

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

**Funding Opportunity Announcement No. BOR-DO-18-F005**

**WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I Grants for Fiscal Year 2018**



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Policy and Administration  
Denver, Colorado**

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**Section D. Application and Submission Information**

**Project Title: Building Watershed Resiliency in the Cache La Poudre – Phase 2.**

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## Executive Summary

January 31, 2018  
Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed (CPRW)  
Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado  
EIN: 46-2850042  
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In 2017, CPRW worked with stakeholders and a technical team to develop a river flood recovery & resiliency master plan for the lower Cache la Poudre River (east of the I-25 to the confluence with the South Platte). The focus of this first phase of the project was to prioritize reaches of the river that had the greatest need for restoration & resiliency building, analyze sediment transport issues, and begin developing a strong stakeholder network to support decision making. CPRW was successful in completing the prioritization with initial concept designs for 5 high priority reaches, a sediment transport model, & engaging watersheds stakeholders and community members. We established an initial steering committee comprised of representatives from local jurisdictions (City of Greeley, Town of Windsor, Larimer County, Weld County) and held multiple community meetings with landowners, river-based business operators, ditch operators, oil & gas industry representatives. For the second phase of our project, we have 3 primary goals: to expand & diversify our steering committee, to further engage the community in this area of the watershed and incorporate stakeholder/community input into 1 – 3 river resiliency designs. Funds from Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) will be used to support staff time to build & implement activities & tools to engage & connect with stakeholders and hire sub-contractors to assist with community outreach & complete engineering & design of river resiliency projects. We anticipate that the second phase of the project will take ~ two years, beginning with the stakeholder & community outreach, which should last throughout the course of the project. Project design & engineering should take approximately one year and would start after the first phase of landowner/stakeholder engagement occurs to ensure that designs reflect community priorities & concerns. Although there are Bureau of Reclamation facilities in the Cache La Poudre watershed (Colorado Big Thompson – Horsetooth Reservoir), the project location is east of these facilities. Most the project area is located on private land.

## Background Data

The Poudre River is an important drainage in the Front Range. At 1,219,038 ac, it is one of the largest drainages in northern Colorado and is home to over 400,000 people. In its upper reaches, lies Colorado's only designated Wild & Scenic River, and 45 miles of river were the first to be designated a National Heritage Area west of the Mississippi. This area is also a loved and well used recreation trail system. The September 2013 flood event caused unprecedented levels of change in Front Range rivers. While the headwaters of the Poudre were spared the degree of damage seen in other parts of the Front Range, the lower corridor experienced significant flooding. In addition, flood waters deposited large volumes of sediment in the channel & floodplain and caused significant bank erosion (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Images of excessive sediment deposited in the lower Poudre (left) & bank erosion (right)

This watershed supports water supply for almost 400,000 residents and 151,547 irrigated acres. The headwaters of the Poudre also supply water that supports a thriving brewing industry, whitewater recreation businesses, and recreational fishing, hunting, and hiking opportunities. In the lower Poudre, there are 7 ditches that divert on average ~8,769-acre ft/yr and ~155,000 residents that depend on the Poudre for water supply.

According to the EPA, various parts of the Cache la Poudre watershed are impaired by Cu, Pb, Cd, *E. coli*, temperature, Se, Hg in fish tissue, and As. Of those impairments, only Se & *E. coli* are applicable to our planning reaches. It is generally assumed that the Se impairment is due to natural sources and is therefore considered a low priority for management action. The *E. coli* impairment is considered a high priority for management action.

Data from local water monitoring programs show that as the Poudre flows under the I-25, benthic macroinvertebrate diversity remains moderate, although as you move farther downstream, the proportion of pollution tolerant species increases. Fish populations in this stretch of the river are dominated by warmwater non-native fishes. Overall the monitoring reports from local programs indicate that Cache la Poudre River is subjected to a variety of influences. In addition to the discharge of treated wastewater, the river's flow is highly

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regulated. Major diversions and irrigation return flows occur at several locations. Channelization, disrupted riparian vegetation, road building, and agricultural practices have had direct and indirect impacts on channel conditions. There are also multiple industrial and municipal wastewater discharges that flow into the river, all affecting the water quality in the system.

According to the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation website, our proposed project area provides potential habitat for several threatened and endangered fish, wildlife & plant species including: Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse, Least Tern, Mexican Spotted Owl, Piping Plover, Whooping Crane, Pallid Sturgeon, Colorado Butterfly Plant, Ute Ladies'-Tresses, and Western Prairie Fringed Orchid.

The ability of the river to remain resilient to the stressors we are putting upon it is also changing. Since September 2013 flood event, flooding has become a more significant concern and its effects on private land, water supply infrastructure, business infrastructure and river function. As agricultural land is being converted to urban uses in the watershed, there is increasing concern about the river's ability to meet all stakeholders needs and expectations. Local jurisdictions are struggling to balance maintaining historic, agricultural identity, water rights, as well as the environmental integrity and community values of the river.

## Project Location

The Lower Cache la Poudre (lower Poudre) is located in Larimer & Weld County in Colorado (Figure 2). The lower Poudre flows for ~ 36 miles east of the I-25 interstate until the confluence with the South Platte. The project location lies ~19 mi east of Fort Collins. Timnath, the Town of Windsor, and the City of Greeley are all located in the project area. The project area lies within the 10190007 HUC.

