work given that there is a Board of Directors in place, a Watershed Coordinator that has been working with the group for twenty-one months, the mission/values/goals statements have been developed, a draft Watershed Assessment has been completed, and a Watershed Plan is being developed that all serve to support the continued success of the organization.

4.4 Evaluation Criteria D: Watershed Group/Landscape Conservation Cooperatives Nexus

The MCRW is located within the northeast quadrant of the Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative (SRLCC). The Council is not yet actively participating with the SRLCC but is signed up as an interested party with the intent of collaborating together in the future as our projects become better defined. The SRLCC has established five focus areas in which it intends to contribute science-based and decision support tools; the Council's work strongly supports two of those areas: 1) native fish; and 2) stream flows (both for consumptive and non-consumptive uses). Information generated through the work proposed herein, or developed later as an outgrowth of this work, that contributes to the SRLCC's mission will be made available for its use and dissemination. In the near term, the Council also intends to use information generated by the SRLCC to support its work, specifically the National Wetland Inventory mapping digitally catalogued by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. It is also interested in results of the Fremont Cottonwood Stand Dynamics study underway by the USGS as well as the Vulnerability Assessment for Aquatic Species and their Habitat underway at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station.

5.0 Required Permits or Approvals

No permits or other approval are required for the execution of the scope included in this proposal.

6.0 Funding Plan

Table 1: Summary of non-Federal and Federal funding sources.

FUNDING SOURCES	FUNDING AMOUNT
Non-Federal Entities	
1. Garfield County	\$25,000
2. Local Municipal	\$6,500
3. Local Private	\$3,000
4. Members (in-kind)	\$66,200*
Non-Federal Subtotal	\$100,700
Other Federal Entities	
1. BLM	\$16,000
Other Federal Subtotal	\$16,000
Requested Reclamation Funding	\$98,924
Total Project Funding	\$215,624

* In-kind funding.

Other Federal funding offered as match is from the BLM in the amount of \$16,000. A letter of commitment is on file and funding should be in place within the next two months. Non-Federal cash has been collected from Garfield County, several local municipalities and a local bank. All non-Federal cash is in the bank. In-kind contributions in the estimated amount of \$66,200 is accumulated time contributed by Board and Advisory Committee members and is based upon actual data collected over the couple of years. No costs associated with completion of this proposal has been accrued to date, nor is any expected to be accrued prior to contract execution.

7.0 Budget Proposal

Table 2: Budget proposal.

Budget Item Description	\$/Unit	Quantity	Quantity Type	Total Cost
Salaries/Wages/Contractual				
Watershed Coordinator/Scientist	\$63,800	2	year	\$127,600
Facilitation	\$100	30	hours	\$3,000
Board and Committee	\$25	1728	hours	\$43,200*
Technical Advisory Committee	\$25	720	hours	\$18,000*
GIS	\$50	100	hours	\$5,000*
Fringe Benefits				\$0
Travel				
Conferences (local CO/UT)	\$400	6	each	\$2,400
Local travel	\$0.56	2400	miles	\$1,344
Equipment				
Office Equipment	incl.			\$0
Supplies/Materials				
Office Supplies	incl.			\$0
Printing Outreach Materials	\$3,000	1	batch	\$3,000
Event Hosting	\$200	6	each	\$1,200
Other				
Website Updates/Maintenance	\$120	24	month	\$2,880
Accounting/Legal	\$1,500	2	year	\$3,000
Insurance	\$1,500	2	year	\$3,000
Reporting	\$1,000	1	year	\$2,000
Indirect Costs %				\$0
Total Project Costs				\$215,624

*In-kind (non-cash).

7.1 Salaries and Wages/Contractual. The program manager will be the watershed coordinator/scientist. These services are currently supplied by Aqua Ria, Ltd., a woman-owned, small business corporation. Aqua Ria's services were selected in 2012 through a competitive, public solicitation process and are based upon a lump sum contract for a defined scope of work. The Council will either renew Aqua Ria's services or enter into agreement for similar services from another qualified firm. The annual lump sum costs estimated for coordination/scientist services related to this proposal are based upon the last twenty months of activity, adjusted to

account for the work load as contemplated. The lump sum costs include benefits, indirect costs, office equipment, and office supplies.

