

**Application for a Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I
Grant**

San Juan Watershed Group Outreach Expansion Project

Submitted By:

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Technical Proposal and Evaluation Criteria

Executive Summary

This application for funding from the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program is submitted January 31st, 2018 by the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District (SJSWCD), located in Aztec, San Juan County, New Mexico. The SJSWCD is the fiscal agent of the San Juan Watershed Group (SJWG), and submits this application on their behalf.

The SJWG proposes to expand and diversify its membership base by conducting activities that contribute to existing watershed group development including: identifying potential stakeholders in the Middle and Upper San Juan Watersheds, conducting meetings to engage and retain stakeholders, and identifying stakeholder concerns regarding water quality and quantity. Building off of feedback from stakeholder meetings, the SJWG proposes to conduct additional pre-planning activities that contribute to drafting an educational outreach plan, and outlining a restoration plan. These activities include researching previous and existing plans related to the watershed, learning from other watershed groups, and identifying gaps in restoration needs for the watershed. This proposed project is not located on a federal facility, and all activities will take place over the course of the two-year funding period. Funding from this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) would allow the SJWG to contract a Watershed Coordinator to conduct outreach activities, reserve meeting space, and purchase the materials necessary to conduct all activities described in this proposal.

Background Data

The San Juan River Basin drains a large area of the Four Corners region, encompassing portions of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona, and eventually flowing into the Colorado River at Lake Powell. The majority of streamflow in the system originates as snowmelt from the headwaters in Colorado, or as monsoon rains in summer and fall. This project will focus on the subwatersheds in the New Mexico portion of the San Juan River, downstream of Navajo Reservoir.

Navajo Reservoir is located on the Colorado-New Mexico border, and stores flows from the Upper San Juan, Los Pinos, Piedra, and Navajo Rivers. The completion of Navajo Dam on the mainstem of the San Juan River in 1962 (as part of the Bureau of Reclamation's Colorado River Storage Project) dramatically changed the hydrology and ecology of the river. The dam now stores water during the peak flows of spring runoff and monsoon season, thus replacing warm, sediment-laden, flashy flows with releases of cold clear water from the reservoir. This change now supports a gold medal trout fishery in the tailwaters of the dam, but has been detrimental to native fish that were adapted to life in a sandy desert river. The Colorado Pikeminnow and Razorback Sucker were added to the endangered species list in 1967 and 1991 respectively, and have been the target of a recovery program which seeks to recreate the pre-dam spring hydrograph when water supply allows.

Storage in Navajo Reservoir is crucial for the Navajo Nation, as the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry relies on water for farmland irrigation supplied via the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP), and water levels within the lake are managed to balance keeping enough water for NIIP water deliveries, while also managing releases to maintain minimum flows in the critical habitat for the endangered fish downstream. The San Juan also supplies water for industrial users, which include two coal-fired power plants, and oil and gas drilling operations throughout the Basin. Sometimes caught between these management priorities are farmers with water rights in the San Juan Valley who rely on irrigation canals to water their crops, and municipal users who are entirely reliant on surface water (also delivered via canals) to fill their reservoirs.

While the San Juan River is joined by numerous large ephemeral washes in New Mexico (some of which are perennial for very short stretches in the river valley), the Animas River and La Plata River are the only true perennial tributaries which contribute to the river’s flow. Upstream of the Animas confluence, flows in the San Juan are dictated primarily by releases from Navajo Dam which may vary from 250 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 5,000 cfs, depending on the season and active reservoir capacity. When releases are at the low end of that range, this stretch of river is especially vulnerable to large sediment inputs carried in from the arroyo systems during storm events. These sediments accumulate in the system until years when Navajo Dam can do a spring release (5000 cfs) to mimic historic flows, and can cause problems for municipal water as well as the fishing industry (see critical issues for more detail).

The seasonal hydrograph on the San Juan is mostly restored downstream of the Animas confluence, which is undammed. However, the river is then exposed to water quality issues unique to the Animas, including the infamous Gold King Mine spill in 2015, in which a release of bright orange metal-laden water traveled down the Animas and into the San Juan River.

Independent of the Animas River, the San Juan has plenty of water quality issues of its own. The New Mexico Environment Department developed Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for bacteria and sediment pollution on the San Juan in 2005. A table of water quality impairments and TMDLs for the San Juan mainstem and its tributaries within the focus area is included below.

Causes of impairment in the San Juan watershed, from the state of NM 2016-2018 Clean Water Act 303(d)/305(b) Integrated List. Assessment units listed from upstream to downstream, with tributaries shown in italics and listed in the order they join the mainstem San Juan.

| Assessment Unit | Impairments | TMDL? | Year First Listed |
|--|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| San Juan River (34.99 miles) Animas River to Cañon Largo (NM-2401_00) | Sedimentation/siltation | Yes | 2004 |
| | E.coli | Yes | 2006 |
| <i>Gallegos Canyon San Juan River to Navajo boundary</i> | <i>Selenium</i> | <i>Yes</i> | <i>2004</i> |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <i>Animas River</i> <i>San Juan River to Estes Arroyo</i> <i>(NM-2403_A_00)</i> | <i>E. coli</i> | <i>Yes</i> | <i>2012</i> |
| | <i>Nutrients/ Eutrophication</i> | <i>Yes</i> | <i>2004</i> |
| | <i>Temperature</i> | <i>Yes</i> | <i>2012</i> |
| <i>La Plata River</i> <i>San Juan River to McDermott Arroyo</i> <i>(NM-2402.A_00)</i> | <i>Sedimentation/siltation</i> | <i>Yes</i> | <i>2004</i> |
| | <i>E.coli</i> | <i>Yes</i> | <i>2012</i> |
| | <i>Dissolved Oxygen</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>1998</i> |
| San Juan River (24.34 miles) Navajo boundary at Hogback to Animas River (NM-2401_10) | E.coli | Yes | 2006 |
| | Sedimentation/siltation | No | 2012 |
| | Turbidity | No | 2012 |

The bacteria impairments in the river were corroborated by a San Juan Watershed Group microbial source tracking study conducted over the course of 2013 and 2014. This study found that 46% of San Juan River *E.coli* samples exceeded the single sample standard for primary contact (ie: swimming). This study also tested for presence/absence of various source categories of bacteria, and found that 94% of samples tested positive for human source bacteria, and 90% positive for ruminant source bacteria. While the ruminant source bacteria was expected due to livestock production in the river corridor (cattle, sheep) and the presence of wildlife (deer, elk), the near-constant presence of human sewage in the river was unexpected and alarming. The exact sources of the human-source bacteria are still unknown, but the leading hypotheses are failing or improperly installed septic systems, and illegal dumping of septage waste (by RVs or waste disposal companies). Other possibilities include leaking sewer infrastructure, legal (permitted) discharges from wastewater treatment facilities, or outdoor defecation.

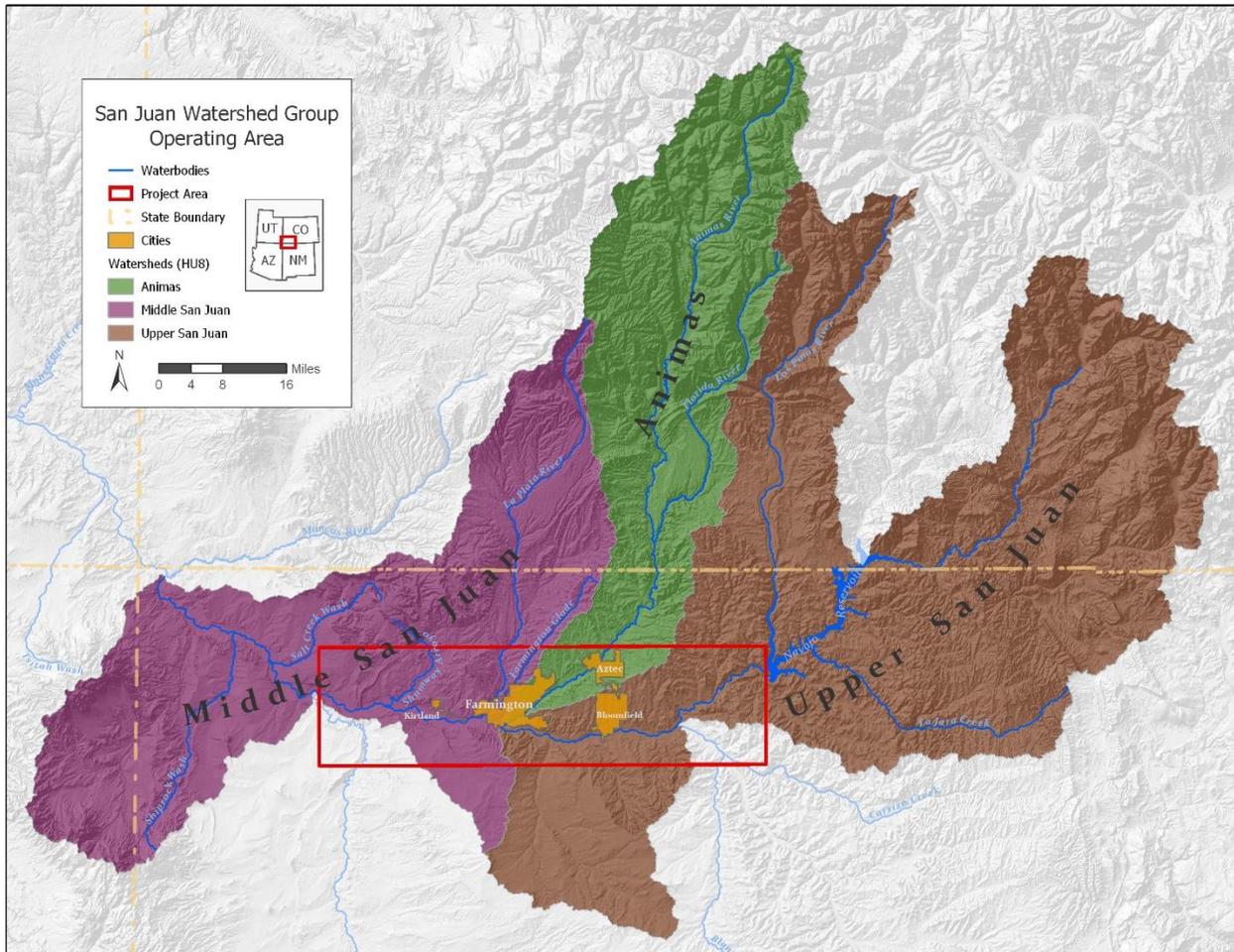
The bacteria problem negatively impacts quality of life in the area, as it makes it difficult to market the river for recreation when it is not meeting “swimmable” criteria under the Clean Water Act. Perhaps more seriously, Navajo people who use the river for ceremonial uses could be at especially high risk of ingesting fecal pathogens, and various cultural barriers seem to have gotten in the way of effectively communicating these risks in the past.