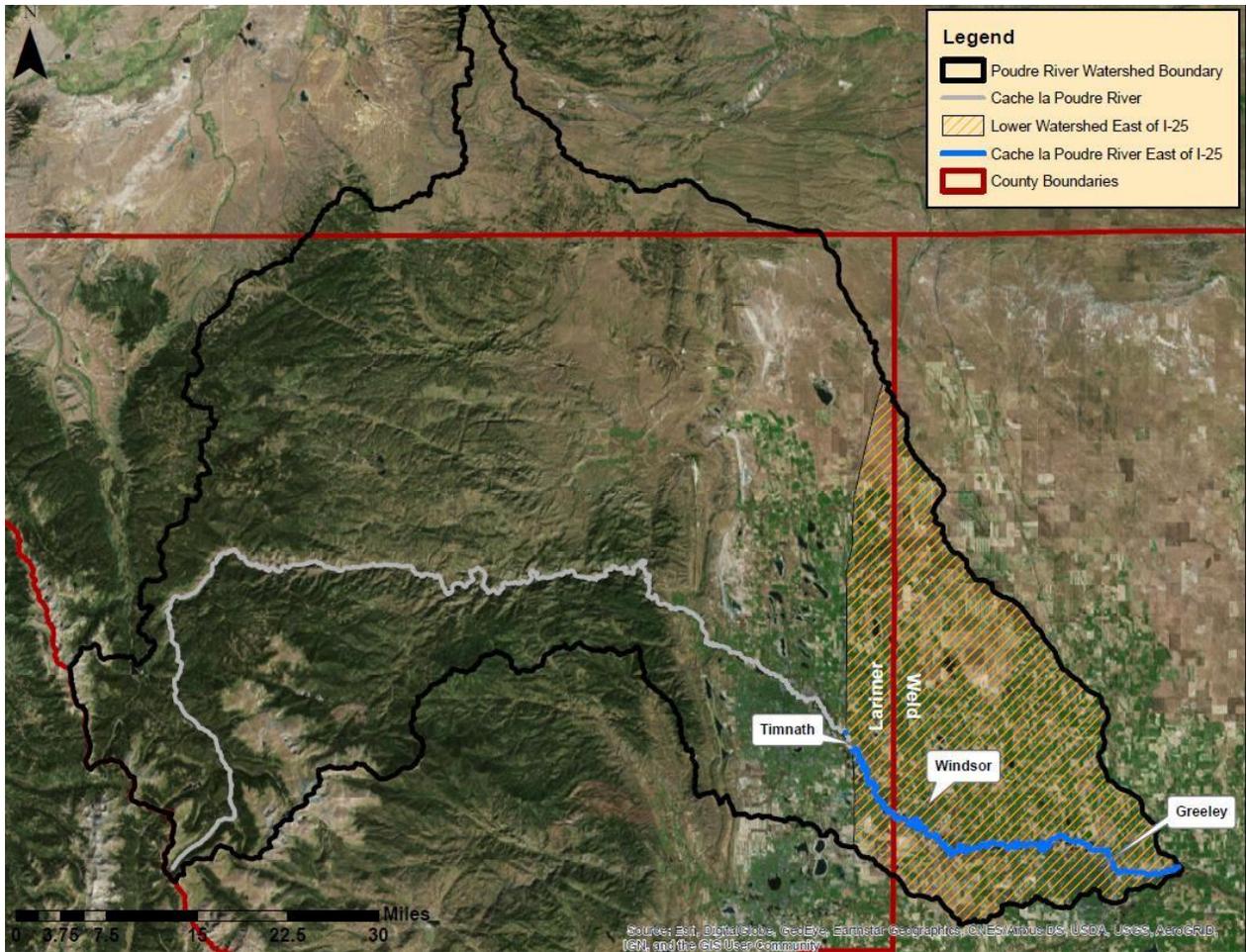


Figure 2. Extent of CPRW's working boundaries - the Cache la Poudre watershed from headwaters to confluence. The hashed orange area shows the lower portion of the watershed. Our planning & outreach efforts focus on the river, east of the I-25 (dark blue line)

## Applicant Category:

CPRW is seeking funding as an existing watershed group. We are a 501(c)3 registered non-profit that was incorporated in 2013. CPRW is a non-regulatory entity. Working to protect the water in the Poudre River is central to the work that we do. In the summer of 2012, the Hewlett Gulch and High Park fires burned 95,172 acres of the Cache La Poudre Watershed. At the time, the High Park Fire was Larimer County's most destructive wildfire. In addition to the loss of homes and trees, the charred watershed also saw enormous increases in runoff, flooding, sediment erosion, and debris flows. With every rain after the fires, sediment and ash flowed into the Poudre River, affecting not just the aesthetics of the river but its ecology and its ability to reliably deliver clean drinking water. The increased runoff also led to road closures as roads flooded during each rain event, compromising the safety of our roadways.

The High Park Fire was a call to action for many organizations in Larimer County. Shortly after the fires began, a group of natural resource agencies, non-profits, representatives from the cities

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of Greeley, Fort Collins, and Larimer County, local businesses, and individuals gathered to discuss how they could work together to rehabilitate the lands affected by the burn. Initially formed as an informal network known as the High Park Restoration Coalition, the group was successful at identifying the top priorities for restoration efforts, finding funding to implement the plans, and training volunteers to help with implementation.

Based on the success of these early efforts, in May 2013, we evolved into a formal non-profit coalition – the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed (CPRW) - with the goal of providing leadership and coordination for the collaborative stewardship of the Cache La Poudre River Watershed. To ensure the successful establishment of CPRW, the City of Fort Collins Utilities, the City of Greeley Water & Sewer, and Larimer County provide seed funding for our operating costs. Because of the collaborative benefits that CPRW has brought to the watershed, Fort Collins & Greeley continue to fund our operations. Our current board of directors is made up of individuals from local water utilities, county government, natural resource professionals, local landowners & business operators, non-profits, and recreational industry interests.

Our initial collaborative efforts were focused on the headwater areas of our watershed. We worked with representatives from United States Forest Service (FS), Colorado State Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Colorado State University, & local non-profits to create a Watershed Resiliency Plan for the Upper Cache La Poudre. CPRW worked with stakeholders to identify key watershed values (forest, river health, community values, and water supply) and the most pressing threats to those values (wildfires, catastrophic floods, climate change). The plan prioritized seventh level HUCs in the upper watershed that were least resilient to stressors like catastrophic wildfires. The plan was complete in 2016 and CPRW has already worked with partners and stakeholders to implement almost 300 ac of watershed protection projects. In addition, we continue to work with stakeholders on post fire restoration needs stemming from the High Park & Hewlett Gulch fires. In 2018, we will continue implementing projects with partners from local water utilities to protect key water supply infrastructure from negative impacts of post fire erosion.

At the request of stakeholders in the lower watershed, CPRW began working of river resiliency issues in the lower Poudre. In 2015, we received funding through the Community Block Development Grant Program for Disaster Recovery to complete a Flood Recovery & Resiliency Master Plan for the lower Poudre (“Lower Poudre Plan”). With the initiation of the lower Poudre Plan, CPRW is now officially working across the whole watershed. By building on the work we have started in the lower watershed, we believe we can increase collaboration and dialogue in this important watershed.

**CPRW Goals:** CPRW’s mission is to improve & maintain the ecological health of the Poudre River watershed through community collaboration. Our aim is to achieve this mission by building stakeholder relationships, reducing duplication of effort, & breaking down jurisdictional silos to get more work implemented that benefits the watershed. Our initial goals were to prioritize & address critical post fire restoration needs in the burn area and improve the resiliency of the upper watershed to reduce the negative impacts of wildfire on key watershed values like water supply and river health. With our current work in the lower Poudre, our broad goal is to improve the

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resiliency of the lower river such that it can continue to support functioning river ecosystems while meeting the demands of water supply, recreation, & community needs.

Our proposed project for this funding has 2 primary goals: To build successful & effective stakeholder relationships/dialogue to facilitate watershed restoration planning & to design river restoration design project(s) that will improve river resiliency and protect river ecosystem services and critical infrastructure.

**Our Approach:** Our primary approach has three main components. First, we will work to recruit new members to our steering committee to make sure the committee has a wider stakeholder representation on it. Second, we will use a range of different community engagement tools to make sure that our affected stakeholders understand the project, have opportunities to learn about watershed resiliency & river restoration, have meaningful opportunities to provide input & address concerns, and can participate in the design process. Finally, we will work closely with a consulting team to make sure we can produce 1-3 scientifically robust resilient river restoration design projects.