Similarly, facilitation will be conducted by the Sonoran Institute, a local non-profit that has assisted the Council with similar activities in the past.

In-kind contributions from Board of Directors, Committees of the Board, and Technical Advisory Committee are estimated based on an accounting of donated time over the last couple of years at an assigned volunteer rate of \$25/hour.

7.2 Fringe Benefits. Fringe is included in the consultant fees as described in Section 8.1. No additional fringe benefits are proposed.

7.3 Travel. Travel includes attendance at six conferences or workshops by either the Coordinator or a Board member (costs include conference fees, lodging, and mileage). Contemplated venues include the annual Colorado Watershed Assembly conference, the annual Upper Colorado River conference at Colorado Mesa University, conferences hosted by the Tamarisk Coalition, workshops hosted by the Colorado Nonprofit Association (for capacity-building), among others. Another 2,400 miles charged at the federal reimbursement rate of \$0.54/mile are estimated to cover local travel within the Colorado River valley for the purposes of stakeholder outreach, partner meetings/collaboration and field visits.

7.4 Equipment. Office equipment costs are included in the consultant fees described in Section 8.1. Additional field equipment needs will be provided by stakeholder members.

7.5 Materials and Supplies. Basic office supplies are included in the consultant fees described in Section 8.1. This proposal includes the cost of printed outreach material estimated at \$3,000 to include brochures, fliers, and summary reports (estimate based on experience with printing production costs). The Council holds bi-monthly workshops, some of which are expense-free, and some that have associated costs such as printed materials, snacks, and transportation, estimated at an average of \$200 per meeting for 6 meetings (estimated based on prior actual costs).

7.6 Other Costs. This category includes monthly fees for website updates and maintenance as well as the annual hosting fees. Accounting and legal fees are estimated based on the need for preparation of the annual nonprofit tax return and as-needed legal advice concerning corporate and liability-related issues. Reporting is estimated at \$1,000/year and will be conducted by the Coordinator.

7.7 Indirect Costs. There are no indirect costs associated with this proposal.

Attachment A - Council Resolution

Middle Colorado Watershed Council

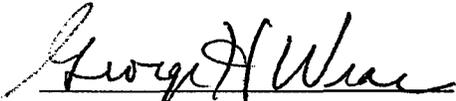
**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGARDING ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT FOR GRANT FUNDING ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. BUREAU
OF RECLAMATION**

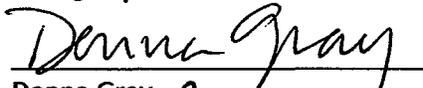
WHEREAS, Article 7, Section 12 of the Bylaws of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council (MCWC) provides for the Execution of Instruments with prior approval by the Board of Directors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF MCWC that:

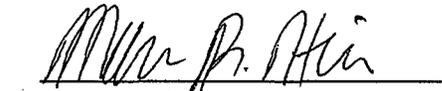
- The President of the MCWC (currently George Wear) is the individual with legal authority to enter into contractual agreements, as attested by the Secretary of the MCWC (currently Angie Fowler);
- The MCWC Board of Directors voted at its May 14th meeting to support the application for submission to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in response to funding opportunity No. R14AS00038, subject to Board review prior to submittal;
- The MCWC is capable of providing the amount of funding and/or in-kind contributions specified in the funding plan, as applicable; and
- The MCWC Board and its staff will work with Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a financial assistance agreement.

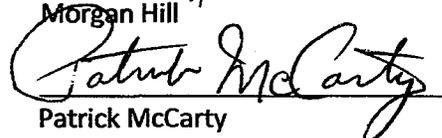
Adopted by those Board of Directors present at its meeting held on, and effective as of, May 14, 2014.


George Wear


Donna Gray


Maria Pastore


Morgan Hill


Patrick McCarty

Attachment B - Letters of Support



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Colorado River Valley Field Office
2300 River Frontage Road
Silt, Colorado 81652



IN REPLY REFER TO:
(CON040) 1511

June 3, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Ms. Maher:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), particularly the Colorado River Valley Field Office, would like to express its support of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) grant proposal under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program for FY 2014. The BLM is an active partner of the MCWC and supports its mission to protect and enhance watershed health along the ever important Colorado River.