Additional threats to watershed health include encroachment of woody invasive species (Russian olive and tamarisk), which pose a fire hazard in the riparian corridor, displace native vegetation, and further channelize the river.

For this project the San Juan Watershed Group intends to focus primarily on the water quality issues discussed above, but interconnections with additional problems/threats to the watershed are abundant and all effort will be made to address multiple issues where possible.

Project Location

The San Juan Watershed Group (SJWG) operates in San Juan County, New Mexico in the “tri-city” area surrounding Farmington, Aztec, and Bloomfield. Within the SJWG’s focus area, the San Juan River travels approximately 65 river miles from Navajo Reservoir to its confluence with the ephemeral Chaco River, which will be the end of the project area for the purposes of this grant. The river drops approximately 1,200 feet in elevation, and changes substantially over this distance in terms of character and aquatic life. This stretch of the San Juan River crosses two USGS HUC 8 boundaries – the Upper San Juan Watershed (HUC8 14080101) and the Middle San Juan Watershed (HUC8 14080105) – and intersects a third, the Animas River Watershed (HUC8 14080104). The complexity of working at the intersection of multiple large watersheds is discussed in greater detail under “Evaluation Criteria A2. Geographic Scope.”



San Juan Watershed Group operating area map also attached as a PDF.

Technical Project Description

Applicant Category

San Juan Soil & Water Conservation District (SJSWCD) is applying to Reclamation's Cooperative Watershed Management Program (FY18) for the San Juan Watershed Group (SJWG) as an Existing Watershed Group.

Eligibility of Applicant

San Juan Watershed Group will lead this project, with the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District (SJSWCD) acting as their fiscal agent. As the fiscal agent of the San Juan Watershed Group, the SJSWCD meets the eligibility requirements for the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grant (FY 18).

The SJSWCD was incorporated in 1941 under the provisions of the Soil and Water Conservation District Act (73-20-25 through 73-20-49 NMSA 1978). The District is a governmental subdivision of the state, with a 501(c)(1) tax status; a special district organized for control and prevention of flood, sediment and soil erosion damage, and to further the conservation, development and beneficial use of water and soil resources. San Juan SWCD is one of 47 soil and water conservation districts in the state of New Mexico. The SJSWCD works with numerous public and private partners, managing grants and operating as the fiscal agent for several organizations, including the SJWG.

The SJWG is an ad hoc stakeholder group that has taken a lead role in coordinating water quality sampling, and has received several grants to implement on-the-ground water quality improvement projects in the San Juan Watershed. Formed in 2001, the SJWG works to find collaborative solutions to improve water quality in the San Juan River and its tributaries. The group operates on a consensus basis, and all interested stakeholders are welcomed to participate at group meetings. SJWG has demonstrated success in completing projects which serve to improve water quality and overall watershed health in the San Juan Watershed.

The SJWG has worked with partners to implement bacteria and nutrient reduction projects, with the goal of mitigating these impairments to acceptable levels. These projects involve working with landowners and partners to implement best management practices (BMPs), and they have shown considerable success in implementation and restoration results.

However, in the past several years these projects have been concentrated on the mainstem of the Animas River. Building on the Group's history of successful project implementation and trust-building among landowners on the Animas, the SJWG would like to use this FOA to expand their geographic scope, and apply the same approach to future projects in the San Juan River corridor.

Goals

With this application, the San Juan Watershed Group seeks funding to perform Task A – Existing Watershed Group Development. The SJWG has identified the following preliminary goals and objectives:

Goal 1. Build the capacity of the Watershed Group.

- Objective 1. Hire a Watershed Coordinator and a VISTA Volunteer.
- Objective 2. Effectively communicate past work.
- Objective 3. Learn from other watershed groups.
- Objective 4. Support the Steering Committee in developing by-laws, mission statement, and long-term planning.

Goal 2. Expand and diversify group membership.

- Objective 1. Involve groups currently working on the San Juan River.
- Objective 2. Improve grassroots involvement.
- Objective 3. Increase opportunities for meaningful involvement.

Goal 3. Develop an outreach plan.

- Objective 1. Collect and leverage local knowledge.
- Objective 2. Develop new messaging to reach diverse target audiences.

Goal 4. Outline a need-based restoration plan.

- Objective 1. Compile input from stakeholder meetings (watershed concerns & projects).
- Objective 2. Identify gaps to inform future watershed restoration plan.

Approach

The San Juan Watershed Group proposes to complete the following activities in order to achieve their goals and objectives towards *Development of an Existing Watershed Group*. The SJWG's proposed development activities under this FOA are listed below in order of progression, according to the Group's goals and objectives.

Goal 1. Build the capacity of the Watershed Group.

The SJWG has existed since 2001 as an ad hoc stakeholder group, and has had success in implementing on-the-ground projects to improve water quality. Since 2015, the group's activities have been guided by an informally organized five-member steering committee. However, the SJWG has struggled to expand and maintain group membership, develop a mission, vision, and bylaws, and to effectively curate and communicate past work. In order to build the capacity of the Group, the SJWG seeks funding to:

Hire a Watershed Coordinator and a VISTA Volunteer.

- As of January 2018, SJWG successfully hired a Watershed Coordinator to manage a 319 grant to conduct on-the-ground projects in the Animas River Watershed. This grant is tied to the Animas watershed however (because it has a completed WBP), and does not cover outreach activities in the larger San Juan watershed. We therefore seek funding under this FOA to expand the Coordinator's activities and grow the watershed group. In conjunction with expanding the Watershed Coordinator's activities, the group also seeks funding to hire a VISTA Volunteer to support and assist the Coordinator in group development and outreach activities.

Effectively communicate past work.

- As mentioned above, although the SJWG has existed since 2001 and has experienced success in implementing water quality improvement projects, they have struggled to effectively communicate those successes to an audience outside of the current group membership. Communicating the Group's history, and narrating past work, is essential to defining the Group's identity and in introducing the Group to new members. Therefore, the SJWG seeks funding for the Coordinator and VISTA volunteer to compile and summarize previous reports and documents into a format that is succinct and accessible to all.

Learn from other watershed groups.

- In order to be efficient in achieving water quality and watershed restoration goals, the SJWG would like to learn from other watershed groups, and adopt successful strategies for outreach and project implementation. To do this, the Group seeks funding for the Coordinator and VISTA Volunteer to attend two regional conferences per year that focus on watershed management practices, restoration, or outreach. Examples of appropriate conferences might include:
 - Tamarisk Coalition's Riparian Restoration Conference (rotating locations within Colorado)
 - Annual Cross Watershed Network Workshop (location varies within New Mexico and Arizona)

- Annual New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute Conference (location varies within New Mexico)
- Annual Colorado River Water Users Association Conference in Las Vegas, NV

Support the Steering Committee in developing by-laws, mission, and long-term planning.

- At the time of application submission, SJWG is actively working on developing their mission and vision statements, writing by-laws, and developing long-term goals. In the event that these are not finalized before the grant start date, these activities may be incorporated into the development activities of the grant.