The key deliverables from this project include:

- A stakeholder steering committee that has representation from multiple stakeholder categories
- Complete 3 -5 community outreach events that are attended by a diverse array of stakeholder representation
- Host 1 – 2 online platforms that promote learning and dialogue regarding critical watershed issues

## Technical Project Description - Evaluation Criteria

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

#### ***Sub-criterion No. A1. Watershed Group Diversity***

##### Current Coalition Membership/Diversity

Since our inception, we have been driven by a desire to find meaningful mechanisms to involve an array of stakeholder opinions and expertise to help us solve watershed problems and maintain a balance of views. Our coalition's board of directors currently has representation from the city Fort Collins and City of Greeley water utilities, Larimer County, individuals representing natural resources nonprofits (Wildlands Restoration Volunteers, Trout Unlimited, Larimer County Conservation Corps), academia, local business owners, and natural resource management. Our local water utilities have seen enough value in CPRW and its ability to improve and maintain stakeholder relationships and critical watershed implementation work that they fund our annual operations each year and have since our first year. In addition to our board, we have built a stable

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stakeholder committee for our work in the headwaters that has regular attendance from the United States Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado State University, Rocky Mountain Research Station, local nonprofits, and local government.

As we have expanded downstream, we have been working to add new members to our board of directors to ensure that our board adequately represents the lower portions of our watershed. One hope from this project is that it will allow us to build the relationships necessary to identify potential new board members that can continue to ensure CPRW has the appropriate stakeholder balance at the board level.

The heart of CPRW's mission is community collaboration – it is the primary tool we use to plan & prioritize watersheds needs and to implement projects. This project will be no different for us. We are committed to bringing as many voices as needed to ensure that our project & its processes reflect the diverse array of interests and needs in the project area. Our first phase of the project has already laid a solid foundation for achieving this aim. Our steering committee has strong jurisdictional representation. We have already discussed what non-jurisdictional representation we should add to the steering committee including more environmental interests such as Ducks Unlimited, federal entities like the Natural Resource Conservation Services, state representatives like Colorado Parks & Wildlife, and other agricultural interests. Over the course of the past year, CPRW held 5 community meetings to introduce the project need, gather input from the public & introduce the concepts behind using resilient river design to reduce flood hazard, protect community & river values, and increase river function. The meetings focused on river residential landowners, farm operators, ditch operators, oil & gas representatives and other river adjacent businesses. We also used community surveys to gather data on people's issues of concern, areas of interest, and their sense of the most critical needs were on the river.

### Affected Stakeholders:

Affected stakeholders in this portion of the watershed include local water utilities, stormwater and floodplain managers, farmers, ditch operators, gravel mining companies, oil & gas operators, river adjacent residents, land managers, & landowners, Poudre Trail users, housing developers, & other key river-adjacent businesses like Kodak/HealthCares.

University of Northern Colorado is also located in the planning area. While they are not an 'affected stakeholder' per se, they are an important community of researchers, students, & scientists that may have expertise and interest in the effort that can benefit our coalition and the outcomes of the project. We do not have significant tribal populations in our watershed.

### Engaging Affected Stakeholders

CPRW is proposing to use multiple levels of engagement to ensure that we reach the diverse array of stakeholders we need to be inclusive and help our project goals are achieved. First, we will use a 'wide-net' approach. We will rely on our e-newsletter to reach a broad array of stakeholders & interested individuals. During the first phase of the project, we started gathering names & contact information of people interested in learning more about the lower Poudre, the work we are doing, and issues along the river. We will continue to build this list by reaching out through partners established networks, attending community events, presenting at University of Northern Colorado, and by soliciting input along the Poudre Trail.

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One other engagement tool that we will be using is a digital product called a StoryMap (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=3dd9e7fd1166420797d97a2ae3be8e>). This is an interactive tool that provides an informative, engaging way for individuals to learn about CPRW, our work in the lower watershed and to stay updated on project opportunities and changes.

We will directly contact individual representatives from entities we believe as important to recruit for our steering committee. CPRW already has contacts at these entities through our existing networks.

We will also continue to get in front of important community groups and organizations to present on our work, the project goals, and on our coalition. CPRW has already started doing this in our first phase. Staff regularly gave presentations to the Poudre Trail Board, City of Greeley Water & Sewer Planning Board, Weld County Commissioners, & Town of Windsor City Council. We will continue to do so in the next phase of the project but would also like to add presenting to key agricultural groups like ditch operator board meetings, other rec community meetings like rod and reel clubs.

One area for us to explore and build on will be reaching vulnerable residential populations that are impacted by this work. To do this appropriately, we have budgeted to ensure we can provide key information in Spanish (the other primary language of use in the region). We will also reach out to local cultural & social services groups to learn about the most effective mechanisms for reaching these populations.

One of the most important stakeholder engagement actions we will be relying on is conducting individual meetings with landowners and land managers in our high priority reaches. We will reach out to these individuals and work directly with them to assess their land, discuss their concerns/interest, and gauge their willingness to work with us further on restoration design and planning at their site.

### Improve Dialogue

This portion of our watershed relies heavily on water deliveries from Reclamation as Horsetooth Reservoir, a Reclamation facility, is one of the principal sources of water for drinking and irrigation in this area. Irrigation ditch diversion structures are common in this portion of the river and help irrigate the plains of the watershed. During the first phase of the project, our technical analysis identified those structures as one factor that was causing sediment transport issues & were creating barriers to fish passage, both of which lead to diminished river resiliency overall. To enable us to start building the kinds of relationships we need, we organized community meeting specifically to engage the ditch operator community. This helped us better understand their concerns and have them learn more about our work. The local water utilities also depend on deliveries from Reclamation facilities and we have been working closely with these entities already seeking to increase their understanding and willingness of planning proactively for resiliency in the river corridor.

More broadly, we will continue to use interactive community meetings to foster dialogue around key issues in the corridor. We will use data gathered from surveys conducted in the first phase to

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inform what the themes should be for dialogue at community meetings including how to protect communities/property from catastrophic flooding, how to protect the Poudre Trail, how to design river resiliency projects that don't harm water rights, how to use river restoration to protect water quality and sediment transport. All of these will lead up to community meetings to choose which high priority reaches to move forward to the next stage of design and gather input on those design goals.

Finally, we are exploring building a digital community conversation platform that will allow us to let the community provide ideas, insight, and dialogue regarding core watershed issues. Our top choice for this is a platform being piloted locally by Larimer County Emergency Services to develop around community emergency preparedness called MindMixer.

### Expanding Lines of Communication

The steering committee for this project has already proven to be a solid venue for building lines of communication. To date, the steering committee has focused on representation from the immediate jurisdictions in the river corridor at the local level. The steering committee has already identified that our work could benefit from have additional representation from federal and state entities like NRCS and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Our regular meetings provide ample opportunity discuss opportunities, needs, and constraints relating to the river and the water issues associated with it. In addition, CPRW has already begun presenting about this project and how it can benefit water resource management to local government entities, which further develops communication about this issue.