The BLM manages over 400,000 acres of public land throughout the Middle Colorado Watershed, which involves three BLM field offices. The watershed council has played a critical role in building stakeholder partnerships across a vast landscape with competing uses of natural resources, and has begun the process to address water quality issues in a holistic manner.

As a partner of the MCWC, the BLM has provided assistance to the organization in several ways over the past 2 years. This assistance has taken the form of providing funding (\$16,000 obligated in FY14), in-kind contributions, and technical support as a Technical Advisory Committee member. We are thrilled to see the progress that the watershed council has made in characterizing the watershed via a highly technical water quality assessment and continuing the next steps for a watershed plan.

Financial support at this point is critical to sustain the comprehensive planning and management effort. The BLM will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,

Steven Bennett
Field Manager

United States Department of Agriculture



Glenwood Springs NRCS Field Office
258 Center Drive
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
(970) 945 - 5494

April 21st, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is submitted in support of work by the Middle Colorado Watershed Council (MCWC) within the Middle Colorado River Watershed to identify, and design projects that restore and conserve the Colorado River and Agriculture within the Watershed. The NRCS provides voluntary conservation technical assistance to any group or individual interested in conserving our natural resources and sustaining agricultural production. NRCS accepts applications for financial assistance from eligible landowners and agricultural producers in this watershed and encourages the MCWC to promote our available programs.

NRCS works through conservation districts and other cooperators to conserve natural resources on private lands. The MCWC mission is in line with our mission to improve the health of our Nation's natural resources while sustaining and enhancing the productivity of American Agriculture.

This project will help NRCS meet its goal to create a climate where private lands conservation will thrive by helping us meet our objectives:

- Build and strengthen partnerships and coalitions
- Promote an ethic of conservation stewardship among America's farmers, ranchers, and stakeholders
- Proactively recognize and address emerging natural resource issues

Using this comprehensive approach, the people we help are in turn able to help the land function as a living sustainable system that provides a high standard of living and quality of life for today and for future generations. As a partner of the MCWC, we have provided assistance to the organization in several ways over the past few years.

I hope that you will give the project every consideration for funding. The MCWC could benefit, at this critical juncture, with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. Our agency will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Jaouen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Jaouen
District Conservationist
Glenwood Springs

Cc: Laurie Rink

STATE OF COLORADO

John W. Hickenlooper, Governor
Larry Wolk, MD, MSPH
Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer

Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

4300 Cherry Creek Dr. S.
Denver, Colorado 80246-1530
Phone (303) 692-2000
Located in Glendale, Colorado
www.colorado.gov/cdphe



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

June 4, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Ms. Maher,

The Colorado Water Quality Control Division Nonpoint Source Program is very supportive of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) in its application to the Bureau of Reclamation for a Cooperative Watershed Management grant for FY 2014. Our organization is an active partner of the MCWC and supports its mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

Colorado's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program has been working collaboratively with the MCWC for over 3 years in their efforts to organize an active watershed initiative in a key part of the state experiencing significant population growth and oil and gas activities. The NPS (319) funding has been a key mechanism to launch the initiative. This collaboration has helped the NPS Program fulfill its goal of addressing water quality impairments by engaging local communities in watershed planning and implementation of best management practices.