Goal 2. Expand and diversify membership.

As mentioned in the “Applicant Eligibility” section, in the past several years the SJWG has primarily focused on implementing bacteria and nutrient reduction projects along the mainstem of the Animas River. These activities have resulted in reliable representation from entities in the Animas watershed, however representation from entities along the mainstem of the San Juan is lacking. In order to expand and diversify Group membership, the SJWG seeks funding for the following activities:

Involve groups currently working on the San Juan River corridor.

- The SJWG would like to re-engage known stakeholders who have been present, but under-represented, in Group activities in recent years, through targeted outreach. Some examples of these groups include the following: The San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Project (SJRBRIP), Diné College, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI), New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).
- The SJWG would also like to identify and involve new partners who have not participated in the Group before. Some of these potential partners have already been identified, and might include the following: Fishing & Sportsman’s Groups, Navajo Chapter Houses, Hilcorp, and Westmoreland. Other potential Group members have yet to be identified, and will need to be identified by the group during initial watershed research.
- Once most potential group members have been identified, the SJWG will begin outreach to those entities by contacting them and building relationships with them. To further develop trust and relationships, the Watershed Coordinator and VISTA Volunteer will attend potential group member’s meetings whenever possible.

- During this time, the SJWG will also begin planning stakeholder meetings for new, and re-engaged, members in the San Juan River corridor. Meeting planning will include identifying several locations to host meetings for stakeholders from different geographic areas along the mainstem of the San Juan. Hosting meetings with stakeholders from separate geographic locations will allow the SJWG to identify area-specific watershed issues, and to develop area-specific outreach messaging. Meeting planning activities will also include developing a meeting format, and a post-meeting survey to gauge meeting effectiveness.
- Once meeting locations have been identified and meeting format has been developed, the SJWG will extend invitations to, and host, area-specific meetings for potential stakeholders. The desired outcomes from the stakeholder meetings will be both to lay the groundwork for new SJWG members by engaging stakeholders, and to inform future outreach and restoration plans for the mainstem of the San Juan. Stakeholders will be encouraged to identify and discuss their watershed concerns, project goals, water needs, and other issues related to water quality and water quantity. The SJWG will also ask stakeholders about methods for communicating water quality and quantity information to their geographic areas, in order to identify effective and area-specific educational outreach strategies and messaging.
- Once the area-specific stakeholder meetings are complete, the SJWG will compile and analyze post-meeting survey results. Post-meeting survey results will be used to gauge effectiveness of the stakeholder meetings, to modify the format of future meetings (if necessary), and to improve the SJWG's overall outreach strategy.

Improve grassroots involvement.

- Currently, and historically, SJWG membership has been composed primarily of members representing organizations or institutions. However, the Group would like to change this by developing a strategy to improve grassroots involvement, and encourage volunteer participation from private citizens.

Increase opportunities for meaningful involvement from group members.

- One strategy for improving grassroots involvement, but also important for retaining and engaging existing membership, is to increase opportunities for meaningful involvement. While some Group members are actively involved in SJWG's on-the-ground projects, other members attend meetings, but are not currently involved in projects. Developing events and activities that are more community-oriented, and that provide a more accessible path to volunteering, would create greater purpose and meaningful participation for Group members, as well as help to promote the SJWG's mission.

Therefore, the SJWG seeks funding to develop a strategy for increasing opportunities for meaningful involvement from group members.

Goal 3. Draft an outreach plan.

In addition to expanding and diversifying group membership, one of the goals of conducting stakeholder outreach is to lay the foundation for an awareness and educational outreach campaign in the San Juan River corridor. By identifying top water quality and quantity concerns at stakeholder meetings, the SJWG can develop strategies to raise awareness about these issues, and educate residents about mitigation measures where appropriate. By conducting area-specific stakeholder meetings, the SJWG can develop area-specific messaging and communication strategies to draft an outreach plan for the mainstem San Juan River. SJWG thus seeks funding to conduct the following activities:

Compile and analyze information from stakeholder meetings.

- As previously mentioned, one of the desired outcomes of the stakeholder meetings is to inform future planning efforts. The SJWG will compile and analyze stakeholder input regarding watershed needs, and outreach and communication strategies, in preparation for drafting an outreach plan.

Inform the outreach plan from past reports.

- Building off of one of the SJWG's initial objectives to "effectively communicate past work," drafting of the outreach plan will be informed by research and compilation of past reports and documents, from Goal 1.

Draft outreach materials and messaging, and get feedback from stakeholders.

- The SJWG will develop area-specific messaging, outreach materials, and communication strategies to target residents from each stakeholder area. These outreach materials may include: workshop planning, pamphlet and flyer design for mailings, drafting of radio ads, event planning, social media strategies, or other methods and materials. Methods may vary depending on identified watershed needs.
- Once outreach materials are ready, the SJWG will host a large stakeholder meeting that incorporates all of the participants from the smaller, geographically specific stakeholder meetings. At this large meeting, the SJWG will present their findings from the smaller meetings, encourage discussion among stakeholders, and seek feedback on the prepared outreach materials. An additional desired outcome of this "capstone" meeting will be to encourage the stakeholder's integration into the SJWG, and to continue their participation at regular SJWG meetings and activities.

Draft an outreach plan.

- Using all of the information gathered through the stakeholder meetings, and the EPA’s “Getting In Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns,” the SJWG will draft an educational outreach campaign plan. The educational outreach plan will include messaging and communication strategies that are informed by feedback from the area-specific stakeholder groups, and address the top watershed concerns within those areas.
- To conduct the educational outreach campaign, the SJWG will seek funding for Phase II of Reclamation’s Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

Goal 4. Outline a need-based restoration plan.

In addition to the reasons listed above, a desired outcome from the stakeholder meetings is to inform a future Watershed Based Plan for the mainstem San Juan River. Developing a Watershed Based Plan would open the door for additional watershed restoration and water quality improvement projects on the San Juan River. Based on input from stakeholder meetings, and research of current and previous projects in the area, the SJWG will identify “gaps” in research, monitoring, restoration, and other practices that will inform future development of a restoration plan. To achieve this goal, the SJWG seeks funding for the following activities:

Compile input from stakeholder meetings (watershed concerns & projects).

- This objective will combine two previous objectives that have already been mentioned: to “effectively communicate past work,” from Goal 1, and to “compile and analyze information from stakeholder meetings,” from Goal 3. The information from past reports and stakeholder meetings should already be compiled, organized, and summarized, but for this objective it will need to be analyzed with the intent of informing an outline for a future watershed restoration plan.

Identify gaps to inform future Watershed Based Plan development.

- One of the primary reasons for gathering information from stakeholders, researching current and previous watershed projects, and compiling that information, is to identify any deficiencies, or areas currently in need of attention in the mainstem San Juan River corridor. By identifying these “gaps,” the SJWG will be able develop future projects that help bridge them, and will be able address them in a future restoration plan.

Phase I CWMP Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criterion A: Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope (30 points)

Sub-Criterion No. A1: Watershed Group Diversity

As mentioned in the “Background Data,” numerous stakeholders are directly affected by water quality and quantity in the San Juan River watershed. Residents of Navajo Dam, Blanco, Bloomfield, and Shiprock, NM all rely on the San Juan River for drinking water supply. Agricultural producers along the entire 65 mile stretch of the San Juan River valley focus area rely on the San Juan River for crop irrigation and water for livestock, while an additional 72,000 acres of Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI) land is irrigated with water diverted directly from Navajo Lake. Industrial users, such as oil and gas companies also rely on water deliveries from the San Juan River.

Current group membership includes representatives from many of these affected stakeholder groups, and representatives from the following organizations regularly attend SJWG meetings, or are involved in SJWG projects:

- San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- New Mexico Environment Department
- San Juan Water Commission
- City of Farmington
- San Juan County
- Animas Watershed Partnership

The group membership varies in who is active based on what projects are ongoing. The Group’s most robust and active membership happened between 2012 and 2014 when the SJWG had a water quality monitoring study that was measuring bacteria levels on both the Animas and San Juan Rivers. Since the completion of that study however, the Group’s only funding was for projects in the Animas Watershed, and due to lack of funding for outreach, stakeholders along the San Juan were not left with any ways to actively participate. Many of the San Juan stakeholders have participated at some point in the past, and it is our hope to restore these relationships and give them a meaningful way to participate in the future.

The following organizations are occasionally represented in the SJWG, but the Group would like for them to be more involved and attend regular meetings:

- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- United States Forest Service (USFS)

- City of Bloomfield
- City of Aztec
- Farmington Chamber of Commerce
- The Nature Conservancy
- Navajo Nation

The SJWG would like to engage with stakeholders along the mainstem of the San Juan River who have not been involved with the group before, or who wanted to be involved, but the Group did not have the resources to keep them engaged. The SJWG will identify potential stakeholders by evaluating who the major water resource users in the San Juan River valley are, and by identifying entities whose actions have a significant impact on water quality.