### ***Sub-criterion No. A2. Geographic Scope***

The Cache la Poudre watershed is in the 10190007 HUC. CPRW works within the entire boundary of the watershed. However, this project will focus on the lower portion of the watershed as it flows under the I-25 until it meets the confluence with the South Platte (Figure 2). This portion of the watershed represents the plains region of the watershed. Major urban areas in the project area also include the Town of Windsor and Timnath. The project area is in both Larimer and Weld County. These entities are already involved in the project process. There are 7 water diversions managed by 7 ditch companies in the project area. Entities such as these are not on the steering committee yet, however CPRW has already started communicating with them and will continue to nurture those relationships through this project.

CPRW already has representation from the whole spatial extent of the watershed. We have representation at different levels from each county, from the City of Greeley on the eastern downstream end, to the city of Fort Collins in the middle & upper portions of the watershed, to the United States Forest Service in the headwaters. We do however have more work to do to develop diversity of representation from all areas of the watershed to have more diverse input on watershed issues. At this stage of our development, our coalition, particularly at the board level, reflects more of the diversity of stakeholder interests in the upper watershed. We have a need and desire to add stakeholder voices at the board level that reflect more downstream concerns/viewpoints. Specifically, our board has indicated gaps that include agricultural voices, other recreational interests, water dependent businesses in the lower watershed. We will use the stakeholder engagement process to recruit potential relevant board members and steering committee members.

## Evaluation Criterion B — Addressing Critical Watershed Needs

### ***Sub-criterion No. B1. Critical Watershed Needs or Issues***

CPRW began work in the lower Poudre because of a growing concern about impacts of flooding to the river, communities, and infrastructure. The September 2013 flood event in Colorado's Front Range caused widespread flooding and triggered disaster declarations across 14 counties including Larimer and Weld. The Cache la Poudre River reached flood stage of 8,000 cfs in Fort Collins, 7,000 cfs in Timnath and damaged the flow gage in Greeley rendering it unable to accurately measure flow. The expensive and devastating aftermath of the flood revealed the necessity to minimize risk & improve resilience along the lower Poudre river corridor. After September 2013, flooding problems persisted in the Poudre River east of I-25, with high flows occurring in both 2014 and 2015 causing flooding and erosion problems that were damaging ecosystem/habitat, impairing riparian function, and causing sediment problems around infrastructure. These persistent flooding problems prompted the City of Greeley to ask CPRW to help local jurisdictions collaborate around this river issue.

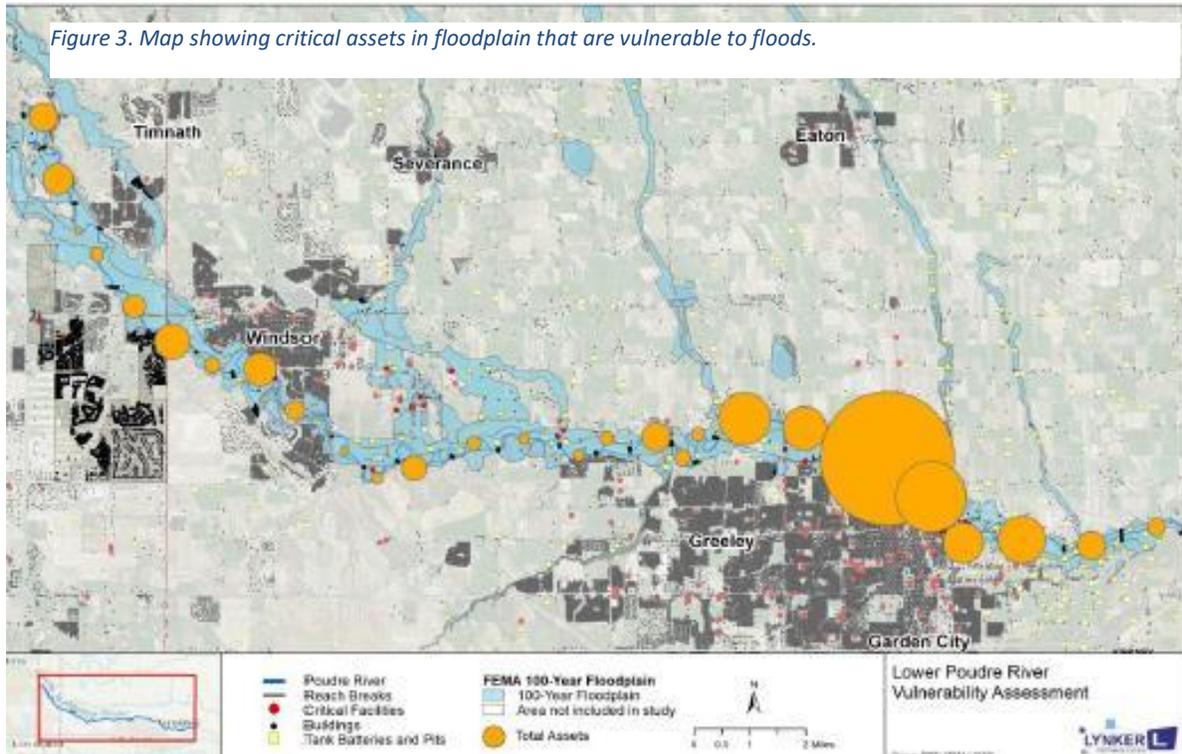
Flooding also poses a hazard to critical community and social infrastructure in this area. Results from our first phase show 688 critical facilities in the floodplain. Additionally, our analysis showed significant vulnerable populations at risk from increased exposure to floods, especially in or near urbanized Greeley. Although the 2013 floods did not destroy the water supply infrastructure in the project area, experiences in other rivers have shown the vulnerability of these critical water supply infrastructure to floods, leading to costly repairs and risks to water rights.

In 2017, CPRW sent surveys to residents and business owners in the lower Poudre. From the results, we also know that flooding is a top concern for local residents. Respondents to our survey identified flooding and erosion as their top 2 hazards to the river. Respondents also noted that three most important aspects about the Poudre were river health to support ecosystems, a natural river setting, and water supply.

As part of our first phase analysis, we also performed a rapid assessment of the whole river corridor to define and prioritize reaches by their level of ecological resilience. While our analysis did find areas of high ecological resilience, overall the assessment found that ecological resiliency has declined. The riparian habitat along the Lower Poudre River has been substantially degraded because of anthropogenic activities. Much of the historic floodplain area and its riparian habitat has been either lost or badly degraded by grazing and agriculture; gravel-mining; and/or industrial, commercial, residential, and other infrastructure development. Although some of these land uses involve large areas of undeveloped land along the river that may seem natural (namely grazing and gravel-mining), most of the native vegetation has been lost or altered. This large-scale degradation of habitat is mainly a result of historic floodplain areas no longer being wetted by seasonal overbank flows and essentially being “disconnected” or cut-off from the main river channel. This generally creates conditions that are too dry and that lack the necessary regular disturbance for woody riparian habitat (especially cottonwoods) to establish or persist.