We are pleased with the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, highlighting areas of concern, and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission. With the Colorado River being the watershed's focal point, the opportunities and need for comprehensive planning and management are great. Continued support at this point in the growth of the MCWC is critical to propel the organization into success. As we face diminishing NPS funds for ongoing outreach and project implementation, partnering and collaboration are crucial for success. Our agency will continue to support the MCWC as best we can and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,

Bonie Pate
Nonpoint Source Project Coordinator
Restoration and Protection Unit
Water Quality Control Division

Tom Jankovsky
District 1

John Martin, Chair
District 2

Mike Samson, Chair Pro Tem
District 3



May 30, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Ms. Maher,

The Garfield County Board of County Commissioners are writing today in support of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) proposal for consideration under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant funding opportunity for FY 2014. Our organization is an active partner of the MCWC and supports its mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

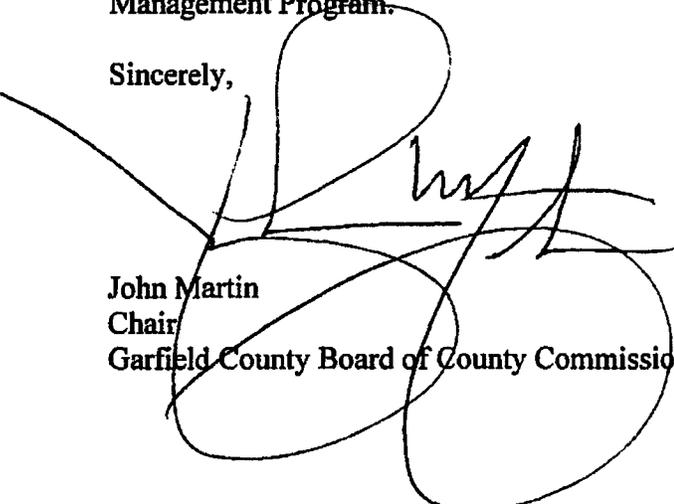
Garfield County is located in western Colorado, where outdoor recreation opportunities abound, including hunting, fishing, hiking, rafting and kayaking, biking, skiing and snowboarding. Garfield County consists of 6 municipalities; Glenwood Springs, Rifle, Carbondale, Silt, New Castle and Parachute, as well as Battlement Mesa, an unincorporated residential community. The county covers about 3,000 square miles, of which approximately 60% is federal public lands. The County's Public Health department's mission is to "promote health and prevent disease." Through its Environmental Health program, Public Health places a strong emphasis on promoting water quality for both consumption and recreational use. Believing that the work of MCWC aligns with this emphasis, Environmental Health has supported the organization since its formation in 2009.

As a partner of the MCWC, we have provided assistance to the organization in several ways over the past 5 years. For Environmental Health, this assistance has taken the form of participating in the original scoping meetings, acquiring grant funding for initial start-up of the organization, providing in-kind contributions, technical support as a Technical Advisory Committee member, and serving as a Board member. The Board of County Commissioners has also provided financial support in the form of grants to the Council in the form of discretionary funds. We are pleased to see the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, highlighting areas of concern, and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission.

*108 8th Street, Suite 213 • Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
(970) 945-5004 • Fax: (970) 945-7785*

Continued support at this point in the growth of the MCWC is critical to propel the organization into success. A great deal of information has been assembled and synthesized to date, results of which highlight the challenges and opportunities that exist when working within a geographically diverse area containing a variety of land and water uses. With the Colorado River being the watershed's focal point, the opportunities and need for comprehensive planning and management are great. The MCWC could benefit, at this critical juncture, with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. Our agency will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,



John Martin
Chair
Garfield County Board of County Commissioners

Silt Water Conservancy District
Farmer's Irrigation Company
P O Box 8
Silt, Colorado 81652

June 3, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P O Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Ms. Maher,

Silt Water Conservancy District (SWCD) and Farmer's Irrigation Company (FICo) is writing today in support of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) proposal for consideration under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant funding opportunity for FY2014. Both of our organization's support MCWC's mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

SWCD and FICo provides irrigation and domestic water to 459 water shareholder's within this District through operation and maintenance of the Rifle Gap Reservoir, Harvey Gap Reservoir and the Colorado River pump facility east of the Town of Silt.

We are pleased to see the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, highlighting areas of concern and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission.