The following are examples of stakeholders the SJWG would like to target in an outreach campaign on the mainstem of the San Juan River:

- Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI)
- San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (SJRBRIP)
- Hilcorp and other major oil and gas producers
- Diné College
- Westmoreland
- City of Bloomfield
- City of Kirtland
- Acequias or Irrigation Ditch Companies

As an example, the group would like to target the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI) because they are a major stakeholder in San Juan River water resources. NAPI is a Navajo-Owned agri-business constituting an estimated 72,000 acres of irrigated farmland south of Farmington, New Mexico. NAPI receives 508,000 acre feet of irrigation water from the San Juan River annually. While representatives from NAPI have attended SJWG meetings through the years, SJWG has not made a concerted effort to engage with NAPI, or with non-Indian irrigators along the San Juan, primarily because the group did not have the capacity to productively grow any of these relationships.

With funding from Reclamation's CWMP grant the SJWG will conduct a coordinated outreach campaign to target and initiate conversation with stakeholders, such as NAPI. In the past, a lack of coordinated outreach has prevented past successes from translating into future projects. However, by researching what worked well to engage certain groups in the past, we will be able to tailor a more successful outreach strategy moving forward.

By developing the SJWG and engaging with these stakeholders, the SWJG will also improve relationships with persons and entities relying on water deliveries from Reclamation. For

example, Reclamation's Navajo Dam project, lies at the far eastern end of the SJWG's project area. This is also the furthest upstream point in the SJWG's project area, which means that, aside from ephemeral flows that supplement the San Juan below Navajo Dam, the entire reach of SJWG's project area is dependent on water deliveries from Reclamation. In addition to the irrigated land and municipal drinking supplies along this stretch of river, there are also two endangered native fish species occurring in the downstream portion of SJWG's project area. These fish, the Razorback Sucker and the Colorado Pikeminnow, depend on water releases from Navajo Reservoir during the summer in order to maintain critical habitat.

Additionally, almost the entire reach of the SJWG's project area borders federal land. While most of the irrigated land directly in the river corridor is privately owned, federal land (BLM) extends to the north and south of the river corridor; bordering virtually all population centers, if not individual properties in the river valley.

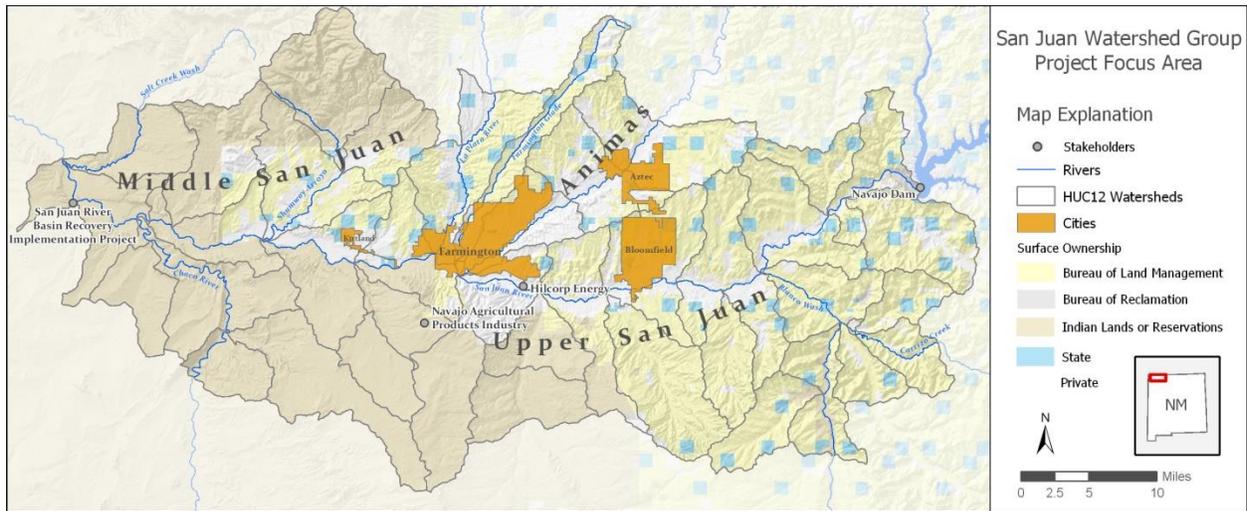
San Juan Watershed Group development will improve relationships among these various groups by soliciting their membership and participation in the group, and by building trust through dialog and partnerships. For example, local residents might be concerned that oil and gas development on BLM land could be causing erosion and sedimentation during storm events. The SJWG would solicit involvement from representatives from all of these groups, and invite them into a discussion to address these issues.

Allowing land owners to voice their concerns, and allowing representatives from the BLM and the oil and gas industry to explain the steps they take to reduce and prevent erosion and sedimentation, would foster communication and trust-building between entities. The SJWG would act as a liaison between groups to initiate the conversation, and then as a facilitator between groups to guide the discussion towards a solution, and ultimately, as an action-taker who implements on-the-ground projects that provide solutions to watershed issues, and help resolve conflicts.

Sub-Criterion No. A2: Geographic Scope

As mentioned in the "Project Location" section, the population center within which the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District and the San Juan Watershed Group operate is focused at the junction of three 8-digit hydrologic unit codes. This presents difficulty when attempting to focus planning and restoration efforts within a single 8-digit HUC, while still engaging all of the citizens and stakeholder groups within the District. Additionally, each of these watersheds lies across multiple state and tribal boundary lines, meaning that engaging stakeholders in the full extent of the watershed will always be a multi-jurisdictional affair.

For outreach activities, it is thus our goal to engage as many stakeholder groups within the population center and outlying areas as possible, to maximize education about water quality issues in our section of the San Juan Basin. However, this precludes working within a single 8-digit HUC. The “San Juan Watershed Group Operating Area” map in the “Project Location” section highlights the area of population concentration within the junction of the three 8-digit hydrologic unit codes.



Since stakeholder groups and engagement along the Animas River are well established, the SJWG will use this funding opportunity to focus our efforts on the mainstem of the San Juan River between Navajo Dam and the San Juan’s confluence with the Chaco River. This geographic area extends across two 8-digit hydrologic unit codes: the lower section of the Upper San Juan Watershed (HUC8 14080101) and the upper section of the Middle San Juan Watershed (HUC8 14080105), as depicted in the “San Juan Watershed Group Project Focus Area” map above.

Although the operating area of the San Juan Watershed Group extends across three 8-digit HUC watersheds, the focus area of this project encompasses an area similar to that of a single 8-digit HUC watershed. Additionally, the vast majority of private land in the watershed is focused within 1 mile of the mainstem of the river, meaning there are HUC12 subwatersheds which are largely devoid of population except for the small area closest to the river.

The uplands in most of these subwatersheds are either BLM or tribal lands, which actually opens the door to engaging with land managers who have control over a much larger geographic area. Engaging local BLM staff and the grazing permittees and oil and gas lessees who use the land will allow the SJWG to target stakeholders which represent the full geographic scope of the watershed. The 12-digit HUC watersheds, and public land ownership within the project area are included in the above map for reference.

Evaluation Criterion B: Addressing Critical Watershed Needs (35 points)

Sub-Criterion No. B1: Critical Watershed Needs or Issues

Numerous critical needs exist within the watershed, with many already being addressed by established groups. For example, the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (SJRBRIP) was established to recover populations of the endangered Razorback sucker and Colorado pikeminnow in the San Juan River while proceeding with water development in the Basin. The San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District has several initiatives underway in conjunction with BLM and the Cooperative Weed Management Area to address the widespread problem of noxious weeds, and woody invasive species (primarily Russian olive and tamarisk) choking riparian areas throughout the watershed. The San Juan Water Commission focuses its efforts on water distribution, water rights settlements, and issues of interbasin diversion. Despite the existence of these groups and the attention given to issues of water quantity, water quality is largely an overlooked problem.

Specifically, violations of water quality standards for primary contact are not publicly advertised or recognized as a public health and safety issue in this region, despite them being a long-standing problem. As discussed under Background, the San Juan River has had a TMDL for bacteria since 2005, and the water quality study conducted by the SJWG from 2013-2014 discovered the consistent presence of both human and ruminant source bacteria, meaning multiple sources must be addressed in order to remediate this issue.

The lack of education and concern about the bacteria pollution (specifically of the existence of significant quantities of human sewage in the river) is especially alarming due to the traditional uses of the river practiced by the Navajo people, which occasionally include drinking untreated river water during ceremonies. This reality also conflicts with the desire of multiple economic development organizations to market the river as a tourist attraction which is ideal for recreation.