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Additional concerns include competing pressures from the conversion of farmland into residential areas. Not only does this pose challenges for water supply planning and water quality, but it adds to the pressure on the river by converting previously open space (agricultural areas that return flows back to the water table) to urban spaces with increased impervious surfaces, which can significantly alter hydrology & water quality. Jurisdictions in the area are working to try to protect the riparian corridor while respecting land and water rights.



### ***Sub-criterion No. B2. Developing Strategies to Address Critical Watershed Needs or Issues***

#### Outreach & Partnership Building

Our steering committee is the cornerstone of our ability to cross jurisdiction silos to help reduce conflict & maximize the efficiency of decision making regarding water resource management in the corridor. It already has representation from all the major local jurisdictions. The steering committee helps CPRW understand where existing conflicts already exist in the river corridor and helps us develop pathways to addressing those conflicts. Given that this portion of the Poudre River is largely private land, most of these conflicts revolve around differences of opinions among private landowners/developers about what is appropriate for the river. Additionally, differences in opinion on the best strategies to protect water supply infrastructure like ditches and water storage ponds can be sources of conflicting views when it comes to increasing the resiliency of the river corridor. Because CPRW is not a government entity, we are often perceived with less bias or suspicion and can act as an impartial actor. This can help us facilitate dialogue and identify compromise solutions. As we grow the steering committee to be more inclusive of other partners, we will be able to directly facilitate some of this dialogue at the committee level.

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Furthermore, we will also be able to leverage our growing partnerships to facilitate a better scale of restoration. Both Larimer County and City of Greeley are actively working on river restoration projects. By working cooperatively with these entities, we have been able to identify areas of the river where our future work could build upon their work and increase the overall impact of restoration and resiliency building.

### Facilitating Discussions about Land Use Planning

This effort will facilitate discussions about land use planning. We have already started working with the steering committee to identify a strategy to have our Lower Poudre Flood Recovery & Resiliency Master Plan adopted as part of the comprehensive plan of both the City of Greeley and the Town of Windsor. This will help ensure that land use planners in this portion of the watershed understand the benefits of taking a holistic, river resiliency approach to design & water resource management and infrastructure planning.

There is very limited public access to the public lands or the river in our planning area. The Poudre Trail provides some of the only access to the river itself. We therefore worked closely with the Poudre Trail Board over the course of the past year. The Poudre Trail Board is a multi-stakeholder entity that plans, developed, & manages the Poudre Trail. As the Poudre Trail runs through almost the entire length of our planning and it was a strong focus of our prioritization work. We worked with the board to identify where the trail was at risk and what river restoration & resiliency actions could be taken to protect this vial recreational asset.

### Establishing relationships with conservation organizations

The primary other conservation organization that operates in our planning area is Ducks Unlimited (DU). DU has been active in our planning working with private & public landowners to develop easements to protect land, restore wetland habitat, & promote recreational hunting access on private lands. As part of the second phase of our work, we will try to recruit DU to participate on the steering committee or at a minimum, to communicate directly with their membership in the region and ensure that they can participate in, or present at, our community meetings.

### **Watershed Restoration Planning:**

The purpose of this project is to build the second phase of a master plan for the lower Poudre with a focus on river resiliency. During the first phase, we worked with critical stakeholders to identify needs, concerns, and areas of interest. We interviewed key government contacts, sent surveys to river landowners, business entities, and land managers to gather input, and held numerous community meetings. In addition, we supported this work with scientific assessment and modelling activities including an assessment of the river corridor's river health, flood & geomorphic hazard, a sediment transport model, and restoration opportunities. All of this work was used to prioritize reaches in terms of those in greatest need/benefit for restoration & resiliency work. The second phase of the project has 4 main components: 1. Engage the

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landowners and land managers in our highest priority reaches to ensure we can move those reaches through design appropriately; 2. Work with an array of stakeholders like ditch operators, gravel mining businesses, water storage companies, & oil & gas to foster better dialogue about longer term opportunities to resolve issues (e.g. how to retrofit structures to be flood/fish friendly while maintaining water rights), 3. Based on input from landowners & stakeholders, choose 1 -3 high priority reaches to move to the next stage of design, & 4. Continue to solidify CPRW's role as a collaborator across the whole. We believe that our plan for targeted individual engagement coupled with extensive community outreach will help foster the kind of dialogue and relationship building that will help us find design solutions that meet our goals for increasing the resiliency of the watershed and develop river restoration projects that are well grounded in river restoration science and best practices and reflect the values/goals of multiple stakeholders.

### **Watershed Management Project Design:**

Our first phase of work prioritized 28 reaches as either high, medium, or low priority. The technical analysis used existing data, field data, and modelling around key river, social, & hazard lines of evidence to prioritize the river. Eight reaches fell into the high priority category, and 10 fell into the medium priority category. With the budget we had, we were able to complete 5 concept level designs for high priority reaches. The remaining reaches had narrative recommendations associated with them.

While we do not need another technical analysis to prioritize, we do need stakeholder input to better understand landowner/managers willingness to have work done on their properties, what constraints they may have for design, and a need to better understand the timeline of other ongoing activities that may affect our potential projects. The City of Greeley and Larimer County are both engaging in active restoration projects, so we can inform and build upon those projects to increase the overall resiliency of the river system. We will need to gather that information and work with stakeholders to create a timeline for design and implementation of the higher priority reaches. Then we will work with the stakeholders to choose 1 -3 to further design, ideally with a sufficient level of design to facilitate CPRW to take that project for design-build funding. Assuming we focus on one of reaches with a concept design, we will work with river restoration specialists & engineers to develop at least 30% design, ideally up to 80%. This will position CPRW to seek funding for a design build project that works off that design. For the selected project reach(es) we will work initially with the design team to identify a realistic design, permitting, and construction timeline. We will then consult with our stakeholders to verify that the timeline & milestones are feasible given other activities in the corridor. Finally, we will consult with other entities like Bureau of Reclamation to make sure that we understand what type of environmental/cultural permitting may be required to move that project forward.

## Evaluation Criterion C— Implementation and Results (25 points)

### Sub-criterion No. C1. Understanding of and Ability to Meet Program Requirements

We are taking a phased approach to reaching our milestones. We will begin with the stakeholder and landowner outreach to ensure that we understand which landowners are willing to work with us on further design. By the end of Q4 2018, we anticipate having expanded the steering committee and conducted initial landowner site visits to gauge willingness, and had a first round of community meetings. At this point we will choose which priority reaches to move forward with design. In Q3 & Q4 2018, we will also begin finalizing the structure of our online tool, the Storymap. The it will be continuously updated throughout the life of the project. By Q1 2019, we will launch our other digital communication platform modelled after the MindMixer tool. By the end of Q1 2019, we would anticipate that field work for the design portion of the restoration work would begin. By the end of Q1 2020, we would anticipate having a completed design with an engineer’s estimate of probable cost.