Continued support at this point in the growth of the MCWC is critical to propel the organization into success. A great deal of information has been assembled and synthesized to date, results of which highlight the challenges and opportunities that exist when working within a geographically diverse area containing a variety of land and water uses. With the Colorado River being the watershed's focal point, the opportunities and need for comprehensive planning and management are great. The MCWC could benefit, at this critical juncture, with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. Our organizations will continue to support MCWC and we urge the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,

Kelly Lyon
President

Cc: George Wear



Colorado River District

Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937

June 3, 2014

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

RE: WaterSMART funding FY2014

Dear Ms. Maher,

I wish to share the Colorado River Water Conservation District's (River District) support of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) request for grant funding under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program for FY 2014. The River District is a founding and an active partner of the MCWC and supports its mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

The River District's organic act charges us with the protection and development of the Colorado River and its tributaries for the benefit and enjoyment of all Coloradans, in fulfillment of which the mission and work of the MCWC is highly complementary.

We are pleased and impressed with the MCWC's progress and accomplishments in its short tenure. They have successfully engaged stakeholders and characterized the watershed, highlighting areas of concern and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration.

As a partner of the MCWC, we have provided assistance to the organization in several ways. We have been a founding funding partner, served as the Council's initial fiscal and contracting agent, and provided technical and organizational advice and support since its founding.

Continued support at this point in the growth of the MCWC is critical to propel the organization into success. A great deal of information has been assembled and synthesized to date, results of which highlight the challenges and opportunities that exist when working within a geographically diverse area containing a variety of land and water uses. The MCWC could benefit, at this critical juncture, from support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans and associated implementation funding. Our agency will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and **respectfully urges the Bureau of Reclamation to join in our support through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.**

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Treese, Manager
External Affairs

201 Centennial Street / PO Box 1120 • Glenwood Springs, CO 81602

(970) 945-8522 • (970) 945-8799 Fax

www.ColoradoRiverDistrict.org



WEST DIVIDE
WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

109 West Fourth Street P.O. Box 1478
Rifle, Colorado 81650-1478
Tel: (970)625-5461 Fax: (970)625-2796
Web: www.wdwdc.org Email: w ater@wdwdc.org

May 21, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation, Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

**RE: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management
Program Grant**

Dear Ms. Maher,

The West Divide Water Conservancy District (WDWCD) supports the grant application for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) for consideration under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant funding opportunity for FY 2014. WDWCD is an active partner of the MCWC and supports its mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the Middle Colorado River watershed.

A primary service of WDWCD is to provide water right augmentation supplies within the District's Service Area for all beneficial uses, and to promote the health, safety and welfare of the public while providing such service. WDWCD is involved in regional issues that affect its citizens including water supply planning associated with existing and future water demands within WDWCD's district area, and the monitoring and management of water quality associated with land uses including oil and gas extraction.

As a partner of the MCWC, we have provided assistance to the organization over the past several years including participation in the original scoping meetings, support for initial start-up of the organization, and providing in-kind contributions through technical support as a Technical Advisory Committee member. We are pleased to see the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission.

With the Colorado River being the watershed's focal point, the opportunities and need for comprehensive water resource planning and management continue to be a priority. The MCWC would greatly benefit with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. WDWCD continues to support the MCWC, and urges Reclamation to approve the WaterSMART grant application and fund the planning effort in full at the amount requested.

Sincerely,

Samuel B. Potter
President

2 June, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

**Colorado
State
University**

Extension

Dear Ms. Maher,

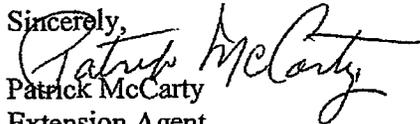
Please consider this as a letter of support for the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) proposal for consideration under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant funding opportunity for FY 2014. Our organization is an active partner of the MCWC and supports its mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

Colorado State University Extension is the local education outreach arm of Colorado State University.

As a partner of the MCWC, we have provided assistance to the organization in several ways over the past several years. This assistance has been in numerous areas such as Technical support, Board Member, etc. We are pleased to see the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, highlighting areas of concern, and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission.