The San Juan has also been impaired for sedimentation since 2004. While the nature of the geology in the basin does produce high sediment loads naturally, these processes are exacerbated by drainage from dirt roads and well pads, of which there are thousands of acres within the basin. Sediment loads threaten the High Quality Coldwater Fishery downstream of Navajo Dam, and have caused significant problems for the City of Bloomfield in securing a redundant water source close to the city, to be used in case the main source is compromised. Their municipal supply is currently drawn from a canal near the outlet of Navajo Dam; when a portion of the canal collapsed in 2016, the water supply was cut off for several days. The so-called “second source” project has been investigated for years, but all attempts to draw water from the San Juan close to town have been cost prohibitive due to sediment quickly filling settling basins and clogging the system.

Sub-Criterion No. B2: Developing Strategies to Address Critical Watershed Needs or Issues

While conducting the activities discussed in the Approach section above, the SJWG will be able to build on the success of their past efforts in both Stakeholder Outreach and Partnership Building, and Watershed Restoration Planning. The Watershed Coordinator will become familiar with past planning and restoration efforts by reading past reports, including the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan (2016), Animas and San Juan Concurrent Nutrient and Bacteria Sampling Report (2016), San Juan Basin Watershed Management Plan (2005), etc. San Juan SWCD Project Manager Melissa May was lead author on both the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan and Animas and San Juan Concurrent Nutrient and Bacteria Sampling Report, and will assist the Watershed Coordinator in efficiently getting up to speed on the history of these and other past projects.

SJWG and SJSWCD staff will work together to develop a strategy to better communicate the scientific findings of past studies in a way that is understandable to the general public and inspires action. Revisiting completed BMP implementation projects and interviewing the landowners and partners involved is another way the SJWG can leverage their past projects to learn lessons for future success. Combining these local lessons with the learning opportunities available at regional conferences will maximize potential for utilizing this knowledge in future planning efforts.

One example of a ready-made partnership framework is a committee that was previously convened to address the critical issue of human-source bacteria in the river, which could be revived as part of this project. In 2015, stakeholders including SJWG, San Juan County, NMED Liquid Waste Program, and Farmington wastewater treatment plant staff met to discuss possible sources and strategies to address sewage pollution in a cooperative manner. Unfortunately, the Gold King Mine spill in August 2015 derailed these efforts before many action items could be completed. For the renewed outreach project, the SJWG Coordinator could review old documents and meeting agendas, and reconvene the group to continue these partnerships.

While the main focus of the San Juan Watershed Group is addressing water quality issues, there are numerous opportunities to improve water quality while also positively impacting water quantity, which is key to several of the other critical issues mentioned above (minimum flows for fish species, water for irrigation, meeting delivery obligations to tribes, etc.). Identifying these win-win types of projects will be a primary goal of both stakeholder outreach and watershed restoration planning efforts. Examples of these types of projects were identified in the Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan, and will be used as a guide to finding similar opportunities along the San Juan:

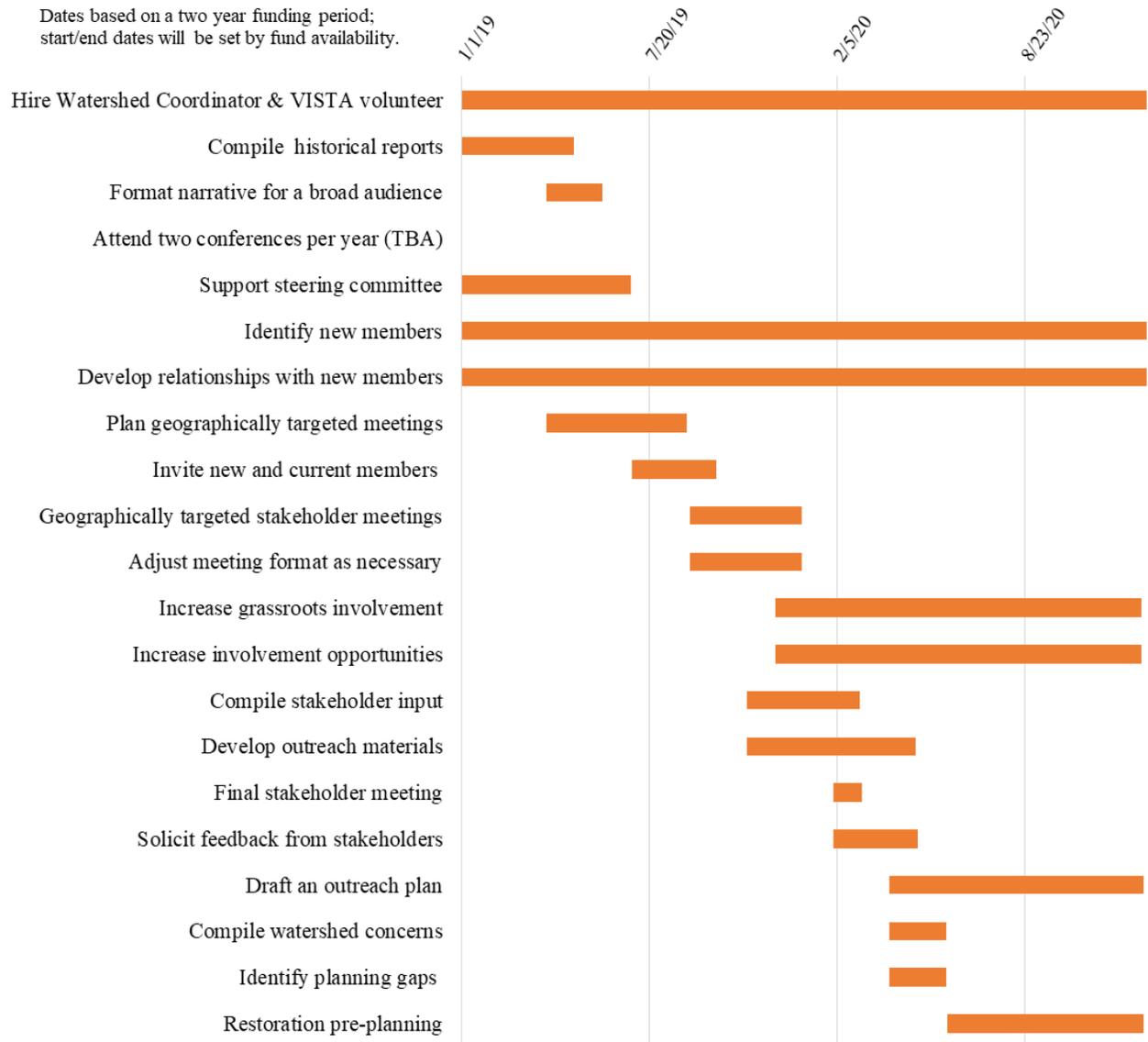
- Reducing stormwater runoff on uplands and urbanized areas to decrease the pollutants that are washed to the river, and increase infiltration of water across the landscape which bolsters base flows and makes the river less flashy during storm events.
- Strategies that reduce ruminant-source bacteria runoff (buffer strips, cover crops, etc.) also improve soil health, which in turn allows more water to soak in where it falls, increasing soil moisture and benefiting farmers' bottom lines while replenishing groundwater.

As the SJWG conducts its outreach to identify priority watershed concerns among stakeholders, projects that meet multiple needs of the watershed will be key to making the best use of limited restoration funds going forward. This should also help resolve conflicts, since efficient use of water benefits everyone in the system.

Evaluation Criterion C: Implementation and Results (25 points)

Sub-Criterion No. C1: Understanding of and Ability to Meet Program Requirements

The San Juan Watershed Group has identified the major tasks in their watershed group development proposal, to be completed on the following schedule:



The activities that build the capacity of the Watershed Group will occur first. Some of these activities, such as compiling and summarizing historical reports, creating an accessible narrative of Group history, hiring a Coordinator and VISTA Volunteer, and supporting development of by-laws, mission, and long-term planning will take place in the first few months of the funding

period. The Coordinator will be responsible for completing all subsequent tasks, including direction and supervision of the VISTA Volunteer. Identifying and developing relationships with new stakeholders will also commence right away, but will continue to take place throughout the course of the funding period, as new connections are made.

- *Milestones:* Verbal or written correspondence between the SJWG and representatives from each new and re-engaging stakeholder group; Successful recruitment of a VISTA volunteer; Planning documents completed by Steering Committee; Historical documents read and summarized by Coordinator/VISTA; Conferences or workshops attended by Coordinator/VISTA

Conducting the stakeholder meetings will take place towards the middle of the funding period. This should allow sufficient time to research and compile historical documents, develop trust with stakeholders, and plan the meetings.

- *Milestones:* Number of stakeholder meetings held; Number of attendees; Review of meeting feedback;

The second half of the funding period will involve analysis of findings and feedback from stakeholder meetings, drafting of an outreach plan, pre-planning for a restoration plan, and development of strategies to increase grassroots involvement and opportunities for meaningful involvement. Where possible, compilation of the results of the stakeholder meetings will be recorded in a format such that it can be added directly to either the outreach plan or draft restoration plan.