Costs for tasks are outlined in the Budget Proposal section on pg 18.

Table 1: Timeline of tasks and milestones.

TASK	YEAR 1								YEAR 2							
	Q3 2018		Q4 2018		Q1 2019		Q2 2019		Q3 2019		Q4 2019		Q1 2020		Q2 2020	
Coordinating project																
Steering committee meetings	■	■			■	■	■		■	■	■					
Project Reporting																
<b>Outreach &amp; engagement</b>																
Finalize outreach plan																
landowner/manager site visits	■	■	■	■					■	■			■	■		
Community meetings																
Translate outreach materials			■	■	■											
Digital tools (StoryMap)																
Online Dialogue tools (MindMixer)									■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
<b>Design/Engineering</b>																
meetings																
field work																
report writing																
design																
landscape architect																
engineering																
environmental compliance																

***Sub-criterion No. C2. Building on Relevant Federal, State, or Regional Planning Efforts***

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

While there are no Department of the Interior facilities in the lower portion of the watershed, the Colorado Big Thompson (C-BT) terminal reservoir, Horsetooth Reservoir, is in the basin. The C-BT is one of the largest and most complex natural resource developments undertaken by the Bureau of Reclamation. It stores, regulates, and diverts water from the Colorado River west of the Rocky Mountains, providing supplemental water for irrigation of 720,000 acres of land east of the Rocky Mountains. It also provides water for municipal use, industrial use, hydroelectric power, and water-oriented recreation. The Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District apportions the water used for irrigation to more than 120 ditches and 60 reservoirs. Twenty-nine communities receive municipal and industrial water from the C-BT.

Even though Horsetooth Reservoir is not in the project area, it does supply water to the residents and agricultural water rights holders in our project area. This canal delivers water to a chute discharging into the Cache la Poudre River and to a siphon crossing the river to supply the Windsor Reservoir and Canal Company. A turnout from the Supply Canal supplies the City of Greeley municipal water works. Water is delivered to the river to replace, by exchange, water diverted upstream to the North Poudre Supply Canal, which conveys it to the North Poudre Irrigation Company System

This project will also support and contribute the goals of the Colorado State Water Plan and the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan. Our project will directly support the Co Water Plan goals of promoting restoration, recovery, and resiliency of endangered, threatened, and imperiled aquatic and riparian dependent species and plant communities; understanding, protecting, maintaining and improving conditions of streams, lakes, wetlands, and riparian areas to promote long-term resiliency; and protecting and restoring watersheds critical to water infrastructure, environmental or recreational areas. Our project will also support the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan's goal of enhancing the health and vitality of rivers and streams in the South Platte Basin, sustaining ecosystems and providing important environmental, societal, and economic benefits to the region.

This project has the potential to positively impact threatened or endangered species. Although this is just a planning phase, ultimately when implemented our projects will improve river and riparian habitat and provide a more diverse and resilient riverine ecosystem. Federal documentation indicates that our proposed project area provides potential habitat for several threatened and endangered fish, wildlife & plant species including: Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse, Least Tern, Mexican Spotted Owl, Piping Plover, Whooping Crane, Pallid Sturgeon, Colorado Butterfly Plant, Ute Ladies'-Tresses, and Western Prairie Fringed Orchid. There is no identified critical habitat in our project area

**Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance**

***Required Permits or Approvals***

To accomplish our project goals, we anticipate that a consulting team will need to do

### **Section E. Application Review Information**

some field work, likely focused on taking river cross sections to better understand site specific geomorphology and engineering constraints for restoration planning & design purposes. During the first phase of this project, we did not require any federal or state environmental permitting. This phase of the project will involve similar activities (field assessments & geomorphic measurements), we are therefore anticipating the same level of permitting and compliance at this stage. For this phase of work, we will not be disturbing earth or filling waterways and therefore should not require any Army Corps permits. Although we do not expect this work will require extensive permitting, but it will require landowner permission to enter private land, including entering the river itself. To obtain landowner permission/approval we will mail letters to the individual landowners of interest, as well as leverage our steering committee's existing network of landowner contacts to connect us with those landowners. In areas where landowners are unwilling to give us land access, we will adjust where our data collection will take place. However, we anticipate doing extensive outreach prior to collecting data to help plan appropriately for any permission challenges. As part of the design process, we will require consultants to research and identify all necessary permitting that will be necessary to move projects to implementation.

Section E. Application Review Information

## Budget Proposal

BUDGET ITEM DESCRIPTION	COSTS			TOTAL COST
	Rates	unit	Quantity	
<b>Salaries and Wages</b>				
coordinating project -Ex. Dir	36	\$/hr	10	\$360.00
coordinating project - Prog. Assist	25	\$/hr	12	\$300.00
landowner site visits -Prog. Assist	25	\$/hr	48	\$1,200.00
Stakeholder coordination	36	\$/hr	10	\$360.00
Stakeholder coordination Prog. Assist	25	\$/hr	192	\$4,800.00
Design Team Coordination	36	\$/hr	24	\$864.00
Design Team Coordination Prog. Assist	25	\$/hr	72	\$1,800.00
Environmental Comp - BoR				\$2,000.00
Project Reporting	25	\$/hr	48	\$1,200.00
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>				
Full-Time Employees (30%)				\$3,865.20
<b>Travel</b>				
mileage	0.545	\$/mi	250	\$136.25
<b>Supplies and Materials</b>				
Outreach & meeting materials				\$250.00
<b>Contractual/Construction</b>				
Outreach facilitator/planner	55	\$/hr	18	\$990
Spanish language assistance	\$40.00	\$/hr	32	\$1,280
Design/Engineering				
meetings	\$125.00	\$/hr	52	\$6,500.00
field work	\$125.00	\$/hr	80	\$10,000.00
report writing	\$85.00	\$/hr	40	\$3,400.00
Design & estimate of prob cost	\$125.00	\$/hr	80	\$10,000.00
landscape architect	\$125.00	\$/hr	100	\$12,500.00
engineering	\$179.00	\$/hr	100	\$17,900.00
environmental compliance	\$85.00	\$/hr	15	\$1,275.00
printing	\$0.25	\$/pg	1000	\$250.00
mileage	\$0.545	\$/mi	756	\$412.02
<b>Other</b>				
Outreach tools (StoryMap)	2,000		1	\$2,000
Outreach tools (MindMixer)	7,000	total	1	\$7,000
<b>TOTAL DIRECT COSTS</b>				<b>\$90,642</b>
<b>Indirect Costs</b>				
Type of rate	10%		1	<b>\$9,064</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS</b>				<b>\$99,707</b>

## **Budget Narrative**

### **Salaries and Wages**

CPRW will have two full time employees involved in this project. CPRW's executive director, Jennifer Kovecses, will oversee general project management, contracts & agreements, project vision & outcomes. Her hourly rate is \$36/hr and we anticipate ~48 hrs. CPRW's Watershed Program Assistant, Hally Strevey, will be the project manager and will oversee project logistics, overseeing contractors' milestones, lead stakeholder & landowner outreach, and will be responsible for ensuring grant reporting and environmental compliance. Her hourly rate is \$25/hr and we anticipate 372 hrs, which is ~18% of the program assistant's time. We anticipate that the program assistant will spend 8 hr of her time on environmental compliance (project coordination budget line) and 48hrs of her time on reporting.