Continued support at this point in the growth of the MCWC is critical to propel the organization into success. A great deal of information has been assembled and synthesized to date, results of which highlight the challenges and opportunities that exist when working within a geographically diverse area containing a variety of land and water uses. With the Colorado River being the watershed's focal point, the opportunities and need for comprehensive planning and management are great. The MCWC could benefit, at this critical juncture, with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. Our agency will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,


Patrick McCarty

Extension Agent

Colorado State University Extension

PO Box 1112

Rifle, CO. 81650

970-625-3969

CITY OF GLENWOOD SPRINGS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
101 WEST 8TH STREET
GLENWOOD SPRINGS, COLORADO 81601
PHONE: (970) 384-6408 FAX: (970) 928-0980



May 30, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

Dear Ms. Maher,

I am writing today in support of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) proposal for consideration under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant funding opportunity for FY 2014. The City has supported the MCWC's mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the watershed.

With the Colorado River running through the heart of Glenwood Springs, the health of the river is vitally important to our community. Given this, the City has participated in their work efforts and provided monetary assistance to their organization. We are pleased to see the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, highlighting areas of concern, and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission.

Continued support at this point in the growth of the MCWC is critical to make the organization successful. A great deal of information has been assembled and synthesized to date, results of which highlight the challenges and opportunities that exist when working within a geographically diverse area containing a variety of land and water uses. With the Colorado River being the watershed's focal point, the opportunities and need for comprehensive planning and management are great. The MCWC could benefit, at this critical juncture, with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. I anticipate the City will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leo McKinney', is written over a horizontal line.

Leo McKinney
Mayor

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

202 Railroad Avenue, Rifle, CO 81650
Phone: 970-665-6490 Fax: 970-625-6268



May 30, 2014

Bureau of Reclamation, Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
PO Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

RE: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant

Dear Ms. Maher,

The City of Rifle is pleased to support the Middle Colorado River Watershed Council's (MCWC) WaterSMART Cooperative grant application for FY 2014. The City and MCWC are strong partners in working towards the protection and enhancement of the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

The City of Rifle, in addition to supporting the MCWC through financial contributions, has dedicated a staff member to serve on the MCWC board of directors. We are pleased to see the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, highlighting areas of concern, and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission.

To continue this partnership and valuable work the MCWC could benefit with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. Our agency will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program. Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Nathan Lindquist, Planning Director



Tamarisk Coalition. *Restore. Connect. Innovate.*

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

www.tamariskcoalition.org

FEIN 27-0007315

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Michelle Maher
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

May 29, 2014

Dear Ms. Maher,

The Tamarisk Coalition (TC) is writing today in support of the Middle Colorado Watershed Council's (MCWC) proposal for consideration under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant funding opportunity for FY 2014. Our organization is an active partner of the MCWC and supports its mission to evaluate, protect and enhance the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

TC, is a regional non-profit focused on advancing river and riparian restoration through collaboration, education and technical assistance throughout the American West. Our organization aligns well with the work of the MCWC, as both our organizations have a vested interest in the health of the middle Colorado River watershed.

As a partner of the MCWC, we have provided assistance to the organization in several ways over the past three years. This assistance has taken the form of participating in the original scoping meetings, acquiring grant funding for MCWC project implementation, providing cash or in-kind contributions, and technical support as a Technical Advisory Committee member. We are pleased to see the progress that the MCWC has made over the last couple of years in engaging stakeholders, characterizing the watershed, highlighting areas of concern, and initiating discussions around opportunities for project collaboration in support of its mission.

Continued support at this point in the growth of the MCWC is critical to propel the organization into success. A great deal of information has been assembled and synthesized to date, results of which highlight the challenges and opportunities that exist when working within a geographically diverse area containing a variety of land and water uses. With the Colorado River being the watershed's focal point, the opportunities and need for comprehensive planning and management are great. The MCWC could benefit, at this critical juncture, with support for additional capacity-building and the development of project-specific plans to carry forward for implementation funding. Our agency will continue to support the MCWC as we have in the past and urges the Bureau of Reclamation to do the same through the Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Sincerely,



Rusty Lloyd
Program Director



Restore. Connect. Innovate.

Tamarisk Coalition

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

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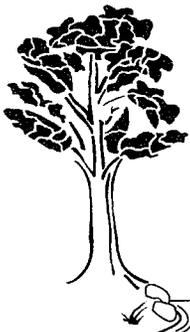
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