Draft an Outreach Plan and Develop Outreach Materials

- *Milestones:* Compiled outreach ideas from stakeholder meetings; New outreach materials developed; Review of materials at “capstone” meeting; Completion of outreach plan

Outline a Watershed Restoration Plan

- *Milestones:* Compiled watershed needs from stakeholder meetings; Compiled project ideas from stakeholder meetings; Report on gaps; Outline/draft of future watershed plan

Performance and Financial Reporting – The Watershed Coordinator and SJSWCD Project Manager will be responsible for submitting quarterly interim project reports, and the final performance report. SJSWCD Project Manager currently submits SF-425 Financial Reports for other federal grants, and is familiar with the process, as well as the ASAP payment system.

- *Milestones:* Submission of quarterly SF-425 financial reports; Submission of quarterly performance reports; Submission of final performance report

Note on costs for each task: Because the majority of the funds requested for this project are dedicated to hiring the Watershed Coordinator, costs for individual tasks can be approximated based on the duration of the activity as illustrated in the project schedule above.

The VISTA Volunteer and SJSWCD Project Manager will be assisting throughout the grant period, with time distributed as needed, with substantial overlap between tasks. These costs are estimated to be evenly distributed throughout the funding period.

Budget items which are task-specific include stakeholder meetings (paper and supplies, room reservations, food and beverage – estimated maximum \$250 per meeting) and conference attendance (\$2400 total).

Sub-Criterion No. C2: Building on Relevant Federal, State, or Regional Planning Efforts

The San Juan Watershed Group plans to build on previous water plans, including the [San Juan Basin Regional Water Plan](#), released by the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer, Interstate Stream Commission in 2016. The SJWG participated as a stakeholder in developing this plan, and further development of the group would advance several of the key water issues of the 2016 Plan, including:

- Addressing water quality concerns regarding bacteria contamination and nutrient enrichment in the San Juan River.
- Addressing high sediment loading in the San Juan River, especially from ephemeral tributaries, such as Canon Largo.

Development of the SJWG would also help implement the following strategies for meeting future water demand, as outlined in the Plan:

- Removal of non-native vegetative species from riparian areas.
- Storage of stormwater.
- Erosion control and watershed improvements.
- Conservation – indoor and outdoor municipal uses.
- Agricultural improvements – on-farm and canal improvements.

As mentioned in several sections above, this effort will also build on the lessons learned during the process of developing the [Lower Animas Watershed Based Plan](#), which was accepted by EPA and meets their “9 key element” criteria for watershed based plans. Because of the overlap in population centers across watershed boundaries, some outreach efforts focused here on the San Juan may also lead to improvements within the Animas Watershed as well.

Evaluation Criterion D: Nexus to Department of the Interior Initiatives (10 points)

Development of the SJWG will benefit the San Juan Basin by improving relationships among stakeholders, and by laying the groundwork to conduct educational outreach and water quality improvement projects in the watershed. The Bureau of Reclamation maintains several projects in the San Juan Basin, including the Navajo Dam and Navajo Reservoir, the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program, and the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP).

As discussed in the “Group Diversity” evaluation criteria, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry is a major water resource user in the San Juan Watershed. NAPI receives water supplies from the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP), which is contracted to Reclamation for infrastructure design and construction. NAPI and NIIP play a significant role in regards to water resources and economic impacts for the Navajo Nation. The SJWG would like to develop a relationship with NAPI, which could benefit the Navajo Nation, and the watershed as a whole, by improving relationships and communication among stakeholders.

Additionally, the Navajo Nation has been involved on monitoring in the past. Diné College has expressed desire for greater participation and for their students to have a useful hands-on science experience that benefits the community, and many people showed an increased interest in water quality after the Gold King Mine spill. Diné College has extended a letter in support of the SJWG’s development efforts, and has shown an interest in greater involvement with both future water quality projects and outreach activities. It is the SJWG’s intention to increase Diné College students’ involvement in future projects, and the Group looks forward to partnering with them.

Development of the SJWG will also benefit initiatives of other Department of Interior agencies, specifically the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). As previously mentioned the San Juan River provides habitat for two endangered fish species, and the USFWS works with BOR to maintain and restore these endangered species populations through the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (SJRBRIP). One of the goals of the Group’s funding proposal is to identify areas of need to inform a future restoration plan. The SJRBRIP has already identified deteriorating water diversion infrastructure as a potential threat to critical fish habitat in their letter of support to the SJWG. The SJWG looks forward to advancing both group’s goals through a partnership that addresses this need, and improves critical habitat for endangered native fish.

D.2.2.5. Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance

No monitoring, measurement, or other field work will be conducted as part of this funding request.

D.2.2.6. Required Permits or Approvals

No permits or approvals will be needed as there will be no on-the-ground work conducted as part of this funding request.

D.2.2.7. Project Budget

See Budget Proposal and Budget Narrative on following pages.

D.2.2.8. Letters of Support

Five letters of support are attached at the end of this document

- Congress of the United States – New Mexico Congressional Delegation
- Diné College Environmental Institute
- New Mexico Department of Game & Fish
- San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program
- City of Farmington

D.2.2.9. Official Resolution

An official resolution will be adopted by the San Juan Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors at the regularly scheduled February 6, 2018 meeting. Resolution will be submitted within 30 days of the application deadline.

Budget Proposal

| Budget Item Description | \$/Unit | Quantity | Quantity Type | Fed. Funding Requested | Non-Fed Cost Share |
|--|-------------|-----------|--|------------------------|--------------------|
| Salaries and Wages | | | | | |
| SWCD Project Manager | \$54,630.00 | 14% | 7% of ann'l salary x 2 yr | \$7,648.20 | |
| VISTA Volunteer Hours | \$19.77 | 1000 | In-kind hours over 2 yrs | | \$19,770.00 |
| Fringe Benefits | None | | | \$0.00 | |
| Travel | | | | | |
| Local Travel | \$0.43 | 4800 | Avg. 200 miles/mo x 24 mo = 4800 miles | \$2,064.00 | |
| Regional Watershed Conf #1 (ABQ or sim.) | \$400.00 | 2 | per conference | \$800.00 | |
| Regional Watershed Conf #2 (Denver or sim) | \$800.00 | 2 | per conference | \$1,600.00 | |
| Equipment | None | | | \$0.00 | |
| Supplies & Materials | | | | | |
| Office supplies | \$750.00 | 2 | per year | \$1,500.00 | |
| Events - food and beverage | \$100.00 | 10 | per event | \$1,000.00 | |
| Postage | \$0.50 | 1000 | 1000 stamps | \$500.00 | |
| Contractual | | | | | |
| Watershed Coordinator | \$50.00 | 1098 | 366 hrs Y1 (40% of time) 732 hrs Y2 (80% of time) | \$54,900.00 | |
| Other | | | | | |
| Meeting Room Rental | \$50.00 | 10 | 10 meetings | \$500.00 | |
| OSMRE/VISTA Volunteer | \$10,000.00 | 2 | Annual fee for 2 years | \$20,000.00 | |
| VISTA office space | \$8,784.00 | 2 | \$15.25/sq ft/mo x 48 sq ft x 12mo x 2 years | | \$17,568.00 |
| Sub-total Direct Costs | | | | \$90,512.20 | \$37,338.00 |
| Indirect Costs | | | | | |
| De Minimis Rate | 10% | 60,612.20 | MTDC | \$6,061.22 | |
| Total Estimated Project Costs | | | | \$96,573.42 | \$37,338.00 |
| Total | | | | \$133,911.42 | |

Budget Narrative

Salaries and Wages:

Melissa May is the District Manager of the San Juan Soil & Water Conservation District. Ms. May also serves as Chair of the San Juan Watershed Group Steering Committee, and will serve as liaison between the District (fiscal agent) and SJWG. Time on this grant is estimated at 7% of total salary, or approximately 12 hours per month for two years. Ms. May will execute subcontracts, supervise San Juan Watershed Group contractors, and ensure project tasks stay on schedule and within budget.

The OSMRE/VISTA Volunteer will contribute 1000 hours of in-kind volunteer time over the grant period. Volunteer time in New Mexico is valued at \$19.77/hr.

Fringe: none

Travel:

Travel includes conference attendance for the San Juan Watershed Group Coordinator and the OSMRE/VISTA volunteer at two watershed conferences per year, one in a nearby location like Albuquerque (estimated at \$400/person for registration, mileage, lodging, per diem) and one further away regional conference in Denver, Las Vegas, or similar (estimated at \$800/person for registration, mileage, lodging, per diem). See Technical Proposal for conference options.

Local travel is estimated at 200 miles per month for 24 months, and would cover mileage to meetings within the watershed, including locations such as Navajo Dam, Bloomfield, Farmington, Shiprock, La Plata, etc. This will be reimbursed at the state of New Mexico rate of \$0.43/mile.

Equipment: none

Materials and Supplies:

Requested materials and supplies are for office use and for outreach events (paper, ink, notebooks, envelopes, handouts/brochures, etc.). Food & beverage supplies for stakeholder meetings are estimated at \$100 per meeting for 10 meetings. Postage costs will be for mailings to advertise stakeholder meetings. These costs were estimated using experience from past grants.