### **Fringe Benefits**

CPRW includes the following elements in calculating fringe benefits: paid vacation time, paid holidays, sick leave, worker's compensation, state and federal withholdings, and a salary stipend. CPRW does not currently offer retirement or health plans, therefore these are not incorporated into our fringe rate. Instead, the organization provides staff with a monthly stipend to compensate for some of those costs. That stipend is incorporated into our fringe rate. Our fringe rate is used for billing.

We calculate the fringe rate by calculating the annual amount of each benefit and dividing that amount by 2,080 then computing the total hourly rate of all benefits and add this number to the hourly rate of pay to establish the total hourly compensation rate. We then calculate the benefit load by dividing the total benefits cost for all employees by the total salary cost for all employees.

### **Travel**

The only travel we anticipate for this project is mileage to & from landowner site visits, community meetings, & stakeholder meetings. These trips will generally occur from Fort Collins (where our office is located) to various parts of the lower watershed. We estimated mileage costs using mileage to & from Greeley. We will use the IRS mileage rate (currently estimated at 54.5 cents/mi). We do not use a different rate of compensation for travel time. We will not require lodging, airfare, or per diems.

### **Equipment**

We do not anticipate renting or buying equipment for this project.

### **Materials and Supplies**

Our materials and supplies will be limited to purchasing supplies for community outreach & engagement. We expect costs such as printing maps and handouts for meetings & site visits, poster boards, markers, sticky pads, etc. We may need to occasionally rent a room for community meetings when we cannot reserve one for free. In the first phase of the project, the Town of Windsor let us use their facilities for free. The prices were estimated based on previous experiences and by comparison across online retailers like Amazon and Office Depot.

## Section E. Application Review Information

### **Contractual**

Our project will entail 2 primary areas of work with consultants/contractors. First, we anticipate hiring consultants to assist various outreach tasks. We will hire consultants/specialist to assist with creating specific online engagement tools. As part of the first phase of the project, CPRW worked with our technical team to start an ESRI StoryMap that provided a digital interface that is an interactive map-based platform for the public to learn about the project and provide us with an engaging platform for keeping stakeholders and the public abreast of project activities and outcomes. In the first phase, we designed the StoryMap outline but the content needs to be completed, which will require some technical input beyond our internal staff capacity. Our staff will then be able to update the content as needed.

In addition, we wish to create a digital platform that will provoke and nurture online dialogue regarding river & watershed issues. We based our cost estimate on the cost incurred by Larimer County Emergency Services to develop a similar tool for community emergency preparedness called MindMixer (<http://larimercounty.mindmixer.com/>). This is a community engagement platform that has helped more than 1,200 organizations start local online conversations with people who care about the places they live.

One important cost associated with the community engagement will potentially be working with communities where English is not the native tongue. Our initial analysis identified a significant portion of the river corridor had sizable populations of vulnerable people whose first language is not English. To ensure that we can communicate with these populations and have some level of cultural competency, we have included a budget line for Spanish language translation and communication services. The costs are based on prices for translation services for companies based in the Greeley area.

Second, we anticipate hiring river restoration design & engineering specialists to help us with the design & engineering needs of the project. We based our budget estimates on costs from the first phase of the project, therefore we are confident that the budget reflects a realistic assessment of needs for the design component. The primary tasks include field assessments (avg \$125/hr) to collect any site specific hydrology &/or geomorphic data needed to understand design needs; attend stakeholder meeting (avg \$125/hr); complete engineering design (avg \$125/hr); landscape architect work to draft designs (\$125/hr); assess environmental permitting needs \$85/hr); complete designs for at least one project site to up to 80% design (including engineers estimate of costs - avg \$125/hr)

### **Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Costs**

Based on our experiences in the first phase of this project, we do not anticipate significant need for environmental compliance or permitting. Any regulatory compliance work will be conducted by consultants, including work to analyze what permitting will be required when restoration projects are implemented at a later stage of the project.

### **Indirect Costs**

CPRW does not have a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement. We therefore rely on the *de minimis* 10 percent rate.

## **Section E. Application Review Information**

### **Total Costs**

The total project cost is estimated to be \$99,707.

CPRW has successfully managed multiple federal grants for planning projects including funds from Housing & Urban Developments Community Block Development Grant for Disaster Recovery. We have met all compliance and financial management requirements for those programs and have passed two grant compliance audits. We feel this demonstrates that as an organization we have the capacity and systems in place to successfully manage a budget from Bureau of Reclamation.

### **Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management**

CPRW is registered & active with SAMs. Our CAGE code is 79Z89. We have included a copy of our active registration page. We currently receive other federal funds and are therefore confident that we will be maintaining an active SAM registration.



January 16, 2018

Darren Olson  
Grants Management Specialist  
Bureau of Reclamation  
P.O. Box 25007  
Denver, CO 80225

**RE: Support for the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed's Phase 2 Master Plan application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART program.**

Dear Mr. Olson:

The City of Greeley Poudre Initiative Team ("Initiative Team") is a multi-departmental City work team with community agency representation whose purpose is to foster an expanded partnership and comprehensive framework for the long-term preservation, development, enhancement, celebration and use of the Cache la Poudre River Corridor for its perpetual benefit to the northern Colorado community as a regional greenway. As chair of the Initiative Team, I am writing to support the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed's ("CPRW") proposal to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART grant program. We believe that CPRW's proposal to complete watershed restoration planning and design work is critical to the long-term health & resiliency of this river and our communities.

The Initiative Team is made up of representatives from several Greeley departments, the Town of Windsor, Poudre Learning Center, and Poudre Heritage Alliance. Several of the members of the Initiative Team participated in CPRW's steering committee for the Lower Poudre Flood Recovery & Resilience Master Plan ('the Plan'), the first phase of this project. We are therefore aware of the importance of continuing this work. The first phase of the Plan has significantly improved our understanding of where our greatest needs are in the river corridor. Completing reach specific design and engineering for additional high priority reaches will be critical to making this plan successful. By integrating strategic community & landowner outreach into the second phase of the Plan, CPRW will help ensure that there is the support to move the projects from planning to implementation and to gather key input from landowners on design ideas. For these reasons, the Initiative Team voted unanimously on Dec 13, 2017 to support CPRW's application to the WaterSMART program.

Members of the Initiative Team have worked collaboratively with CPRW previously and have seen that it can successfully work with stakeholders to create meaningful watershed projects. We are therefore confident that CPRW has the right skills and abilities to complete this much needed work. Please let us know if you have any questions about our support of CPRW's application to the Colorado Water Plan grant program.

Sincerely,

  
Rebecca L. Safarik  
Assistant City Manager



**1100 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 210**  
**Greeley, CO 80631**  
[www.poudretrail.org](http://www.poudretrail.org)  
**Phone: 970-336-4044**

January 16, 2018

**Board Members:**

*Mike Ketterling, Weld Co.*

*Ivan Adams, Windsor*

*Julie Cozad, Weld Co.*

*Mike Finn, Greeley*

*Phil Neville, Windsor*

*Dale Hall, Weld Co.*

*Bill Hertneky, Windsor*

*Tom Grant, Greeley*

*Fred Otis, Greeley*

Mr. Darren Olson  
Grants Management Specialist  
Bureau of Reclamation  
P.O. Box 25007  
Denver, CO 80225

**RE: Support for the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed's Phase 2 Master Plan application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART program**

Dear Mr. Olson:

As Chairman of the Poudre River Trail Corridor Board ("Trail Board"), I am writing in support of the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed's (CPRW) proposal to the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART grant program. The Poudre River Trail Corridor, Inc is a non-profit that manages 21 miles of the Poudre River Trail east of the I-25. Representatives from the City of Greeley, Town of Windsor and Weld County work cooperatively to manage the trail. The Poudre River is the lifeblood of the communities east of the I-25; providing irrigation water for agriculture, water for local businesses, & habitat for wildlife. The Poudre Trail connects all our communities and provides some of the only public access to this section of the river making its integrity critical to our communities and local economies. This project is a crucial step toward improving the flood resiliency & ecological integrity of the river.

The Poudre River east of the I-25 has suffered since the flood of September 2013; seeing increases in sediment deposition & erosion causing instability of banks and undermining key portions of the Poudre Trail. In response to the 2013 flood and its impacts, CPRW worked with the City of Greeley, Town of Windsor, and Weld & Larimer Counties to develop the Lower Poudre Flood Recovery and Resiliency Master Plan ("Master Plan"). This first phase of the Master Plan prioritized reaches of the river in need of restoration & flood resiliency work. Concept plans were also made for 6 of 28 planning reaches. We see great value in furthering this work by completing reach specific project design and engineering for the remaining highest priority reaches. We look forward to continuing with CPRW on this important watershed planning effort.

On Dec 14, 2017, the Trail Board met & voted unanimously to support CPRW's application to the WaterSMART grant. We strongly encourage the approval of their grant request. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the Trail Board's support of the project.

Sincerely,

Mike Ketterling  
Poudre River Trail Corridor. Board Chairman



January 31, 2018

Darren Olson  
Grants Management Specialist  
Bureau of Reclamation  
P.O. Box 25007  
Denver, CO 80225

**RE: Support for the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed's Phase 2 Master Plan application to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART program.**

Dear Mr. Olson:

I am writing on behalf of The Town of Windsor Parks & Open Space Division. We are responsible for parks, trails, and open spaces within the Town including open space near the Poudre River and the Poudre Trail. We are writing to express our support for the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed's ('CPRW') proposal to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART grant program. We believe that CPRW's proposal to develop further high priority restoration design for the lower Poudre is critical to the long-term vitality of this portion of the watershed.

The September 2013 flood event caused extreme damage to rivers and communities across the Front Range of Colorado. Although the Poudre River did not experience the scale of physical damage that other river systems did, the Poudre River east of the I-25 has experienced problematic levels of sediment deposition with subsequent increases in flooding, and consistent bank erosion since 2013. These issues have put the river's health and community infrastructure at risk. These persistent watershed problems prompted CPRW to work with key jurisdictions east of the I-25 to create a holistic plan to help address these observed problems. For the past year, CPRW worked with stakeholders, community members, and a technical team to create the Lower Poudre Flood Recovery & Resiliency Master Plan ('Plan'). The first phase of the Plan consisted of three main components: a multi-criterion analysis of 36 miles of river to prioritize which of 28 study reaches are in most need of restoration & resiliency building; conceptual level design plans for 6 high priority reaches; and a sediment transport model to support watershed management and restoration planning.

The Town of Windsor participated on the steering committee for the first phase of this process & are therefore familiar with how it can benefit not just residents of Windsor, but all the residents in our region that love and depend on the river corridor. We support CPRW's efforts to take the Plan to the next phase to complete site specific design & engineering plans for the

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remaining high to medium priority reaches. This effort will be complemented by a rigorous landowner outreach plan to ensure that CPRW has the support to move the projects from planning to implementation and to gather key input from landowners on design ideas.

As an existing watershed group that has been successfully planning and implementing high priority, collaborative watershed restoration work for the past five years, we are confident that CPRW has the right skills and abilities to complete this much needed work. The health and resiliency of the Poudre River and the vitality of our communities depends on innovative efforts such as this one. Please let us know if you have any questions about our support of CPRW's application to the Colorado Water Plan grant program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wade Willis", written over a horizontal line.

Wade Willis, Open Space and Trails Manager



Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed  
PO Box 876  
Fort Collins CO 80522  
970.222.5754

Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed (CPRW)

Resolution

On this Dec 19, 2017, as members of the Board of Directors of the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed and specifically in the matter of application to the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation Funding Opportunity Announcement Funding Opportunity Announcement No. BOR-DO-18-F005 WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I Grants for Fiscal Year 2018:

We hereby approve in the majority and as individually attested by our names affixed below, the following conditions:

1. Maelly Oropeza, Chair of the Board of Directors, is authorized to enter into agreement on behalf of CPRW, with the Bureau of Reclamation.
2. We support this grant application
3. We agree that as a board, we will meet the established grant deadlines

Votes in favor of resolution:

Maelly Oropeza  
Dick Jefferies  
Shannon Allstott  
Jill Oropeza  
Bob Stutevant  
Nate Boschmann  
Jeremy Sueltenfuss  
Jen Petrzlka

Absent:  
  
Evan Stafford

\*\*\*\*\*

Resolution approved

Maelly Oropeza  
Chair – Board of Directors

## Entity Dashboard

- Entity Overview
- Entity Registration
  - Core Data
  - Assertions
  - Reps & Certs
  - POCs
- Reports
  - Service Contract Report
  - BioPreferred Report
- Exclusions
  - Active Exclusions
  - Inactive Exclusions
  - Excluded Family Members

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Coalition For The Poudre River Watershed  
DUNS: 078839054 **CAGE Code: 79Z89**  
Status: Active  
Expiration Date: 05/24/2018  
Purpose of Registration: Federal Assistance Awards Only

1609 Wagon Tongue Ct  
Fort Collins, CO, 80521-1133,  
UNITED STATES

### Entity Overview

#### Entity Registration Summary

DUNS: 078839054  
Name: Coalition For The Poudre River Watershed  
Business Type: Business or Organization  
Last Updated By: Jennifer Kovceses  
Registration Status: Active  
Activation Date: 05/24/2017  
Expiration Date: 05/24/2018

#### Exclusion Summary

Active Exclusion Records? No