Contractual:

The program manager will be the San Juan Watershed Group Coordinator, Jaclynn Fallon. SJSWCD contracts Ms. Fallon on behalf of San Juan Watershed Group at a rate of \$50/hr. Estimated program hours are 366 hours in Year 1 (approximately 40% of time) and 732 hours in Year 2 (approximately 80% of time). The increase in hours is expected due to overlap with a

grant the SJWG is finishing for the Animas River in Year 1, and the increase in technical aspects of this proposal in Year 2, including development of the final project report and evaluation. The Watershed Coordinator will lead all activities described in the Technical Proposal, and will assist in supervising the VISTA volunteer. Past watershed coordinators in this region have been paid between \$45-\$70/hr, so this rate is well within a fair and reasonable range.

Other:

Meeting rooms for 10 stakeholder meetings will be rented at an estimated cost of \$50 each.

San Juan Watershed Group proposes funding to cover the cost of an OSMRE/VISTA Volunteer for two years, at \$10,000/year. This is a one-time fee to Conservation Legacy (Non-profit coordinating the VISTA program) which secures the volunteer for a year-long service term. Office space for the Volunteer will be provided by a partner organization, most likely SJSWCD, and is valued at \$15.25 per square foot per month. Provision of a 6x8 ft. cubicle yields an annual value of \$8,784/year.

Indirect Costs:

The rate of recovery for overhead and general administrative costs by SJWG's fiscal agent SJSWCD will be the de minimus 10% of modified total direct costs. MTDC was calculated according to 2 CFR §200.68 and comes to a total of \$60,612.20, yielding an indirect cost of \$6,061.22.

Total Costs:

The total Federal funding request for this two-year project is \$96,573.42

The non-Federal cost share is \$37,338.00, bringing the overall project total to \$133,911.42.

San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District

Resolution No.17-18-005

A RESOLUTION APPROVING SUBMITTAL OF

The San Juan Watershed Group's Application to the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program

WHEREAS, the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District (SJSWCD) is the authorized fiscal agent of the San Juan Watershed Group (SJWG) and has the legal authority to enter into an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) as:

San Juan Soil & Water Conservation District
Melissa May
District Coordinator
1427 W. Aztec Blvd. Suite 1
Aztec, NM 87410

WHEREAS, the SJSWCD supports the application made to the BOR WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program to build the capacity of the SJWG, conduct stakeholder outreach, draft an outreach plan, and outline a restoration plan for the mainstem San Juan River;

WHEREAS, the SJSWCD is prepared to secure the non-federal cost share outlined in the SJWG's application budget, via the hosting of a VISTA volunteer;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, if the SJSWCD is awarded a grant by the BOR, the SJSWCD may enter into an agreement with BOR for the above referenced project. The SJSWCD will comply with all applicable laws, environmental requirements and regulations as stated in the grant agreement, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the SJSWCD will work with BOR to meet established deadlines for entering into a grant or cooperative agreement,

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE SAN JUAN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT THIS 6th DAY OF FEB, 2018.

- YES John B. Arrington, JOHN ARRINGTON - CHAIR
- NO _____ CASEY SPRADLEY – VICE CHAIR
- YES _____ RALPH FENTON - TREASURER
- YES _____ DEANNE MCKEE - SUPERVISOR
- YES _____ LEO PACHECO - SUPERVISOR
- YES _____ VERN ANDREWS - SUPERVISOR
- Absent _____ CAROL CLOER – SUPERVISOR

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

DELEGATION OFFICE

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

(202) 224-8962

January 23rd, 2018

Mr. Darren Olsen
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Support Section
Mail Code: 84-27814
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Mr. Olsen:

The New Mexico Congressional Delegation writes in support of the grant application submitted by the San Juan Watershed Group for the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant as funded by the Bureau of Reclamation. This grant, BOR-DO-18-F005, will allow the San Juan Watershed Group (SJWG) to continue their restoration efforts on the Animas River as well increase restoration efforts up to the Bureau's Navajo Dam.

The San Juan Watershed's health has diminished from a variety of activities including agricultural uses, industrial uses, and residential development within the watershed. Water quality studies have revealed high levels of human-sourced bacteria and excessive loads of sediment. To improve water quality, the SJWG is seeking funding to increase outreach with San Juan County residents and water users. SJWG volunteers and staff will work with stakeholders and landowners to develop solutions that keep septic waste from reaching the river, and reduce other forms of harmful runoff.

The San Juan River is an important economic driver for northwest New Mexico. A major university study indicates this four mile stretch contributes nearly \$40 million dollars annually to the local economy. A short distance away, the river irrigates the Navajo Nation's tribal owned

farm with 72,000 acres under irrigation. The San Juan provides water to the oil and gas industry, utilities, municipalities, and agriculture. The WaterSMART funding will be used to forge a stronger partnership with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in its recovery efforts to restore the endangered Colorado Pikeminnow and Razorback Sucker. Our state is fortunate to have the San Juan and the New Mexico Delegation appreciates the SJWG's stewardship to improve its health.

The New Mexico Congressional Delegation proudly supports the application submitted by the San Juan Watershed Group for the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant as funded by the Bureau of Reclamation and we request that you give their application thorough consideration within your agency's guidelines.

Sincerely,



Tom Udall
United States Senator



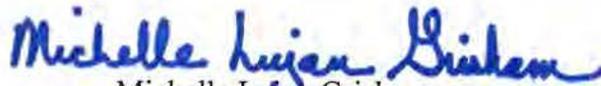
Steve Pearce
United States Representative



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján
United States Representative



Michelle Lujan Grisham
United States Representative



DINÉ COLLEGE

SHIPROCK CAMPUS

January 24, 2018

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Support Section
Attn: Mr. Darren Olson
Mail Code: 84-27814
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

**Re: San Juan Watershed Group application to BOR WaterSMART CWMP Phase I,
Funding Opportunity Announcement No. BOR-DO-18-F005**

Dear Mr. Olson and grant review committee,

This letter is written in support of the San Juan Watershed Group's application and efforts to expand their outreach activities to include more projects and stakeholders along the San Juan River.

Dine College is located near the San Juan River, therefore would enhance and expand opportunities with the San Juan Watershed Group's hands-on field-sampling and data analysis studies if partnered with our college faculty/staff/students. One example is our on-going study with Dr. Karletta Chief and the University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University and other institutions for which monitor the Gold King Mine Spill disaster. One of their deliverables is to engage in community outreach and teach-ins. This interaction with the community is very important which keeps them informed of safe usage of the San Juan River and its farmlands.

The Dine College team looks forward to further interaction and participation in the studies conducted by the San Juan Watershed Group.

Thank you for taking the time to review this application.

Sincerely,

Perry H. Charley

*Perry H. Charley, Sr. Scientist, Director
Diné College-Shiprock Campus
Diné Environmental Institute- Research & Outreach
1228 Yucca Street, Room 135, PO Box 580, Shiprock, New Mexico 87420
Phone: (505) 368-3514 phcharley@dinecollege.edu*

GOVERNOR
Susana Martinez



DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY
TO THE COMMISSION
Alexandra Sandoval

DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Donald L. Jaramillo

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
DEPARTMENT OF GAME & FISH

One Wildlife Way, Santa Fe, NM 87507
Post Office Box 25112, Santa Fe, NM 87504
Tel: (505) 476-8000 | Fax: (505) 476-8123
For information call: (888) 248-6866

www.wildlife.state.nm.us

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Albuquerque
BILL MONTOYA
Vice-Chairman
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CRAIG PETERSON
Farmington
RALPH RAMOS
Las Cruces
BOB RICKLEFS
Cimarron
ELIZABETH A. RYAN
Roswell
THOMAS "DICK" SALOPEK
Las Cruces

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Support Section
Attn: Mr. Darren Olson
Mail Code: 84-27814
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Re: San Juan Watershed Group application to BOR WaterSMART CWMP Phase I, Funding Opportunity
Announcement No. BOR-DO-18-F005

Dear Mr. Olson and grant review committee,

This letter is written in support of the San Juan Watershed Group's application and efforts to expand their outreach activities to include more projects and stakeholders along the San Juan River.

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish has work extensively on the San Juan River below Navajo Dam to improve fish and wildlife habitat while working to increase sediment transport, reduce sediment inputs and mitigate reduced flows in the San Juan River. Partnerships are key to successful projects; an active San Juan Watershed Group can help foster partnership that will bring private and government agencies together for the health of the resource.

The San Juan River tailwater trout fishery is estimated to generate 30 million dollars a year for the state and local economy. This spring the NMDGF along with New Mexico State Parks, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and private contractors will have completed a 1.2 million dollar project on the San Juan River improving fish and wildlife habitat, without inter/agency partnerships this project could not have happened.

Approximately 225 miles of river runs from Navajo Dam to Lake Powell where habitat restoration is greatly needed. Two federally listed fish and numerous native fish of the southwest would benefit from partnerships that could provide the technical and financial resources to take on the challenges of habitat restoration, water quality, recreation and many other issues with water in the southwest.

San Juan Watershed Group can play an essential role in building partnerships at the local, state and federal level along with filling a need for public outreach. They have experience in providing public education on how human activities impact water quality. Public education is a greatly needed element to protecting our water resources.

Thank you for taking the time to review this application.

Sincerely,

NMDGF San Juan River Fisheries Biologist
C. Marc Wethington



San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program
New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office
2105 Osuna NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87113
Phone: (505) 346-2525 Fax: (505) 346-2542

January 29, 2018

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Support Section
Attn: Mr. Darren Olson
Mail Code: 84-27814
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Re: San Juan Watershed Group application to Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART
Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP) Phase I, Funding Opportunity
Announcement No. BOR-DO-18-F005

Dear Mr. Olson and the Grant Review Committee,

This letter is written in support of the San Juan Watershed Group's application to the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART CWMP Phase I grant program and its efforts to expand their outreach activities to include more projects and stakeholders along the San Juan River.

Working within a sub-basin of the Upper Colorado River Basin, the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (Recovery Program) goals are to protect and recover endangered fishes in the San Juan River Basin while water development proceeds in compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws. Recovering the two endangered fish in the San Juan River, the Colorado Pikeminnow (*Ptychocheilus lucius*) and the Razorback Sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*), is challenged by numerous threats including: climate change, non-native species, and water withdrawals. In response to this threat, the Recovery Program has identified channel habitat restoration as an important action that, when paired with environmental flow releases intended to create and maintain channel habitat, is expected to support species recovery and provide important ecosystem resilience to climate change impacts.

In August 2016, the Recovery Program published a final report titled, *San Juan and Animas Rivers Diversion Study*. The study was undertaken to compile relevant information for the Recovery Program's use in identifying municipal, agricultural, and industrial diversions along the San Juan and Animas rivers that may warrant further investigation due to potential for native fish entrainment and to address Colorado Pikeminnow and Razorback Sucker stocking sites in respect to diversion structure locations. This study also helps identify potential threats of impediments to movement for these highly migratory species (e.g., diversion structures). The Recovery Program plans to use information from the study to identify areas on the San Juan and Animas

rivers that could provide partnering opportunities for the Recovery Program to financially support infrastructure improvement projects that would also help minimize entrainment risk and provide fish passage.

The San Juan Watershed Group is a group of citizens (i.e. water users, private landowners) and local agencies that could aid the Recovery Program's outreach and education efforts to inform the community of the recovery needs for the endangered species and the availability of assistance from the Recovery Program to make infrastructure improvements. In addition, the San Juan Watershed Group may be crucial in developing new relationships to find additional opportunities in restoring river habitat and improving infrastructures that could benefit both the endangered species and structures along the river. To that end, both the San Juan Watershed Group and the Recovery Program are valuable resources to each other with regards to outreach, education, and funding opportunities to achieve river restoration and water infrastructure improvements that will mutually benefit both parties.

The Recovery Program is in full support of the San Juan Watershed Group's application to the WaterSMART CWMP Phase I grant program and its efforts to expand their outreach activities to include more projects and stakeholders along the San Juan River.

Sincerely,

Sharon Whitmore

Sharon Whitmore, Coordinator,
San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program



CITY OF FARMINGTON

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January 30, 2018

Mr. Darren Olsen
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Support Section
Mail Code: 84-2874
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Dear Mr. Olsen:

The City of Farmington writes in support of the grant application submitted by the San Juan Watershed Group for the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant as funded by the Bureau of Reclamation. This grant, BOR-DO-18-F005, will allow the San Juan Watershed Group (SJWG) to continue their restoration efforts on the Animas River as well increase restoration efforts up to the Bureau's Navajo Dam.

Water quality studies have suggested upstream high levels of human-sourced bacteria and excessive loads of sediment. To improve water quality, the SJWG is seeking funding to increase outreach with San Juan County residents and water users. SJWG volunteers and staff will work with both stakeholders and landowners to develop solutions that keep septic waste from reaching the river, and reduce other forms of harmful runoff.

The City of Farmington, along with other San Juan River stakeholders, has long been an active participant in the stewardship activities of the SJWG and are proud to support the application submitted by the San Juan Watershed Group for the WaterSMART Cooperative Management Program grant funded by the Bureau of Reclamation and requests that you give the application thorough consideration within your agency's guidelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David M. Sypher'.

David Sypher, P.E.
Public Works Director

San Juan Watershed Group Project Focus Area

Map Explanation

● Stakeholders

— Rivers

□ HUC12 Watersheds

■ Cities

Surface Ownership

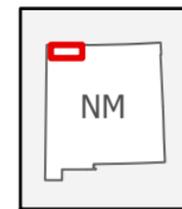
■ Bureau of Land Management

■ Bureau of Reclamation

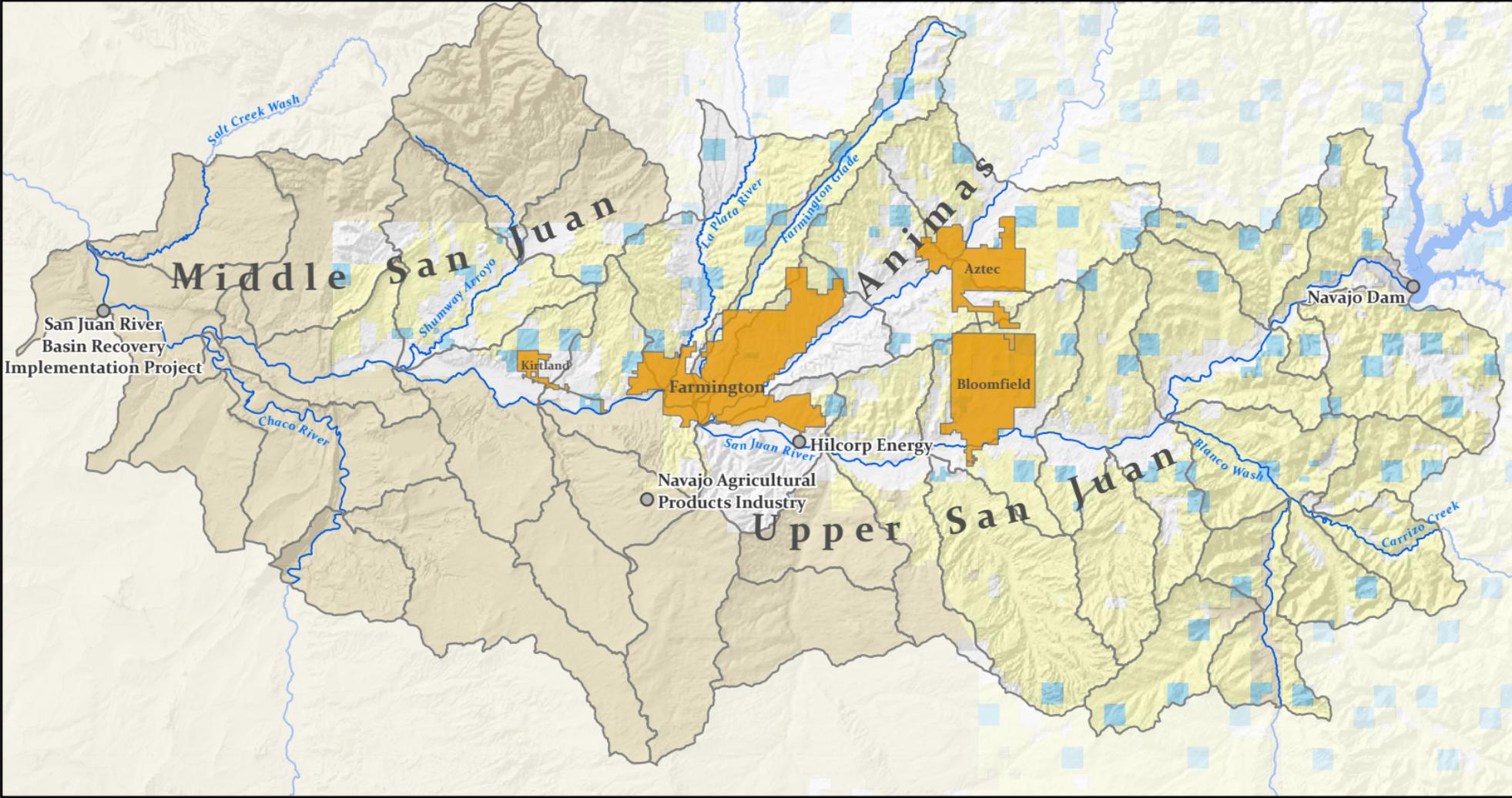
■ Indian Lands or Reservations

■ State

■ Private



0 2.5 5 10 Miles



San Juan Watershed Project Area

- Waterbodies
- Project Area
- State Boundary
- Cities
- Watersheds (HU8)
 - Middle San Juan
 - Upper San Juan

